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Ecological Impact Assessment

Client

Hallam Land Management Limited

Project

Land South of Longsight Road

Langho

Date

November 2025

CONTENTS

FIGURES

APPENDICES

Rev	Issue Status	Prepared/Date	Approved/Date
-	Issue	SH/ET/20.02.25	AJB /25.02.25
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1.0 NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

Report Scope and Methodology

This report has been prepared to inform the submission of an appeal relating to the refused outline planning application (Ribble Valley Borough Council planning ref: 3/2025/0196). A full summary of the background to the appeal is set out within the appellant's planning Statement of Case (SoC).

An Ecological Impact Assessment (EcIA) was undertaken following published guidelines on the likely effects upon biodiversity as a result of proposals for an Outline Planning Application at Longsight Road, Langho.

The assessment draws from a desk study, Phase 1 Habitat Survey and Preliminary Protected Species Survey of the Site and surrounding area which was carried out in December 2019 and a UKHab survey and updated Preliminary Protected Species Survey of the Site and surrounding area which was carried out in October 2024. A series of additional detailed surveys were completed in 2024 and 2025. The surveys comprised detailed botanical surveys of grassland and species surveys for bats, breeding birds, wintering birds and Great Crested Newts. A Biodiversity Net Gain Strategy (FPCR, 2025) has also been undertaken and should be read in conjunction with this report.

The Site is approximately 20 ha in extent and supports mostly grassland habitats. Primarily other neutral grassland, with a central area of lowland meadow priority grassland and a modified grassland field to the west. Two streams and a number of waterbodies were recorded on Site. In the north east corner is an area of Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland, which has recently been identified as a parcel of Ancient & Semi-Natural Woodland, following an update of this layer on the Multi Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) website since the initial report issue in 2025. Two further areas of Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland, lesser in extent occur along the central stream and also on the western boundary. Six ponds were recorded of which all dried up over the course of the Great Crested Newt surveys undertaken on Site and are therefore considered ephemeral.

Key Findings

The baseline assessment identified the following Important Ecological Features (IEFs) which could be affected by proposals or warrant consideration due to the legal protection afforded them:

- Ancient Woodland / Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland;
- Lowland Meadow;
- Other neutral grassland;
- Non priority Ponds;
- Mature Trees;
- Hedgerows;
- Other rivers and streams;
- Bats;
- Breeding Birds (legislative context only);
- Himalayan balsam (legislative context only);
- Reptiles (legislative context only).

Where possible, the design proposals have sought to retain the Site's most important ecological features and maintain connectivity of onsite and offsite habitat.

A combination of onsite and offsite habitat mitigation, compensation and enhancement is proposed, in order to provide strategic level mitigation for lowland meadow habitats. Any loss of habitats within the Site will be appropriately compensated for through subsequent approval and via the associated Biodiversity Net Gain Condition, which will secure a 10% gain in biodiversity value for the Site. A Biodiversity Net Gain Strategy has been prepared for the Site and is submitted with the application, which relies on a bespoke offsite compensation strategy, which involves the provision of

additional lowland meadow units and an increased offer of other neutral grassland units. This has sought to over compensate for the losses to the grassland habitats on site and will result in an increase of 113% and 5.2% in biodiversity units of the respective habitat types locally.
Overall, the purchase of these units will result in the scheme providing a 12.15% gain in biodiversity units, a 24.37% hedgerow gain and 13.3% watercourse gain, with all trading rules satisfied.

Construction phase impacts will be minimised through careful control of construction activities through an industry best practice CEMP.

Where necessary, the detailed lighting strategy for the Site will consider the best practice guidance note set out by the Bat Conservation Trust and the Institute of Lighting Professionals in 2023, 'GN08/23 Bats and Artificial Lighting at Night to ensure, wherever possible, that existing and new habitat resources are not negatively affected by artificial lighting during the construction or operational phases.

2.0 INTRODUCTION

2.1 This EcIA has been prepared by FPCR Environment and Design Ltd on behalf of Hallam Land Management Ltd, to accompany the submission of an appeal relating to the refused outline planning application (Ribble Valley Borough Council planning ref: 3/2025/0196) for the redevelopment of a Site at Longsight Road, Langho (central grid reference: SD 702 344) herein referred to as 'the Site'.

2.2 This EcIA has been prepared with reference to the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management's (CIEEM) EcIA Guidelines. In line with this guidance, the EcIA: describes the Assessment Methodology; establishes the baseline conditions, currently existing at the Site and surroundings; the likely significant environmental effects associated with the proposed development; the mitigation measures required to prevent or reduce any impacts; the likely residual effects after these measures have been employed; the compensation measures required to offset any residual effects; and identifies opportunities available within the proposals to deliver ecological enhancement.

2.3 To inform this assessment, a suite of ecological surveys has been undertaken on the Site. The results of these surveys are discussed where relevant in the EcIA report, with details of survey methodologies and results included in separate, reports which should be read in conjunction with this report. These include:

- Bat Survey Report (Appendix C, FPCR, 2025)
- Wintering Bird Survey Report (Appendix D, FPCR 2025)
- Breeding Bird Survey Report (Appendix E, FPCR 2025)
- Great Crested Newt Report (Appendix F, FPCR 2025)

2.4 A Biodiversity Net Gain report and Arboricultural Assessment have also been produced by FPCR and should be read in conjunction with this report.

Site Context

2.5 The Site is located to the south of Longsight Road, east of Whitehaigh Lane, west of the recently completed Northcote Park housing development and north of the Ribble Valley railway line. It is connected to the village of Langho via a railway underpass on the southern boundary of the Site (see Figure 1).

2.6 The Site is approximately 20 ha in extent and supports mostly grassland habitats. The site is primarily comprised of other neutral grassland, with a central area of lowland meadow priority grassland and a modified grassland field to the west. Two streams and a number of waterbodies were also recorded on Site. In the north east corner is an area of Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland, which has recently been identified as a parcel of Ancient & Semi-Natural Woodland, following an update of this layer on the Multi Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) website, since the initial report issue in 2025. Two further areas of Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland, lesser in extent, occur along the central stream and also on the western boundary.

Proposal

2.7 It is proposed that the Site will be utilised for a residential scheme as illustrated on the Illustrative Masterplan (333101612_MR_MP_VW0101F). Approximately half of the Site area is proposed as open greenspace (8.82ha).

Report Aims and Objectives

2.8 This report has been prepared to achieve the following objectives:

- Provide a summary of the methods and results of survey work to establish an ecological baseline;
- Identify and describe all potentially significant ecological effects associated with the proposed development on important ecological features;
- Set out the mitigation measures required to ensure compliance with nature conservation legislation and to address any potentially significant ecological effects;
- Provide an assessment of the significance of residual effects;
- Identify appropriate enhancement measures and consider biodiversity net gain; and
- Set out the requirements for post-construction monitoring.

3.0 LEGISLATION AND POLICY

3.1 This report has been prepared to establish an Ecological Baseline an to conduct and Ecological Impact Assessment on Important Ecological Features as informed by relevant international, national and local legislation and policy. Detail on the relevant National and Local Policy and legislation for ecology in relation to development sites are provided in Appendix A. The National Policy and legislation most relevant to this assessment include:

- The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (CHSR)[1] (as amended) in relation to the European Protected Species (EPS) Great Crested Newt *Triturus cristatus* (GCN) and bats (all species); and European protected sites i.e. Special Areas of Conservation (SAC), Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Internationally protected "Ramsar Sites" (collectively known as "National Site Network site" following the UK's exit from the EU). Annex II bat species of particular relevance in relation to SACs designated for bats;
- The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (WCA)[2] (as amended) in relation to all wild birds (including Schedule 1 species), other animals (notably Schedule 5 species), flora (those listed in Schedules 8 and 9) and Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI);
- The Environment Act 2021[3] which covers a range of environmental protections and enhancements including requiring developments to demonstrate a mandatory biodiversity net gain following publication of secondary legislation;
- The Protection of Badgers Act 1992[4] which protects badgers from killing or harm;

[1] HMSO. The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) – No.1012
[2] HMSO. The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)
[3] HMSO The Environment Act 2021
[4] UK Government (1992) Protection of Badgers Act 1992 [Online] Available at: https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1992/51/contents

- The Natural Environmental and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006[5]; in relation to various priority species and habitats;
- Hedgerow Regulations 1997[6] made under Section 97 of the Environment Act 1995;
- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2024[7] which sets out the Governments planning policy for England including measure to conserve and enhance the natural environment by protecting and enhancing value landscapes, recognising the value and wider benefits of natural capital and minimising impacts/providing net gains for biodiversity;
- Local Nature Reserves (LNR) as designated most recently by the NERC Act 2006;
- Non-statutory protected local sites including County Wildlife Sites (CWS), Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC), Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) and Ancient Woodland Inventory (AWI) sites;
- Local Biodiversity Action Plans (LBAP); and
- British Trust for Ornithology's (BTO) Birds of Conservation Concern (BoCC).

4.0 METHODOLOGY

Desk Study

4.1 In order to compile existing baseline information, relevant ecological information was requested from both statutory and non-statutory nature conservation organisations including:

- The Lancashire Environmental Records Centre (LERC);
- Multi Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) website (www.magic.defra.gov.uk)[8];
- Colour 1:25,000 OS base maps[9]; and
- Aerial photographs from Google Earth[10] .

4.2 The search area for biodiversity information was related to the significance of sites and species and potential Zones of Influence, as follows:

- a minimum of a 10km radius around the Site was searched for sites with an international statutory designation: Special Area of Conservation (SAC), Special Protection Area (SPA) and Ramsar sites;
- a minimum of a 2km radius around the Site for sites of national / regional or local importance with a statutory designation: Site of Special Scientific Importance (SSSI) or National Nature Reserve (NNR);
- up to a 2 km search area for records of notable / protected species, including Species of Principal Importance under S41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (NERC) 2006 and Local Biodiversity Action Plan species; and

[5] HMSO. (2006), Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act
[6] UK Government (2006) Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 [Online] Available at: https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/16/contents
[7] Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (2024) National Planning Policy Framework, December 2024.
8 [Online]. http://magic.defra.gov.uk/
9 [Online]. www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk
10 [Online]. www.maps.google.co.uk

- up to a 1km radius around the Site for sites of local importance with statutory designation of Local Nature Reserve (LNR), or non-statutory designation of Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) or the equivalent Local Wildlife Site (LWS).

4.3 When handling data, species data were filtered to include records from the previous twenty years only to keep the data relevant to the date of this assessment.

4.4 Further consideration of potential Zones of Influence in relation to statutory designated sites of International and National importance was made using Natural England's SSSI Impact Risk Zone Tool[11] which outlines the likely zone of influence from impacts for a range of development types.

Field Survey

Habitats

4.5 A Preliminary Protected Species Scoping Survey and Phase 1 Habitat Survey (following JNCC methodology) were initially undertaken on the 17th of December 2019.

4.6 An updated Site walkover, including a UKHab survey and Condition Assessment were undertaken on the 22nd of October 2024. This was supplemented by a detailed botanical survey undertaken on the 10th July 2025 to inform the habitat type and Condition Assessments of grassland habitats .

4.7 The habitat surveys were undertaken by a suitably experienced Associate level Ecologist who holds a BSBI Field Identification Skills Certificate Level 5.

4.8 The objective of the habitat assessment was to undertake an evaluation of the habitats that are currently present within the Site with regards to their relative conservation value.

4.9 Survey methods broadly following the UKHab Classification System[12] with minor departures from this methodology to allow for compatibility with the DEFRA metric where applicable and comprised a systematic walk over the Site to classify the broad habitat types and identify any Habitats of Principal Importance (HPI) for the conservation of biodiversity as listed within Section 41 (S41) of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act (2006) and identify a representative species list for each habitat.

4.10 Representative species lists were compiled for individual areas and assessments of abundance were made using the DAFOR scale. Vascular plant nomenclature follows Stace (2019)[13]. Whilst the species lists collected should not be regarded as exhaustive, sufficient information was gained during the survey to enable classification and assessment of broad habitat types and identify features likely to be of interest.

4.11 During the surveys the hedgerow network were surveyed to determine the hedgerow type and condition. To achieve this the length of the hedgerow was walked, and the woody species present recorded. In line with the hedgerow regulations, the number of native woody species within 30m sample sections was recorded, with 1-3 sample sections recorded depending on the length of the hedgerow. A record of the veteran, mature and young tree standards was taken for each hedgerow and a record of the length of each horizontal gap within the hedgerow. In

11 https://data.gov.uk/dataset/5ae2af0c-1363-4d40-9d1a-e5a1381449f8/sssi-impact-risk-zones
12 UKHab Ltd (2024). UK Habitat Classification Version 4.1(at https://UKHab.org)
13 Stace, C (2019) New Flora of the British Isles. 4th edn. C&M Floristics

addition to the above, any hedgerow trees of medium size or above (>30cm DBH) within all hedgerows which were to be lost to proposals were mapped as individual trees.

4.12 Detailed Botanical Surveys of the Grasslands were undertaken on the 10th July 2025 by an Associate Ecologist from FPCR (MCIEEM, Botanical Society of Britain and Ireland's (BSBI) Field Identification Skills Competency (FISC) Level 5), to inform habitat classification and collect robust Condition Assessment information. This involved the remapping of the grassland communities present within the Site, where necessary and recording the plant species present within a series of 1m x 1m quadrats, which were used to inform the habitat classification selected and the corresponding Condition Assessment undertaken. Quadrats were placed within what were visually considered to be stands of homogenous vegetation where the vegetation was considered to potentially be representative of a distinct community type. The number of quadrats collected within each community sampled varied between 4-10 based on the size of the community, perceived species richness, distinctiveness or variability within the sward.

4.13 The location of each quadrat was recorded and a photograph taken of the sampled area. Within each quadrat, all vascular plant species were recorded and given a percentage cover. This information was then used to construct 'floristic tables' which include the frequency and abundance for each species recorded within the sample quadrats as well as information to inform classification and condition, such as species per m^2. The percentage cover of bare ground was also recorded within each quadrat.

4.14 Where species are referred to in the text, the common name for the species is used, with the associated scientific name provided within the botanical species lists for the Site. These can be found within Appendix A of the accompanying BNG Strategy report (FPCR, October 2025)

4.15 Any habitats suitable for, or features with the potential to support, protected or notable species were also assessed and recorded with the surveys. Habitats were mapped in the field, along with additional notes regarding the current 'condition'[14] of the habitat, completed in accordance with the Statutory Biodiversity Metric Condition Assessments[15].

4.16 Consideration was given as to the presence of invasive species listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) (WCA 1981)[16] and the presence of any notable weeds including those covered under the Weed Act 1959 [17] (where population is significant enough to be considered injurious).

Faunal Surveys

4.17 During the UKHab surveys, observations, identification and signs of any species protected under the following list of Acts and Regulations (collectively referred to herein as 'Protected Species') were recorded:

- Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended);
- The Protection of Badgers Act 1992;

14 Condition' is one of the measures of the quality of a habitat used within the DEFRA biodiversity metric. It takes into account key physical characteristics and typical species of a particular habitat type.
15 Defra (2023). " "The Statutory Biodiversity Metric -Technical Annex 1: Condition Assessment Sheets and Methodology" November 2023" Access [online] (Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/statutory-biodiversity-metric-tools-and-guides)
[16] Act of Parliament, (1981). The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), London: HMSO.
[17] Act of Parliament. (1959). The Weed Act 1959. London: HMSO

- The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended).

4.18 Consideration has also been given to the existence and use of the Site by other fauna listed as one or more of the following (collectively referred to herein as 'Notable Species'):

- Species of Principal Importance (SPI) for the conservation of biodiversity in England on the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act, Section 41 (S41);
- Species listed on any Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP) initiatives;
- Red Data Book (RDB) species.

4.19 The likely presence or absence of protected and notable species has been assessed by a number of factors including the availability or suitable habitat, connectivity, known species distribution, local records and an understanding of the ecology and habitats requirement of the individual species assessed.

Badgers

4.20 As part of the Site walkover, all suitable habitat within the Site and immediately adjacent to the Site boundary, were searched for evidence of badger activity. The standard methodology was used, as outlined by Harris, Creswell and Jefferies (1991)[18]. This involved a thorough search for evidence indicating the presence of badgers, including:

- Setts, including earth mounds, evidence of bedding and runs between setts;
- Latrines, often located close to setts, at territory boundaries or adjacent to favoured feeding areas;
- Prints and paths or track ways;
- Hairs caught on rough wood or fencing; and
- Other evidence including snuffle holes, feeding and playing areas and scratching posts.

4.21 The identification of snuffle holes, scratching posts or feeding signs on their own is not necessarily conclusive evidence of the presence of badgers. A number of such signs may need to be seen in conjunction before they can be said to be conclusive of badger activity.

Other Fauna

4.22 Following the initial assessment of the Site for protected/notable species potential, a series of further surveys were completed in 2024 and 2025. These included:

- Bat surveys comprising the following -with detailed methodologies included in Appendix C:
    - A ground level tree assessment and initial aerial roost assessment was undertaken on 19th and 20th November 2024;
    - Three further aerial roost assessments of three trees classified as PRF-M undertaken in between May and June 2025;
    - Three nocturnal emergence surveys of five trees classified as FAR undertaken between May and August 2025; and

[18] *Harris*, S., *Cresswell*, P. and *Jefferies*, D., (1991). (Report) Surveying Badgers. The Mammal. Society, Bristol.

- Seasonal activity surveys comprising flightline and transect surveys in October 2024, April 2025 and July 2025, supplemented by monthly deployment of static detectors in October 2024 and between April and September 2025.

- Four monthly wintering bird surveys carried out between November and February 2024/ 2025 with detailed methodologies included in Appendix D.
- Four breeding bird surveys were undertaken between April and June 2025. with detailed methodologies included in Appendix E.
- Four Great Crested Newt (GCN) aquatic presence/ likely absence surveys undertaken between April and May 2025 with detailed methodologies included in Appendix F.

Impact Assessment

4.23 The assessment of significant ecological effects has been undertaken in accordance with CIEEM EcIA guidelines. In summary, the process involves:

- Establish Baseline – this is based on desk study and field surveys which describes the existing and potential Important Ecological Features (IEFs) within the Zones of Influence specified.
- Determine the Scale of Importance of Ecological Features - importance is determined using geographical frames of reference. This assessment is based on a variety of factors, including statutory protection, statutory designation, conservation status, abundance and rarity. Features with a value of Local or above were considered to represent an 'Important Ecological Feature' (IEF). Those features not meeting the criteria for IEF's were classified as having either lower than local scale (immediate zone of influence) or negligible ecological importance.
    - International and European;
    - National;
    - County (Lancashire);
    - District (Ribble Valley); and
    - Local.
- Assess Significant Ecological Effects –based on the importance of the ecological feature, magnitude of the effect and sensitivity of the features considered. This is description-based rather than applying a matrix which considers construction and operation effects only where relevant. The assessment assumes the proposed layout, intrinsic mitigation and routine ecological mitigation normally conditioned, and these are outlined clearly.
- Mitigation – This will be based on the mitigation hierarchy – avoidance, mitigation, compensation and enhancement. Any further mitigation measures required will be outlined to ensure residual effects are lowered to a level considered acceptable. Enhancements will seek Biodiversity Net Gain in line with the NPPF and Local Plan Policy - Core Strategy Policy CS17. Monitoring will be considered where applicable.
- Future Baseline and Residual Effects – final conclusionary statements for the short, medium and long term.

Assessment Approach

4.24 If an ecological feature is not considered to be important, the proposed scheme is not anticipated to have an effect that would be of relevance to the decision maker and these features are not considered further within the assessment. Exceptions to this would be if the species, population or habitat in question was identified as having a high social or economic value or if they are afforded legal protection (e.g., badgers). While the assessment does include protected species that receive statutory protection and are of material consideration at the local scale, the presence of such a species does not necessarily infer value in relation to the proposed scheme but only to the level of protection it receives.

4.25 As such the value of the proposed scheme for protected species is considered by the specific ecological feature, considering the level of activity, the level of protection it receives and the overall value of habitat to that species within the Site.

4.26 Features with a value of Local or above were considered to represent an 'Important Ecological Feature' (IEF). Those features not meeting the criteria for IEF's were classified as having either lower than local scale (immediate zone of influence) or negligible ecological importance.

4.27 Evaluation of habitats which did not reach this scale of significance were otherwise recognised as being of negligible significance or as providing habitat diversity at a Site scale but not considered to appreciably enrich the habitat resource at a local scale.

Determining Impacts and Effects

4.28 The CIEEM guidelines, define an impact as an influence on an ecological feature. The effect is the outcome of the influence on the ecological feature. As part of the EcIA it is important to assess whether or not an impact is defined as an effect (negative or positive) on the integrity of a defined Site or ecosystem and / or the conservation status of a habitat or species within a given geographical area (CIEEM, 2018).

4.29 Impacts should be identified and understood to be able to determine their likely effect (consequence) of that impact in relation to the ecological feature.

4.30 As part of the process of determining whether there is likely to be an effect on the status of an ecological feature, the following questions are considered:

- Will any site / ecosystem process be removed or changed?
- What will be the effect on the nature, extent, structure and function of component habitats?
- What will be the effect on the average population size and viability of the component species?
- A description of parameters that are considered when assessing the degree and type of change are detailed in Table 1, below.

Table 1: Parameters used to describe effects

Parameter for describing impacts on ecological structure and function	Definition of the parameter
Positive or Negative	Whether the impact has a positive or negative effect
Extent	The area of which the effect occurs
Magnitude	The size or amount of an effect
Duration	The time for which the effect is predicted to last prior to recovery or replacement of the resource or feature
Reversibility	Whether the effect is permanent (i.e., irreversible) or temporary (i.e., reversible)
Timing and Frequency	How often the effect occurs (e.g., repeated noise from piling work) and when it occurs (e.g., vegetation clearance undertaken outside of the bird breeding season.

4.31 With reference to the duration of an ecological impact, in addition to other uses, for the purposes of the assessment Table 2 defines the timeframes used within the chapter:

Table 2: Definition of timeframes

Term	Definition within this assessment
Short term	1-5 years
Medium term	6-15 years
Long term	16-60 years

4.32 In addition to considering the effect on the ecological feature an assessment of significance of the residual effect (for the type / nature of change), is provided in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Classification of the significance of the Effects

Impact Classification	Explanation
Significant Negative Effect	Likely to create a significant negative effect, including loss, or long-term or irreversible damage on the status of the ecological feature.
Not Significant Negative Effect	Likely to create a negative effect without causing long-term or irreversible damage to the status of ecological feature.
Neutral	Effects are either absent or such that no overall net change to the ecological feature.
Not Significant Positive Effect	Likely to create a beneficial effect on an ecological feature or providing a new lower value ecological feature without improving its conservation status.

Impact Classification	Explanation
Significant Positive Effect	The activity is likely to create a significant beneficial effect, including long-term enhancement and favourable conditions for an existing ecological feature.

Limitations

4.33 This assessment aims to provide baseline ecological data for the Site and as such presents an overview of the habitats and features present. Due to the transient and complex nature of ecosystems, no investigation can provide a complete representation or prediction of the natural environment present, however every effort has been made to ensure an accurate description of the Site in presented following best practice guidance, experience, and professional judgement.

4.34 The UKHab map (Figure 2) has been reproduced from detailed field notes and informed by aerial imagery, OS mapping and Site maps provided by the client. The accuracy of this figure is therefore ultimately guided by the accuracy of these sources and can only be relied upon to a certain degree of resolution.

4.35 Data provided by third party sources collated during the desktop study is generally made up from a wide range of sources including (but not limited to) those submitted by ecological consultancies, wildlife conservation organisations and volunteers. As such, this data is typically focused on areas of known nature conservation, is reliant upon formal surveys having been undertaken within an area or the presence of an expert within the locality (particularly for invertebrate records) and as such this data can never be fully relied upon as a complete ecological dataset for any given area. Rather, this data is used as a guide to likely presence of notable ecological features and can never be relied upon for likely absence.

4.36 It was not possible to collect detailed quadrat information for Other Neutral Grassland Field G9 and Modified Grassland field M1 as the fields has just been cut for Silage. However, due to the low species diversity and richness observed during the two previous surveys in 2024 and 2019, it is considered that a robust classification and Condition Assessment has been made based on the available data.

4.37 Limitations relating to specific species surveys are provided in the relevant report.

4.38 There are no other limitations specific to this assessment.

5.0 RESULTS

Designated Sites

5.1 There are no statutory sites designed at either an international level within 10km of the Site or at a national level within 2km of the Site. The closest SSSI is Harper Clough and Smalley Delph Quarries which is located approximately 3km south-east and the closest LNR is approximately 7km south-east of the Site (Foxhill Bank LNR). Although the site is within the SSSI risk zone for

Harper Clough and Smalley Delph Quarries this is a geological site with only Minerals, Oil and Gas planning application requiring consultation with Natural England.

5.2 Considering the above it is unlikely that any significant constraints will be imposed as a result of statutory designated sites and therefore statutory designated sites are scoped out of further assessment.

Non-statutory Designated Sites

5.3 Three non-statutory sites, known locally as Biological Heritage Sites (BHS) are located within 1km of the Site boundary (see Figure 1 and Table 4), the closest being 850m north.

Table 4: Non-statutory designated sites (Biological Heritage Sites)

Name	Approximate Distance and Direction from Site Boundary (m)	Reason for Site Selection
Dinckley Bridge Wood	850m N	Woodland which is ancient and semi-natural in character.
Cronshaw Chair	885m SE	Heathland communities dominated by heather and bilberry, gorse and willow scrub with noteworthy presence of invertebrates including Green Hairstreak butterfly and Birch Sawfly
Park Brook Pastures	980m NW	Species-rich grassland and additional habitats on sloping ground adjoining Park Brook and Dinckley Brook. Damp grassland dominates but smaller areas of drier, neutral and acid grassland also present. Supports a diverse flora

5.4 There are no obvious direct hydrological linkages and no direct public footpath links to the three BHS from the Site. Given the distance from the Site and lack of connectivity there are unlikely to be any direct impacts to non-statutory designated sites. The BHS sites are scoped out of further assessment.

Habitats

Priority Habitats (see Figure 1)

5.5 Deciduous woodland priority habitat was present in the northeastern corner, central and western area of the Site and further small pockets exist within the wider landscape. When the initial desk study consultation was undertaken, there were no areas of Ancient Woodland within the Site on Magic map. However, since the initial consultation, the Ancient Woodland Layer has been revised and following this, the north eastern woodland parcel W-1 has been identified as an area of Ancient & Semi-Natural Woodland.

5.6 The onsite woodland was surveyed as part of the assessment, further details are provided in Table 5, below.

UKHab Classification Survey

5.7 The locations of the habitats described below are illustrated in Figure 2: Baseline Habitat Plan. Botanical species lists and Habitat Condition Assessments can be found in the Biodiversity Net gain Report (FPCR, 2025) which should be read in conjunction with this report.

Table 5: Habitat descriptions.

Ref	Habitat type	Condition	Description	Photo
Very High Distinctiveness				
G11	Lowland Meadow	Poor	Community G11 was moderately species rich neutral grassland community recorded at the southern extent of the Site to the West of Watercourse R2. The community featured a diverse mixture of species, including a number of neutral grassland and lowland meadow indicators. However the majority of these were present at lower frequencies, which resulted in the average number of species per m² recorded during the detailed botanical surveys being lower than typical examples of the community. The tall, closed sward was characterised by common bent, red fescue, sweet vernal-grass and hairy sedge with crested dog's-tail and heath-grass noted at lower frequencies. Tormentil, ribwort plantain and meadow buttercup were frequent throughout with eyebright, greater bird's-foot-trefoil, great burnet and betony locally frequent. Himalayan balsam was occasionally noted in association with the margins of the watercourse. Classification The community is representative of NVC community MG5c the *Danthonia decumbens* sub-community. The *Danthonia* sub-community is the acid influenced sub-community of MG5, with its classification here based on the frequency and abundance of preferential species such as tormentil, eyebright, heath-grass, betony, devil's-bit scabious, field wood-rush and sneezewort, which occur together with a range of neutral grassland indicators, such as ribwort plantain meadow buttercup, common sorrel and common bird's-foot-trefoil. Lowland Meadow Criteria 1. >15 species m² (including grasses and excluding bryophytes) – FAIL (12.67 m²) 2. >30% cover of broadleaved herbs and sedges – PASS – 36.17% 3. <10% cover of rye grasses and White Clover – PASS – 3.3% AND EITHER ≥4 of these indicators at least 'present' on the DAFOR scale. – PASS 12 present OR ≥3 of these indicators at least 'occasional' on the DAFOR scale – PASS – Five Occasional in quadrats On the basis of the habitat meeting the pre-requisite habitat classification of MG5 and passing the lowland meadow criteria outlined in UKHab the classification of g3a Lowland Meadow was made. NVC community MG5 is a constituent habitat of Lowland Meadows, a Habitat of Principal Importance under the NERC Act (2006). Biological Heritage Site (BHS) Selection Criteria[19] For a site to qualify as a BHS under the grassland selection guidelines in Lancashire, one of three possible guidelines must be met. Of relevance here is the following criteria: *Gr3* *Areas of old established semi-natural grassland over 0.5 hectare, including sites referable*	

[19] Lancashire County Planning Department (1999) Lancashire County Heritage Sites Scheme – Biological Heritage Sites: Guidelines for Site Selection. (Oct 2024, rev)

Ref	Habitat type	Condition	Description	Photo
			to the following NVC types, *-MG1* *-MG5 - YES* *-MG6* *-MG9* *-MG10* *-with 10 or more species from the indicator list provided, where the species concerned should be reasonably well-distributed over the whole or a significant part of the site* 'Reasonable distribution' is commonly defined as occasional or above, as quantified through detailed quadrat surveys. FAIL - Twelve indicator species are present but only six were recorded at occasional or above). Given the above, the community does not meet the selection criteria for qualification as a BHS within Lancashire. Condition Overall, the community was assessed as being in Poor condition, principally due to failing essential criterion A. Although it is a good fit for NVC community MG5c, assessment has shown it is not a good example of the type, lacking the overall species richness and cover of indicator species seen in the best examples. Here, no Lowland meadow indicators were recorded as frequent within the quadrats with 5 at occasional. The community is managed by extensive low density grazing and is considered to be undermanaged, in common with the wider eastern and central field, which is evident through the tall closed grassy swards and the lack of bare ground. These limit herbaceous diversity and cover to the detriment to the conservation value of the community. The community also failed on the local presence of the invasive species Himalayan balsam on the margins of the habitat next to R2. The Lowland Meadow habitat recorded on Site is considered to be an important ecological feature at a County scale.	
High Distinctiveness				
W1	Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland Ancient & Semi-Natural Woodland	Poor	Woodland W1, known locally as Green Nook Wood, was recorded to the north-east of the Site. Pedunculate Oak was abundant amongst the canopy sycamore and beech (including a veteran) occasional associates. These canopy trees formed a high single storey canopy, lacking any significant understorey with only hazel recorded at occasional or above. The ground flora would be broadly characterised as NVC community W11 *Quercus petraea - Betula pubescens - Oxalis acetosella* woodland) with an abundance of common bent, frequent cock's foot and a limited number of herbaceous species such as wood speedwell, wood avens and broad buckler-fern recorded occasionally. However, the woodland was open to grazing stock, with evidence of grazing pressure negatively impacting the woodland. Further north, alder was more prominent within the canopy and tufted hair-grass and creeping buttercup become locally frequent along with marsh thistle and Reed canary-grass at lower frequencies, indicative of damper conditions. The banks of watercourse R1,	

Ref	Habitat type	Condition	Description	Photo
			which runs along the woodlands western edge, featured a more diverse assemblage of plants, including yellow pimpernel, common figwort, remote sedge and lady-fern. The stream side vegetation and the alder dominated areas were characteristic of NVC community W7 *Alnus glutinosa - Fraxinus excelsior - Lysimachia nemorum* woodland. The invasive species Himalayan balsam was recorded locally along the eastern and northern extent of the woodland. Due to the age and native status of the canopy trees, together with the typical associated woodland ground flora, this woodland was classified as Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland, a priority habitat type. The woodland is also mapped on the updated Ancient Woodland Inventory (revised completed counties) layer, with the classification of Ancient Woodland supported by the field survey which show the ground flora comprises recognisable NVC communities, with a number of Ancient Woodland indicators, albeit at low frequencies. As a result this habitat is considered to be an irreplaceable habitat as defined by the NPPF and the Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Irreplaceable Habitat) Regulations 2024. Due to its recent reclassification as Ancient Woodland, W1 is considered to meet the selection criteria as a Biological Heritage Site (BHS) under either Criteria: WD1: Sites included on the Lancashire Inventory of Ancient Woodland which support semi-natural woodland vegetation; or WD2: Other semi-natural woodlands over 1 hectare where field evidence indicates that they are ancient in origin. The woodland was assessed as being in poor condition, scoring poorly on herbivore damage, structure and regeneration. Woodlands on Site were considered to be an important ecological feature at a County scale.	
W2	Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland	Poor	Woodland W2 was an additional area of Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland, recorded in a mosaic with species rich neutral grassland, and scattered Trees along the steep-sided valley of Watercourse R2 which runs through the centre of the site. Pedunculate oak was abundant within the canopy with ash and alder at lower frequencies. Hawthorn and holly were occasional amongst the scattered scrub understoreys. On the slope tops the ground flora displayed an acidic influence, characterised by common bent, with the herbaceous species such as foxglove and tormentil scattered throughout. In the sheltered valley sides, a cooler, damper influence was noted, evidenced by an increased incidence of the ferns broad buckler-fern, male-fern and hart's-tongue. The community was assessed as being in poor condition scoring badly on structure, herbivore damage, invasive species and regeneration. Woodlands on Site were considered to be an important ecological feature at a County scale.	

Ref	Habitat type	Condition	Description	Photo
W3	Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland	Moderate	Woodland W3 was recorded along the steep banks of a ditch to the western extent of the Site. Pedunculate oak, sycamore and ash were co-dominant within the canopy. A healthy understorey was noted with frequent hazel and oak saplings recorded. The ground flora featured a reasonable diversity of species characteristic of old woodlands, with wood melick, dog's mercury , broad buckler-fern and Hairy-brome all recorded. Himalayan balsam was locally frequent at the slope bottom. The woodland was assessed as being in moderate condition due to the improved structure and regeneration, but the community still scored poorly in relation to invasive species and the amount of deadwood. Woodlands on Site were considered to be an important ecological feature at a County scale.	
Medium Distinctiveness				
G1	Other neutral grassland	Moderate	Other Neutral Grassland Community G1 was recorded within the eastern section of the eastern field compartment and comprised a moderately species rich example of g3c6 *Lolium -Cynosurus* grassland. The sward comprised an intimate mixture of common bent, Yorkshire-fog, red fescue, perennial rye-grass, sweet vernal-grass and hairy sedge, with the general character of the sward being tall. The undesirable specie creeping thistle formed locally frequent patches with creeping buttercup and common ragwort scattered throughout. The bulk of the herbaceous cover was made up by the neutral indicators: common sorrel, ribwort plantain and meadow buttercup. However, a number of lowland meadow indicator species meadow vetchling, great burnet, tormentil, eyebright and greater bird's-foot trefoil were scattered across the community at lower frequencies. <u>Classification</u> The community is a moderately species rich example of NVC Community MG6b, the *Anthoxanthum* sub-community. Although some Lowland Meadow species were present, only meadow vetchling (frequent) and greater bird's-foot-trefoil (occasional) were above occasional within the quadrats. Lowland Meadow Criteria 1. >15 species m^2 (including grasses and excluding bryophytes) – <u>FAIL (10.71 m^2)</u> 2. >30% cover of broadleaved herbs and sedges – <u>FAIL – 27.43%</u> 3. <10% cover of rye grasses and White Clover – <u>PASS – 4.57%</u> AND EITHER ≥4 of these indicators at least 'present' on the DAFOR scale. – <u>PASS 6 present</u> OR ≥3 of these indicators at least 'occasional' on the DAFOR scale – FAIL <u>2 ≥ Occasional in quadrats</u>	

Ref	Habitat type	Condition	Description	Photo
			On the basis of the above a classification of Other Neutral Grassland - g3c6 *Lolium -Cynosurus* grassland was made Biological Heritage Site (BHS) Selection Criteria *Gr3 - FAIL* *-MG6 - YES* *-with 10 or more species from the indicator list provided, where the species concerned should be reasonably well-distributed over the whole or a significant part of the site* FAIL - Six indicator species are present but only two were recorded at occasional or above). G 1 was assessed as being a good example of its habitat type (Passed Criterion A of the Condition Assessment) and as such is an important ecological feature at a Local scale.	
G1a	Other neutral grassland	Moderate	Community G1a, was similar to the community G1, described above, but overall was less diverse and lacked the diversity and coverage of indicator species. The undesirable species creeping thistle was also locally frequent. Classification The community is a moderately species rich example of NVC Community MG6b, the *Anthoxanthum* sub-community (g3c6 *Lolium -Cynosurus* grassland in UKHab). Only 3 lowland meadow indicators were noted within the community none of which were in the quadrats. Lowland Meadow Criteria: 1. >15 species m² (including grasses and excluding bryophytes) – FAIL (9.4 m²) 2. >30% cover of broadleaved herbs and sedges – FAIL – 24% 3. <10% cover of rye grasses and White Clover – PASS – 7% AND EITHER ≥4 of these indicators at least 'present' on the DAFOR scale. – Fail 3 present OR ≥3 of these indicators at least 'occasional' on the DAFOR scale – FAIL 0 ≥ Occasional in quadrats On the basis of the above a classification of Other Neutral Grassland - g3c6 *Lolium -Cynosurus* grassland was made. Biological Heritage Site (BHS) Selection Criteria *Gr3 - FAIL* *-MG6 - YES* *-with 10 or more species from the indicator list provided, where the species concerned should be reasonably well-distributed over the whole or a significant part of the site* FAIL - two indicator species are present with none recorded at occasional or above). G1a was assessed as being a good example of its habitat type (Passed Criterion A of the Condition Assessment) and as such is an important ecological feature at a Local scale.	

Ref	Habitat type	Condition	Description	Photo
G1b	Other neutral grassland	Moderate	Community G1b was a short-grazed species rich grassland community recorded on the southern, western and south-eastern boundaries of the eastern field, as well as locally along ridges within the field. As with G1, the sward comprised an intimate mixture of common bent, Yorkshire-fog, red fescue, perennial rye-grass, sweet vernal-grass, but in a short, closed sward with the increased incidence of field wood-rush and crested dog's-tail. The most notable component of the herbaceous diversity was eyebright which was frequent throughout, along with ribwort plantain, meadow buttercup and common sorrel. Lowland Meadow indicator species such as tormentil, glaucous sedge, sneezewort and betony were present, but with the exception of eyebright these were all at local distributions or lower frequencies generally. This community now contains the small bank of grassland adjacent to watercourse R1, which was previously recorded as a medium distinctiveness acid grassland community. This previous classification was made due to the presence of tormentil and betony. However, detailed surveys do not show a strong difference between this bank of grassland and the wider G1b community. Classification The community is considered a species rich example of NVC Community MG6b, the *Anthoxanthum* sub-community. Although eyebright was constant, other MG5c indicators were highly local (1 patch of betony for example) or were rare generally, with the constant species being the typical MG6 indicators meadow buttercup, common sorrel, white clover and ribwort plantain. Lowland Meadow Criteria 1. >15 species m^2 (including grasses and excluding bryophytes) – FAIL (12 m^2) 2. >30% cover of broadleaved herbs and sedges – PASS – 34.3% 3. <10% cover of rye grasses and White Clover – FAIL – 11.8% AND EITHER ≥4 of these indicators at least 'present' on the DAFOR scale. – PASS 10 present OR ≥3 of these indicators at least 'occasional' on the DAFOR scale – FAIL 2 ≥ Occasional in quadrats On the basis of the above a classification of Other Neutral Grassland - g3c6 *Lolium -Cynosurus* grassland was made. Biological Heritage Site (BHS) Selection Criteria *Gr3 - FAIL* *-MG6 - YES* *-with 10 or more species from the indicator list provided, where the species concerned should be reasonably well-distributed over the whole or a significant part of the site* FAIL - twelve indicator species are present but only five were recorded at occasional or above). G1b was assessed as being a good example of its habitat type (Passed Criterion A of the Condition Assessment) and as such is an important ecological feature at a Local scale.	 

Ref	Habitat type	Condition	Description	Photo
G2	Other neutral grassland	Good	Community G2, recorded centrally within the Northern section of the eastern field and comprised a taller wet grassland community, with a sward characterised by an increased cover of rushes, including compact rush (frequent), soft-rush (occasional), hard rush (occasional) and sharp-flowered rush (locally frequent). These rushes were growing together with Yorkshire-fog, common bent, sweet vernal grass and hairy sedge. Greater bird's-foot-trefoil, common sorrel, common sedge, creeping buttercup and ribwort plantain were the indicators with the highest coverage, recorded with oval sedge, meadow buttercup, great burnet, tormentil and meadow sweet at low frequencies. Classification The community is considered a good example of NVC community Mg10 (equivalent of g3c8 Holcus Juncus Grassland in UKHAB), moving towards M23b rush pasture, the soft rush sub-community (f2b rush pasture in UKHab). However, the community recorded is not species rich enough to classify as the priority habitat type of rush pasture and overall lacks either the presence or frequency of typical M23 indicators, such as common marsh bedstraw, marsh thistle, wild angelica. Of the typical M23 indicators, only common sedge and greater bird's-foot-trefoil were recorded at occasional or above in the quadrats. On the basis of the above a classification of Other Neutral Grassland - g3c8 *Holcus-Juncus* grassland was made. The community is not a close match to NVC communities MG4 MG5 or MG8 and so does not meet the qualifying criteria for lowland meadows. Biological Heritage Site (BHS) Selection Criteria *Gr3 - FAIL* *-MG10 - YES* *-with 10 or more species from the indicator list provided, where the species concerned should be reasonably well-distributed over the whole or a significant part of the site* FAIL - nine indicator species are present but only two were recorded at occasional or above). G2 was assessed as being a good example of its habitat type (Passed Criterion A of the Condition Assessment) and as such is an important ecological feature at a Local scale.	
G3	Other neutral grassland	Moderate	Community ONG3 was recorded to the north of the Site along the A59, to the west of watercourse R2. The sward was characterised by an intimate mixture of grasses, including perennial rye-grass at an average cover of ~10%. Herbaceous cover featured frequent ribwort plantain, great bird's-foot-trefoil, locally frequent silverweed, with occasional red bartsia, common sorrel and tormentil. Classification The community was considered to be a moderately species rich example of g3c6 *Lolium -Cynosurus* grassland and does not meet the qualifying criteria for lowland meadow. Biological Heritage Site (BHS) Selection Criteria *Gr3 - FAIL*	

Ref	Habitat type	Condition	Description	Photo
			-MG6 - YES *-with 10 or more species from the indicator list provided, where the species concerned should be reasonably well-distributed over the whole or a significant part of the site* FAIL - three indicator species are present but only two were recorded at occasional or above). G3 was assessed as being a good example of its habitat type (Passed Criterion A of the Condition Assessment) and as such is an important ecological feature at a Local scale.	
G4	Other neutral grassland	Poor	Recorded to the south of G3, this community featured a similar sward composition, characterised by a mixture of grasses within which common bent and perennial rye-grass were the most abundant. The bulk of the herbaceous cover was formed by creeping buttercup, but ribwort plantain, common mouse-ear, red bartsia, common sorrel and eyebright were all scattered through the sward at low covers. Classification The community is a typical example of g3c6 *Lolium -Cynosurus* grassland and does not meet the qualifying criteria for lowland meadow. Biological Heritage Site (BHS) Selection Criteria *Gr3 - FAIL* *-MG6 - YES* *-with 10 or more species from the indicator list provided, where the species concerned should be reasonably well-distributed over the whole or a significant part of the site* FAIL - one indicator species are present, recorded at occasional or above). G4 was assessed as a species poor example of the habitat type and as such is not considered an important ecological feature within the context of this assessment.	
G5	Other neutral grassland	Poor	Recorded to the west of G3, along the A59, this community featured an intimate mixture of grasses, with common bent, Yorkshire-fog and perennial rye-grass the most abundant. Meadow buttercup and ribwort plantain were frequent common mouse-ear, red bartsia, common sorrel, eyebright and meadow vetchling noted at low frequencies. Classification The community is a typical example of g3c6 *Lolium -Cynosurus* grassland and does not meet the qualifying criteria for lowland meadow. Biological Heritage Site (BHS) Selection Criteria *Gr3 - FAIL* *-MG6 - YES* *-with 10 or more species from the indicator list provided, where the species concerned should be reasonably well-distributed over the whole or a significant part of the site* FAIL - three indicator species are present with none recorded at occasional or above).	

Ref	Habitat type	Condition	Description	Photo
			G5 was assessed as a species poor example of the habitat type and as such is not considered an important ecological feature within the context of this assessment.	
G6	Other neutral grassland	Poor	A small unmanaged g3c5 *Arrhenatherum* grassland community recorded to the north-west of the Site. The tall sward was characterised by the broad-leaved grasses, cock's-foot, false oat-grass, Yorkshire fog and creeping bent. Herbaceous diversity was low, limited to occasional common sorrel and meadow buttercup. Ruderal species were common including locally frequent creeping thistle, great willowherb and occasional common hogweed. Bramble was encroaching locally at the margins, and the invasive species Himalayan balsam was locally frequent on the margins of the ditch which runs through the habitat to the west. This is a common and widespread habitat type and is not considered an Important Ecological Feature in the context of this assessment	
G7	Other neutral grassland	Poor	The central field in the site, contained a community of g3c6 *Lolium -Cynosurus* grassland on a shallow north facing slope. Common bent, perennial rye-grass, red fescue, Yorkshire-fog and sweet vernal-grass characterised the sward. Meadow buttercup, ribwort plantain and common sorrel were constants, with creeping buttercup, eyebright and red clover occasional associates. <u>Classification</u> The community is a typical example of g3c6 *Lolium -Cynosurus* grassland, with high frequency of neutral grassland indicators. It does not meet the qualifying criteria for lowland meadow, but features four lowland meadow indicators, only one of which is above rare. <u>Biological Heritage Site (BHS) Selection Criteria</u> *Gr3 - FAIL* *-MG6 - <u>YES</u>* *-with 10 or more species from the indicator list provided, where the species concerned should be reasonably well-distributed over the whole or a significant part of the site* <u>FAIL - five indicator species are present but only two were recorded at occasional or above).</u> G7 was assessed as being a good example of its habitat type (Passed Criterion A of the Condition Assessment) and as such is an important ecological feature at a Local scale.	

Ref	Habitat type	Condition	Description	Photo
G8	Other neutral grassland	Good	Community ONG8 was a moderately species rich neutral grassland community recorded to along the western edge of watercourse R2, to the north of the Site. Generally, the sward was dominated by fine leaved grasses, particularly common bent and red fescue. Within the community a small bank of acid influenced grassland was noted (sampled by quadrat Q1), which featured sheep's fescue, heath-grass and tormentil, as well as more mesotrophic herbs such as common bird's-foot-trefoil and cat's-ear. Additionally, there was a small area with high cover of sharp-flowered-rush (sampled by quadrat Q2), which also featured common sedge, common knapweed and great burnet. Elsewhere, eyebright, ribwort plantain, meadow buttercup, common bird's-foot-trefoil are common with a range of other indicators noted at low frequencies. Classification Although containing localised areas with acidic and damp influences, overall, the community is considered a good example of NVC Community MG6b. The most constant herbs were the ONG indicators ribwort plantain and meadow buttercup, along with eyebright and common bird's-foot-trefoil. Beyond those four, a range of lowland meadow and MG5c indicators were recorded but only rarely. Lowland Meadow Criteria 1. >15 species m^2 (including grasses and excluding bryophytes) – FAIL (12.25m^2) 2. >30% cover of broadleaved herbs and sedges – FAIL – 27.5% . <10% cover of rye grasses and White Clover – PASS – 5% AND EITHER ≥4 of these indicators at least 'present' on the DAFOR scale. – PASS 12 present OR ≥3 of these indicators at least 'occasional' on the DAFOR scale – PASS 9 ≥ Occasional in quadrats On the basis of the above a classification of Other Neutral Grassland - g3c6 *Lolium -Cynosurus* grassland was made. Biological Heritage Site (BHS) Selection Criteria *Gr3 - FAIL* *-MG6 - YES* *-with 10 or more species from the indicator list provided, where the species concerned should be reasonably well-distributed over the whole or a significant part of the site* FAIL - nine indicator species are present with all nine at occasional or above (Noting that 5 of these were recorded in a single quadrat and as only four quadrats were taken within this habitat parcel the threshold for occasional identified in the methods section above (≥20%) is artificially low). G8 was assessed as being a good example of its habitat type (Passed Criterion A of the Condition Assessment) and as such is an important ecological feature at a Local scale.	

Ref	Habitat type	Condition	Description	Photo
G9	Other neutral grassland	Poor	Parcel G9, recorded to the west of the Site featured a short sward of abundant perennial rye-grass, with frequent Yorkshire-fog and creeping bent and occasional red fescue. Dandelion was the most frequent forb noted, with common sorrel, creeping buttercup and meadow buttercup being occasional and ribwort plantain and common mouse-ear rare. The community was considered to be borderline between g4 modified grassland and g3c other neutral grassland, with a classification of g3c made on the basis of the overall species richness and the frequency of a number of neutral grassland indicators. It was not possible to collect detailed quadrat information for this field as the field has just been cut. However, due to the low species richness observed during the previous surveys, it is considered that a robust classification and Condition Assessment has been made. Given the low species richness and modified nature of the community this grassland is not considered an Important Ecological Feature in the context of this assessment.	
P1-P6	Ponds (non-priority habitat)	Moderate	Six ponds were recorded around the Site. • P1 – Recorded on the northern boundary within woodland W1. Heavily vegetated pond with abundant creeping buttercup and locally frequent Himalayan balsam. (Note this habitat has not been mapped separately and is included within the woodland W1 habitat. • P2 – A seasonally wet pond dominated by soft-rush present within community ONG4. • P3 – A heavily vegetated pond in a hollow within ONG3, featuring frequent floating sweet-grass and creeping buttercup. • P4 – A shallow hollow on the southern boundary, featuring shallow water heavily vegetated with floating sweet-grass and creeping buttercup. • P5 – A seasonally wet pond within a hollow to the southern extent of ONG7. Creeping buttercup, broad-leaved dock and creeping bent were all locally frequent. • P6 – A shallow heavily vegetated pond on the boundary between ONG7 and ONG9 Featuring dominant creeping bent. All ponds within the site were assessed as being in moderate condition, scoring well on water quality and the lack of artificial drains. Ponds are a declining habitat both locally and nationally however as the ponds on site were classified as non- priority habitat these are considered to be of importance on a local scale.	 

Ref	Habitat type	Condition	Description	Photo
SC1	Hawthorn scrub	Poor	Sc1, recorded on the Sites eastern boundary was an open even aged scrub community featuring frequent hawthorn, along with holly and hazel. The ground flora was dominated by ruderal species, particularly common nettle and creeping thistle, with the invasive species Himalayan balsam locally frequent. Scrub is a common habitat both nationally and locally, that present on Site is considered to in 'poor' condition. Therefore, this habitat is not considered to be of importance and is scoped out of further assessment	
SC2	Blackthorn scrub	Poor	An area of continuous scrub was recorded on the western boundary of the Site between hedgerows H4 and H5. Blackthorn was abundant with hawthorn and an alder standard. The community was assessed as being in poor condition, failing on the even aged nature of the habitat, the dominance of a single species and lack of glades. Scrub is a common habitat both nationally and locally, that present on Site is considered to in 'poor' condition. Therefore, this habitat is not considered to be of importance and is scoped out of further assessment	
T	Trees	Good/ Moderate	Mature freestanding trees, particularly of pedunculate oak, were a prominent feature of the Site. A total of 37 freestanding trees in good condition were recorded within the Site, of the following size categories: • Four Very large; • 29 Large; and • Four medium. The majority of the trees were pedunculate oak, with the exception of T1, T42, T43 and T44, which were alders; T63 which was a sycamore and T69 which was an ash. Additionally, A mature row of trees was recorded on the southern extent of the western boundary (see LOT1 below) The tree line featured two prominent large pedunculate oak trees, together with a further 3 medium sized oaks and a medium ash tree. A number of outgrown hazel stools and large holly bushes were also present. Trees are a common habitat type both nationally and locally, however very large trees specimens provide intrinsic ecological value. Therefore, trees are considered to be of importance at a Local scale.	
Low Distinctiveness				

Ref	Habitat type	Condition	Description	Photo
MG1	Modified grassland	Poor	A small field to the west of the Site, contained species poor modified grassland. Perennial rye-grass was dominant within the sward, growing with occasional Yorkshire fog. Creeping buttercup and dandelion were the most frequently recorded forbs, with meadow buttercup, common sorrel and cuckooflower noted at low frequencies. The Community was provisionally assessed as containing less than 6 species per m^2 and as a result was recorded in poor condition. Modified grassland is a common habitat both nationally and locally therefore, this habitat is not considered to be of importance and is scoped out of further assessment.	
TF1	Tall forbs	Poor	An area of tall forbs were recorded to the south of ONG5. Common nettle was locally abundant, growing with frequent creeping thistle and Broad-leaved dock. This habitat is not considered to be of ecological importance and is scoped out of further assessment.	
Linear Habitats				
H3, H5	Species-rich native hedgerow	Moderate - Good	Two species rich hedgerows were recorded on the western boundary of the Site. H3 was characterised by hawthorn with occasional hazel and elder and featured a single pedunculate oak standard. The hedgerow was assessed as being on moderate condition H5 featured frequent hawthorn, holly and hazel, with a single mature oak standard and was assessed as being in good condition. Hedgerows supported at least 80% native canopy species and therefore met the criteria as a Habitat of Principal Importance under the NERC Act 2006. Hedges do not meet the criteria to be considered important under the Wildlife and Landscape criteria of the Hedgerow Regulations 1997. They are therefore, only considered to be of importance at a Local scale	

Ref	Habitat type	Condition	Description	Photo
H1, H2, H4	Native hedgerow	Moderate	Three species poor hedgerows were recorded within the Site. • H1 was recorded on the Sites northern boundary and was dominated by hawthorn, with occasional elder. Himalayan balsam was present to the east. • H2 was a boundary hedgerow to an adjacent property at the western extent, again dominated by hawthorn. • H4 which connected woodland W3 to scrub Sc2, featured blackthorn and hawthorn, along with a mature ash tree. As these hedgerows average between 2 and 2.5 species per 30m section, they would not be considered important under the Wildlife and Landscape criteria of the hedgerow regulations 1997. However, the hedgerows supported at least 80% native canopy species and therefore met the criteria as a Habitat of Principal Importance under the NERC Act 2006. The hedgerows on site are not particularly notable examples and are largely retained, they therefore, would only be considered to be of importance at a Local scale.	
Watercourses				
R1	Other Rivers and streams	Fairly Poor and Poor	Watercourse R1 was recorded on the Sites eastern boundary, with the stream issuing to the south of the Site near tree T1. The stream then flows south, along the western edge of Woodland W1, before exiting the site via a culvert under Longsight Road. The watercourse featured a reasonable variety of emergent vegetation with brooklime, water-cress, floating sweet-grass, creeping buttercup and reed canary-grass. The invasive Species Himalayan balsam was locally frequent. R1 was considered to be an important ecological feature at a Local scale.	

Ref	Habitat type	Condition	Description	Photo
R2	Other Rivers and streams	Fairly Poor	Watercourse R2 ran from south to north through the centre of the Site, issuing from a culvert under the railway and running through the steep sided channel featuring woodland W2. Himalayan balsam was frequent along the watercourse, particularly to the north. R2 was considered to be an important ecological feature at a Local scale.	
D1	Ditch	Poor	Watercourse D1, was a shallow ditch running along the western boundary edge within at the centre of woodland D1. Th ditch featured very shallow water with Himalayan balsam locally frequent at its northern extent. The ditch was assessed as being in poor condition and is not considered an ecologically important feature. It is therefore scoped out of further assessment.	

Species and Species Groups

5.8 Figure 3 shows the location of relevant species records returned in the data search. A summary table of records is included in Appendix B.

Plant Species

5.9 The species that were identified during the UKHab survey were all common and widespread. No protected or notable plant species were recorded, with the exception of the Schedule 9 plant species Himalayan balsam, which was frequently recorded across the site in association with the watercourses, woodland, pond P1, scrub, hedgerow H1 and encroaching into the margins of grasslands G1b,, G6, G8 and G11. Due to the legislative considerations INNS are included as an IEF in a legislative context. Other plants are scoped out of further assessment.

Bats

5.10 The Bat Survey Report (Appendix C) provides full details of the surveys undertaken on the Site and a summary is provided below.

5.11 The data search provided no bat records directly referring to the Site. A total of 11 records, all for pipistrelle species (common, soprano and not identified to species level) were returned for the search area this included three maternity roosts, the largest containing 100 individual pipistrelle sp. located 1.8km north of the Site in 2010. Two smaller, but also likely maternity roost records occur to the south west. The closest is 267m from the Site, where 20 mixed sex/stage common pipistrelle bats were recorded in 2011, and a further, located 465m from the Site, where 40 pipistrelle bats were recorded in 2009 .

5.12 The residential area adjacent to the southern Site boundary contained 4 further records of foraging bats with the closest being 137m from the boundary.

<u>Roosting Bats</u>

5.13 A summary of the ground based and aerial assessment survey are provided within Table 6, below, with details in Appendix C and Figure C-4. Following a ground based assessment of trees potentially impacted within the proposals, 17 trees were initially assessed as requiring further assessment (FAR) for their potential to support roosting bats.

5.14 The initial aerial tree assessment in November 2024 identified the following:

- Two trees (T53 and T57) that were inspected were found to contain PRF-M, which meant that they contain features suitable to support a maternity roost;
- Two trees (T1 and T56) were assessed as PRF-I - containing features only suitable for individual roosting bats;
- No evidence of previous bat occupation was observed within the inspected features;
- Seven of the trees could not be climbed or had incomplete climbs due to either health and safety, or the fact they could not be fully inspected. The initial assessment of FAR was retained for these trees (T37, T44, T62, T65, T67, T69, T72); and
- A further tree (T37) was classified as PRF-M during the May 2025 aerial survey.

Table 6: Summary of Tree PRF Survey following aerial inspections.

Category	Tree Ref
PRF-M	T53, T57, T37,
PRF-I	T1, T56
FAR	T44, T62, T65, T67, T69, T72
NONE	T6, T38, T52, T55, T59, T61

5.15 Trees that were categorised as FAR or PRF-M were subject to three aerial assessments or three nocturnal emergence surveys, where it was considered they may be impacted the scheme. This comprised the following:

- Three Aerial Inspections of three trees – T57, T53 and T37; and
- Three Nocturnal Surveys of five trees- T44, T62, T65, T69, and T72.

5.16 No further surveys were undertaken on trees classified as NONE or PRF-I. Additionally, T67 was not included in the further surveys as it was considered to be retained and suitably buffered from impacts.

5.17 Following the additional surveys, no bat roosts were identified. It is therefore concluded that there is likely to be an absence of higher status bat roosts within trees that are likely to be impacted within the illustrative scheme. However, lower status roosts, which are often quite ephemeral in their use and typically used by small numbers of individual bats, may be present within trees assessed as being PRF-I. Therefore, on a precautionary basis, roosting bats have been valued at less than Local scale but have been scoped into further assessment on account of the legislative context within Section 6.0.

Activity Surveys

5.18 The woodland, mature trees, hedgerows grassland and scrub habitats, along with the waterbodies and streams, offer suitable foraging habitat and serve as potential commuting routes providing linkages to the wider area. In relation to the latest best practice guidelines, the site is considered to be of Medium Suitability for commuting and foraging bats.

Activity Surveys

5.19 No Annex II bat species were registered or observed. The species assemblage recorded on Site is typical for the rural mixed agricultural and wooded habitat on Site and for the north of England.

5.20 The species diversity and number of bats shown to be using the Site consistently was low. The static detected register common pipistrelle comprising 74.89% the most frequently. This was also the most abundant species on transect and flightlines surveys. Common pipistrelle are the most common bat species in the UK and are widespread in all geographies. The next most frequently registered species was soprano pipistrelle with 15.27% of registrations.

5.21 The following species were also registered by static detectors in low numbers:

- Nathusius' pipistrelle (2.25%);
- Myotis Species (2.04%);
- Noctule (1.23%);

- Brown Long-eared (0.26%); and
- Nyctalus Species (0.08%)

5.22 Nathusius' pipistrelle are considered a rare species in the UK, but have long been considered under-reported. They were recorded on the static detectors in April, May, June and July but were not observed on any flightline surveys. Low numbers of this species were recorded, indicating that there are no significant roosts in the vicinity, but use the Site as a foraging resource. The species is often associated with large water bodies such as Dean Clough and Parsonage reservoirs that are present approximately 1.5km and 2km to the south of the Site.

5.23 Overall, during the static detector surveys, activity levels on Site were low with less than 500 registrations per night. Bats were most active at static location 6 adjacent to W1 followed by location 2 situated in hedgerow H1. The most frequently used and, therefore, important Site habitat for bats are the hedgerows, woodland and trees and watercourses.

5.24 Considering the numbers of bats and species using the Site, it has been assessed as being of local value for foraging and commuting bats.

Badgers

5.25 A single record of a deceased badger *Meles meles* was returned within the 1km search boundary. For confidentiality reasons the location of the record is not shown.

5.26 The majority of the Site provides a potential foraging resource for badgers and comprised grazed poor semi-improved grassland and improved grassland areas which was considered to offer a limited seasonal foraging resource. The central belt of semi-improved neutral grassland and the woodland areas provided more permanent foraging habitat for badgers.

5.27 No evidence of the presence of badger was recorded within the Site during the survey, subsequently badgers are not considered to pose a constraint to the redevelopment of the Site and are scoped out of further assessment.

Birds

Desk Study

5.28 No records of birds were returned on Site. The data search returned a total of 18 bird species within 2km which appear on one or more of the following and are hereafter referred to as 'notable species':

- Schedule 1 of the WCA;
- Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006; and
- BoCC Red or Amber Lists.

Wintering Birds

5.29 Full details of the wintering bird surveys undertaken can be found in Appendix D and a summary is provided below.

5.30 Across the wintering bird surveys, a total of 41 species were observed, of which 19 were considered 'notable species' and include small numbers of stock dove, woodpigeon, black-headed gull, common gull, kestrel, rook, mistle thrush and redwing within grassland. The hedgerow and woodland blocks provided suitable foraging and sheltering habitat for the range

of common and widespread generalist and woodland edge species recorded including sparrowhawk, wren, song thrush, house sparrow, dunnock, bullfinch and greenfinch. The streams running through the Site provided foraging habitat for mallard and grey wagtail.

5.31 Due to the majority of species recorded being common and widespread, and found in relatively low numbers, the wintering bird assemblage is considered to be important at a Site scale and are therefore scoped out of further assessment.

Breeding Birds

5.32 Full details of the breeding bird surveys undertaken can be found in Appendix E and a summary is provided below.

5.33 The breeding bird surveys have demonstrated that the Site supports common and widespread bird species typical of the habitats present onsite, predominantly consisting of a woodland bird assemblage including woodpigeon, wren and song thrush. The boundary hedgerows also offered suitable nesting habitat for notable species such as whitethroat, wren, dunnock and greenfinch.

5.34 The grassland field interiors are regularly grazed by horses and support a very limited assemblage of breeding birds. Small numbers of notable species including woodpigeon and starling utilised these areas for foraging. The streams running through the Site offered potential habitat for mallard, but no breeding behaviour was observed. The other waterbodies previously identified had largely dried up and were unsuitable for breeding birds.

5.35 Based on the assemblage of species recorded, the Site is considered to be of no more than Site-scale of importance for breeding birds but on account of the legal protection offered to all nesting birds they have been scoped into further assessment.

Great Crested Newts

5.36 Full details of the GCN surveys undertaken can be found in Appendix F and a summary is provided below.

5.37 Six records of GCN were returned within 2km of the Site boundary. All records were 1.91km NNE from the Site boundary in 2017. A search of MAGIC identified no EPS mitigation licences issued for GCNs within 2km of the site.

5.38 The October 2024 habitat survey identified six ephemeral waterbodies on Site and the Desk study identified three further ponds within 250m of the Site boundary. Suitable terrestrial GCN habitat is present on Site, within areas of grassland, woodland, scrub, ditches and hedge and tree bases.

5.39 During the GCN field survey it was found that all ponds within the Site boundary were dry and considering the general vegetated state of these, with the absence of much bare ground, aquatic or emergent vegetation, they are likely to be ordinarily dry. As such, it is concluded that there are not likely to be any GCN breeding ponds within the Site boundary.

5.40 Pond 8 returned a HSI score of "poor" and the presence/absence surveys confirmed absence of GCN in this pond.

5.41 Two further ponds were identified within 250m of the Site boundary both of these were domestic garden ponds. Pond 8 was considered to provide 'poor' suitability for GCN but was subjected to aquatic surveys comprising torchlight surveys and egg searching and no evidence

of GCN was identified. Pond 9, which is also a garden pond, is located approximately 36m to the southwest of the Site boundary. Access was not granted to survey this pond. However, from aerial photographs this pond appears to be an ornamental pond is most likely also stocked with fish in addition there are no other ponds which are likely to support GCN within 250m. As such the likelihood of it supporting an isolated population GCN is considered to be very unlikely.

5.42 In consideration that the nearest GCN record is almost 2km from the Site and on account of the above survey results, it considered that there is negligible risk of GCN utilising the site and therefore GCN are unlikely to present a constraint to the proposed development no further surveys are considered necessary to inform an application.

5.43 Therefore GCN are scoped out of further assessment.

Reptiles

5.44 No records of reptiles were returned from the desk study consultation within the 1km search area.

5.45 Habitats on-site provided limited value for reptilian species as the Site lacks the ideal structural diversity and mosaic of habitats typically required by reptiles for basking, sheltering and foraging in close proximity. The modified and other neutral grassland recorded across the majority of the site is considered largely sub-optimal, given the homogenous sward . Localised areas associated with the field and woodland margins could provide the structural diversity required to support reptiles however, these areas are primarily retained and enhanced within the proposed design. As such, the habitats within the Site that are largely to be affected by the proposals are considered largely unsuitable. Given this, and the lack of recent records in the local area, the presence of reptiles is considered unlikely, and reptiles are scoped out of further assessment. The legislative context is considered separately within Section 6.0.

Riparian Mammals

5.46 There are no records of water voles within 1km of the Site.

5.47 The habitat within the majority of the site was considered largely unsuitable for water vole. The streams were considered suboptimal due to fast-flowing and shallow water channels which lacked suitable aquatic vegetation for water voles. The banks were also grazed which further limited the foraging and nesting potential for this species which, along with disturbance from dog walkers, suggested low habitat suitability for water voles.

5.48 As such, water vole are considered unlikely to be present within the Site during their breeding or terrestrial phase and would therefore not pose a constraint to the scheme at this time. However, in the event the masterplan design requires work to be undertaken in association with the banks of the streams, it is recommended a precautionary approach is adopted and a presence/absence field survey be carried out.

5.49 Otters and Water vole are therefore scoped out of further assessment.

Summary of Important Ecological Features

5.50 A summary of the ecological features that have been determined as requiring detailed assessment is provided in Table 7.

Table 7: Summary of Important Ecological Features

Ecological Features	Geographical/Ecological Frame of Reference
Lowland Meadow	County
Ancient Woodland /Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland	County
Good Quality Other neutral grasslands (G1 G1a, G1b, G2, G3, G7, G8)	Local
Ponds	Local
Mature Trees	Local
Hedgerows	Local
Other rivers and streams	Local
Bats	Local
Breeding Birds	Below Local – included in a legislative context.
Reptiles	Below Local – included in a legislative context.
Himalayan balsam	Below Local – included due to legislation

6.0 DISCUSSION

Proposals and Intrinsic Mitigation

6.1 The iterative design process, which led to the sites Illustrative Masterplan has sought to retain higher distinctiveness habitats within the site and to strengthen existing ecological corridors. This has been achieved through the following intrinsic ecological avoidance measures

Irreplaceable Habitats

6.2 Proposals will retain and appropriately buffer the Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland W1 and the veteran tree recorded within it. The woodland will be buffered by a minimum distance of 15m from built development. It will also be enhanced as part of proposals.

Very High Distinctiveness Habitats

6.3 This Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment has assumed the loss of the entirety of the 0.8796ha of lowland meadow recorded within the Site. Of this total, 0.7726ha will be translocated to the western section of the Site, replacing the existing modified grassland field M1. The 0.7726ha to be translocated accounts for the 0.72ha under the footprint of built development and an additional 0.0526ha which is outside the built development, but greater than 10m from the watercourse.

6.4 The remaining 0.107ha of lowland meadow, which is present within 10m of the watercourse will not be translocated and will be in effect retained but treated as lost and recreated as other neutral grassland in good condition within the statutory biodiversity metric.

High Distinctiveness Habitats

6.5 Impacts to high distinctiveness habitats have been avoided, with the retention and buffering of the Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland within the Site. Furthermore, woodlands will be enhanced as part of proposals, which supports wider LNRS aims.

6.6 Similarly, both streams, which are high distinctiveness watercourse habitats, will be retained as part of proposals, with the exception of two sections of the central watercourse R2, which will require culverting under the proposed internal roads. Watercourse R1, present on the sites eastern boundary will be enhanced as part of proposals.

Medium Distinctiveness Habitat

6.7 Proposals have sought to focus development on the western section of the site, which contains predominantly neutral and modified grassland in poor condition. Significant areas of the moderately species rich grassland (Other Neutral Grassland in Good and Moderate condition) recorded centrally and to the east of the site will be retained, with measures outlined to enhance them where possible.

6.8 The vast majority of mature free-standing trees have been retained and buffered as part of proposals. Up to ten trees may be lost within the illustrative layout as they are located within, or close to areas of proposed residential development or proposed SUDS attenuation basins. These are:

- A large oak tree and a medium alder (T43 and T50), which require removal to facilitate the internal access road to the south of the site;

- Three large oak trees and a medium sycamore (T62, T63, T64 and T 65), which require removal to facilitate the creation of a SuDS basin to the north of the Site;
- Two large oak trees which require removal to facilitate residential development to the east (T37 and T7); and
- A single medium sized ash tree on the northern Site boundary (T10).

6.9 All hedgerows and tree lines will be retained and where possible enhanced, with the exception of 160m of species poor native hedgerow (H1), which will be removed to facilitate access and the visibility splay. The creation of a replacement native species rich hedgerows has been included within the illustrative proposals to replace the loss of this feature.

6.10 Two crossing points are proposed over the central watercourse R2. The northern crossing point will utilise an existing crossing which will be upgraded. A new crossing would be required at the southern point.

Standard Mitigation - Core Documents

6.11 The following lists the core documents that will secure the mitigation and enhancement measures described in this report. They can be secured through appropriately worded pre-commencement planning conditions, attached to the application to be submitted and discharged prior to the commencement of works.

- Construction and Environmental Management Plan for Ecology (CEMP: Ecology): This pre-commencement document contains the necessary Method Statements to ensure protected species are not unlawfully harmed during ground clearance, earthworks and during construction. The document will include an Ecological Constraints and Mitigation Plan drawing that clearly shows the location of constraints and details mitigation required, where necessary. This will also provide measures for removal WCA Sch9 Invasive Non-native plant species from the Site.
- Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (HMMP): this provides planting/landscape information that includes both the landscape and ecology features and their management for an appropriate period. In accordance with the planning practice guidance (PPG) for BNG, this document can be submitted as part of a Biodiversity Gain Plan once full planning permission has been received. This document can also include ecological enhancement and management information as appropriate to demonstrate how the biodiversity net gain measures will be delivered and can also include the final Ecological Mitigation and Enhancement Plan that shows location of wildlife boxes and other proposed features. The Biodiversity Net Gain Strategy includes information which comprises an outline HMMP for the onsite habitats post development.

Important Ecological Features Impact Assessment

6.12 The status of the important ecological features (IEFs) identified on Site have been reviewed against the proposals and intrinsic mitigation to determine whether there are any impact pathways to IEFs and whether any of these will lead to a likely significant effect in Table 8. The requirement for additional mitigation measures above the intrinsic mitigation has been considered for each of the IEFs where they can reduce the scale of negative effects or where they can encourage a positive effect.

Table 8: Assessment of Effects on Important Ecological Features

Important Ecological Feature:	Lowland meadow
Assessment of Impacts	There will be a direct loss of 0.72ha of the Lowland Meadow grassland recorded within the Site. The 0.72ha of Lowland Meadow Grassland lost to proposals will be translocated into the existing field M1. The remaining of lowland meadow grassland not directly impacted by proposals remain at risk of degradation post development. As such, an additional 0.0526ha will be translocated to into the western site, leaving an approximate 10m buffer of lowland medow grassland remaining along the watercourse. As such, in EcIA terms there will be a direct loss of 0.7726ha with 0.107ha retained. However, within the Statutory Biodiversity Metric, all of the 0.8796ha of lowland meadow has been treated as lost, with the 0.107ha retained treated as created other neutral grassland in good condition, to account for risk of potential degradation of the lowland meadow post development. There is potential for impacts on the retained Lowland Meadow grassland during the construction phase of the development from accidental damage and via dust deposition. In the absence of mitigation, this could result in habitat loss or degradation. Therefore, in the absence of mitigation, there is potential for a Significant Negative Effect at a County scale.
Mitigation	As described above, 0.7726ha of existing Lowland Meadow Grassland will be translocated into the existing field M1. An additional 0.0228ha of good quality other neutral grassland will be translocated into field M1 so that the entirety of the field will comprise good quality translocated grassland. Outline methods for the grassland translocation are included within the Biodiversity Net Gain Strategy. The retained area of lowland meadow grassland will be protected during construction through the use of Heras fencing. No access by plant or machinery will be allowed during the construction period, except for any machinery required to manage the grassland. Construction phase dust impacts will be minimised through careful control of construction activities, in adherence with an industry best practice CEMP.

Important Ecological Feature:	Lowland meadow
Residual Effects	Proposals will result in the translocation of 0.7726ha of Lowland Meadow Grassland, which will maintain the extent this priority habitat type within the Site. The management of this translocated grassland will be secured for thirty years under the sites Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan, which will enhance the habitats value across this period, by increasing species diversity and cover. The design process has accounted for the protection of the translocated grassland by removing public access to the western extent of the site. A new hedgerow is proposed between the built development and the translocation area, with access only available for management purposes. These measures will result in an increase in the quality of this grassland type locally in the medium term. However, the act of translocating the grassland means there remains a risk of habitat degradation to the translocated habitat, which could, in the worst case scenario lead to the grassland no longer meeting the qualifying criteria for lowland meadow. Following industry best practice standards in the translocation methods, the ongoing management, monitoring and remedial measure secured by the sites HMMP is considered robust mitigation for this. Interrogation of the Priority Habitat Inventory for England[20] suggests there is 512.55ha of known Lowland Meadow Grassland within Lancashire. The potential loss of the translocated lowland meadow grassland through habitat degradation equates to 0.15% of the known Lowland meadow resource in the county. As such, in this context the loss of this grassland through degradation would be considered a Not Significant Negative Effect at a County scale, but a Significant Negative Effect at a District scale. However, without intervention it is reasonable to assume that the conservation value of the Lowland Meadow grassland and the wider grasslands, would continue to decline. Lack of management, or unsympathetic management, are two of the most important factors which threaten species-rich grassland and result in this being one of the most vulnerable habitats of nature conservation importance in the UK. The current year-round under grazing has the potential to lead to long term detrimental effects on the quality of species rich grasslands through two means. The undermanagement leads to a closed grassy sward, which both supresses herbaceous vegetation to the benefit of grasses and limits recruitment into the community. Secondly, year round grazing also limits the ability of herbaceous vegetation to flower and set seed from year to year. Given the above, It is reasonable to assume that the current management regime will have detrimental effects to the Lowland meadow and wider Site grasslands, which will affect the conservation status of this priority habitat in the medium to long-term.
Compensation	In addition to the proposed translocation of the existing lowland meadow grassland, a bespoke compensation strategy is proposed whereby additional

[20] https://www.data.gov.uk/dataset/4b6ddab7-6c0f-4407-946e-d6499f19fcde/priority-habitats-inventory-england

Important Ecological Feature:	Lowland meadow
	lowland meadow units have been reserved for purchase from a local registered Biodiversity Net Gain Habitat Bank. The Biodiversity Net Gain Strategy demonstrates that the proposed translocation and enhancement of the lowland meadow grassland means the trading rules are satisfied for this habitat within the Site boundary. However, as part of a bespoke compensation strategy, an additional 10.02 units of lowland meadow habitat have been reserved from a local habitat bank, which is located within 4km of the Site. This will result in a significant increase in the extent and quality of lowland meadow habitat in the local area and in effect 'trades up' for the losses to other neutral grassland resulting from proposals. This can be relied upon to result in a not-significant positive effect to Lowland Meadow at a District Scale.

Important Ecological Feature:	Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland/ Ancient Woodland
Assessment of Impacts	There will be no direct loss of woodland. Proposals will retain and buffer all areas of Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland within areas of proposed greenspace. Ancient Woodland W-1 will be buffered by a minimum distance of 15m from built development. Retained woodland will also be enhanced as part of proposals. Considerable additional tree planting is proposed within greenspace provision. The retained woodlands have the potential to be impacted indirectly during the construction phase of the development by dust deposition, particularly in periods of dry weather and higher wind and compaction from construction traffic. In the absence of mitigation, this could result in damage to the woodland. The operational phase could result in impacts to the woodland through increased recreational pressure. Therefore, in the absence of mitigation, there is potential for a not-significant negative effect at a District scale.
Mitigation	Construction phase impacts on retained woodlands will be minimised through careful control of construction activities, in adherence with an industry best practice CEMP. Proposed public open space footpaths have been limited within the retained woodland. A single path through the central woodland belt is proposed. This path should be created so that it is clearly delineated and soft barriers included to discourage desire lines through the woodland. Additionally, extensive provision for recreational open space has been provided outside of the retained woodland areas within the Illustrative Masterplan.
Residual Effects	Neutral
Enhancement	Enhancement measures and ongoing management of retained Lowland mixed deciduous and Ancient Woodland as outlined in the BNG Report submitted

Important Ecological Feature:	Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland/ Ancient Woodland
	alongside this report outline how this habitat will be enhanced to deliver an overall gain in the Biodiversity value of this habitat. These enhancement measures include: • Control of non-native invasive species, particularly Himalayan balsam; • the removal of grazing animals from the woodlands to reduce negative impact and encourage regeneration; • Selective felling on non-native trees, where appropriate and coppicing of suitable understorey shrubs to encourage natural regeneration of gaps and diversify the structure of the woodland; • Deadwood from coppicing and thinning should be left in-situ, both as standing and lying deadwood; and • Underplanting of native shrub and tree species to increase structural diversity.

Important Ecological Feature:	Good Quality Other neutral grasslands (G1 G1a, G1b, G2, G3, G7, G8)
Assessment of Impacts	Proposals will result in the permanent loss of 7.78ha of good quality other neutral grassland, required to facilitate the proposed residential areas, infrastructure and the creation of SUDS basins. The remaining areas of these grasslands will be retained, protected during construction and enhanced where possible and practical. There is potential for impacts on retained grassland during the construction phase of the development from accidental damage and via dust deposition. In the absence of mitigation, this could result in habitat loss or degradation. Therefore, in the absence of mitigation, there is potential for a significant negative effect at a Local scale.
Mitigation	The retained area of good quality other neutral grassland will be protected during construction through the use of Heras fencing. No access by plant or machinery will be allowed during the construction period, except for any machinery required to manage the grassland. Construction phase dust impacts will be minimised through careful control of construction activities, in adherence with an industry best practice CEMP.
Residual Effects	Proposals will result in the permanent loss of 7.78ha of good quality other neutral grassland. Detailed assessment has demonstrated that these grasslands do not meet the qualifying criteria for Lowland Meadow Habitat of Principal Importance or any other grassland priority habitat type. Prior to the compensation measures secured by the BNG condition attached to any planning permission, this would be considered a significant negative effect at a Local scale.
Compensation/ enhancement	The BNG report outlines the compensatory grassland creation and enhancement measures proposed within the Site. This includes the 2.9ha of existing other neutral

Important Ecological Feature:	Good Quality Other neutral grasslands (G1 G1a, G1b, G2, G3, G7, G8)
	grassland which is to be enhanced as part of proposals, as well as an additional 1.05ha of created other neutral grassland. As part of the bespoke compensation solution for grasslands, the offsite Biodiversity units reserved for purchase will comprise a total of 42.02 other neutral grassland units. This is above the minimum required units to deliver a 10% gain, overall, for the Site and will result in a net increase of 5.2% in other neutral grassland units locally. This can be relied upon to result in a not-significant positive effect to this receptor at a local scale.

Important Ecological Feature:	Non-Priority Ponds
Assessment of Impacts	Five non-priority ponds (P2-P6) on site will be lost within the illustrative proposals. The woodland pond P1 located within the mapped Ancient Woodland W1 will be retained as part of proposals. There is potential for degradation of retained pond via accidental pollution during construction. Therefore, in the absence of mitigation, there is potential for a not-significant negative effect at a local scale.
Mitigation	Construction phase impacts will be minimised through careful control of construction activities, in adherence with an industry best practice CEMP.
Residual Effects	The loss of this habitat will reduce the extent and availability of this habitat type locally and also reduce the ability of the typical species associated within the habitat to persist within the Site. However, field ponds remain a relatively common habitat type within the local area and the ponds lost to proposals were seasonally dry and supposed a species poor associated flora. As such, prior to the compensation measures Secured by the BNG strategy for the Site, this would be considered a not-significant negative effect at a Local scale.
Compensation/ enhancement	The Statutory BNG requirement will ensure these losses are adequately compensated for. As the detailed design progresses, it may be possible for the SUDS to incorporate areas of permanent water and planting of suitable wetland and/or riparian species, with a varied vegetation structure.

Important Ecological Feature:	Mature Trees
Assessment of Impacts	The scheme has been designed to retain existing trees where possible. However, within the illustrative layout, up to nine mature trees may be lost to facilitate the proposed layout.

Important Ecological Feature:	Mature Trees
	The retained trees have the potential to be impacted during construction by accidental damage and via dust deposition. In the absence of mitigation, this could result in habitat loss or degradation. Therefore, in the absence of mitigation, there is potential for a not significant negative effect at a local scale.
Mitigation	Construction phase impacts on retained trees will be minimised through careful control of construction activities, in adherence with an industry best practice CEMP.
Residual Effects	The loss of nine mature tree alters the structural and habitat diversity of the site and represents a loss of biodiversity value to local wildlife. However, this loss represents 23% of the free-standing trees present within the site and a fraction of available tree resource within the surrounding area. As such, prior to the compensation measures outlined within the BNG report and secured by the BNG condition, this is considered to be a Not Significant Negative effect at a Local scale.
Compensation/ enhancement	Outline proposals include planting of an additional 478 new native individual trees.

Important Ecological Feature:	Hedgerows
Assessment of Impacts	Proposals have sought to retain hedgerows wherever possible. A section of H1 will be lost to facilitate access and visibility splays. This equates to a direct loss of 160m of species-poor native hedgerow. The retained hedgerows have the potential to be impacted during construction by accidental damage and via dust deposition. In the absence of mitigation, this could result in habitat loss or degradation. Therefore, in the absence of mitigation, there is potential for a not significant negative effect at a local scale.
Mitigation	Construction phase impacts on existing hedgerows will be minimised through careful control of construction activities, in adherence with an industry best practice CEMP.
Residual Effects	Proposals will result in the permanent loss of 160m of native hedgerow. The hedgerow survey demonstrated that this hedgerow is species poor and in moderate condition. Boundary hedgerows are a common field boundary marker within the local area. As such, prior to the compensation measures outline within the BNG report, this is considered to be a Not Significant Negative Effect at a Local scale.
Compensation/ enhancement	At the detailed design stage there are opportunities to incorporate additional native hedgerow planting. At this stage, the design has accounted for the creation

Important Ecological Feature:	Hedgerows
	of 239m of new species rich hedgerow proposed for the southern boundary of the Site and between the grassland translocation area to the east and the built development. This will result in a significant Biodiversity Net Gain in hedgerow units.

Important Ecological Feature:	Other rivers and streams
Assessment of Impacts	Proposals have sought to retain and buffer all watercourses on site. Two crossing points are proposed over the central watercourse R2. The northern crossing point will utilise an existing crossing which will be upgraded. A new crossing would be required at the southern point. Proposals will also result in impacts to the watercourses, resulting from drainage outfalls. The number and extent of these will be determined within the detailed design, however these are likely to be small in extent. During the construction phase, there will be the potential for disturbed soil to enter the river, and/or accidental fuel and other pollutant spillages to enter the river resulting in a potential negative effect on aquatic and riparian flora and fauna. During the operational phase there remains a risk of negative impacts from silt laden surface water entering the watercourses through the Site's drainage system, together with surface water contamination from, for example petrochemicals, which are toxic to aquatic life. Therefore, in the absence of mitigation, there is potential for a significant negative effect at a local scale.
Mitigation	The potential Drainage outfalls will be designed sensitively to minimise impacts to the watercourse and riparian zone. This can be achieved by citing the hard engineered headwall back from the channel with a naturalised channel from the outfall then flowing into the channel. The design, construction and monitoring of which will be secured by the detailed drainage strategy for the Site. At the detailed design stage, river crossings should be designed to allow the river to maintain its function as a wildlife corridor. The Site has been designed so that the stream is buffered from built development by the large expanse of greenspace as shown on the Illustrative Masterplan, thereby minimising impacts during operation. The adoption of standard pollution methods within the CEMP for the construction phase will mitigate any potential pollution issues. The detailed surface water drainage strategy for the Site, will include mitigation measures to be adopted in relation to water quality during the operational phase. This will ensure that the surface water run-off will be restricted to greenfield

Important Ecological Feature:	Other rivers and streams
	rates, foul water will be treated off-site and the operational maintenance to ensure that the contaminant control measures remain effective can be secured.
Residual Effects	The two proposed road crossings of watercourse R2 will directly impact approximately 32m of the watercourse, which prior to the compensation measures outlined below will result in a Not Significant Residual Effect at a Local scale.
Compensation/ enhancement	The BNG condition will ensure that proposals will result in an overall gain in watercourse units. The BNG Report outlines an option for delivering this through the enhancement of watercourse R1, to the east, by reducing the effects of over-deepening, controlling invasive species, removal of grazing impacts. Following compensation therefore it is predicted there will be a not-significant positive effect at a Local Scale to this receptor.

Important Ecological Feature:	Bats
Assessment of Impacts	It is unlikely that the proposals will result in any impacts to bat roosts, either directly or by impacting commuting routes of significant roosts (maternity). We can conclude likely absence of high status roosts within the surveyed trees due to a lack of any evidence found to support the presence of bat roosts. There is a residual risk of occasional or intermittent bat use of the roost features identified within trees classified as PRF-M and PRF-I. Bats will often change roost locations, particularly tree roosting bats and lower status roosts. Indirect impacts to potential roosts within the woodlands may be caused by potential damage and/or by light disturbance during the construction and operational phases of the proposed development. Therefore avoidance measures should assume presence of these species roosting in W1 and W2. Activity surveys showed very low bat foraging activity over the Site and low-level commuting and foraging behaviour along the hedgerows and woodland edge on Site. There was no evidence that the habitats on Site provide any significant value to local bat populations. Proposals have sought to retain and buffer the most suitable bat foraging and commuting habitat where possible. There will be a small loss of hedgerow H1, and P3 which may be lost to the development. However proposed greenspace and tree planting adjacent to this, will maintain provision of suitable commuting and foraging habitat in this location. In the absence of specific mitigation, there will be a not significant loss of foraging and commuting habitat, used by low numbers of common and widespread species as a result of hedgerow, pond and tree loss and also localised lighting effects.

Important Ecological Feature:	Bats
	Mitigation by design has included habitat enhancements and creation of additional habitats of higher value to foraging, roosting and commuting bats. There is potential for disturbance impacts during operations, via lighting, and noise/vibration. It is unlikely that any bat roosts will be impacted. It should be noted that the overall percentage of bat species that are known to be light sensitive (Myotis Sp. and brown long-eared bat) represented less than 2.3% of the total bats registered on the static bat detectors. Therefore, the increase in lighting is unlikely to be significant at a population level. Impacts during both the construction and operational impacts would be considered not significant negative impact at a Local scale.
Mitigation	Any required works to trees identified as PRF-I, PRF-M or FAR must be preceded by an updated assessment of their bat roost potential by a suitably qualified ecologist, in order to prevent potential harm to roosting bats. This can be secured via a planning condition. A pre works detailed inspection and/or nocturnal survey (where aerial assessment is considered unfeasible) of potential roost features should be undertaken prior to any works to T37, T53, T57, T1, T56 T44, T62, T65, T67, T69 and T72 to ensure continued likely absence of roosting bats. Should roosting bats be impacted, then work will need to take place under a mitigation licence from Natural England. Loss of potential bat roost features can be mitigated via provision of a replacement roost feature, in the form of a suitable and long lasting bat box (one box per impacted roost feature), located on the new buildings, or on suitable trees, to be agreed by a suitably qualified ecologist. During construction, appropriate precautions will be incorporated into a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) which will be implemented to control the works. To include details of protection of retained habitats during construction. The CEMP should include a lighting strategy in line with current best practice to ensure that retained and new habitat features that are suitable roosting bats are not degraded by new lighting. A lighting strategy should be produced to ensure that retained and new habitat features that are suitable for roosting, foraging or commuting bats are not degraded by new lighting. It is recommended that the lighting design strategy is reviewed (and if necessary updated) for any new development proposals as part of future Reserved Matters applications, to ensure there are no negative impacts to wildlife from lighting. Where necessary, the detailed lighting strategy for the Site will consider the best practice guidance note set out by the Bat Conservation Trust and the Institute of Lighting Professionals in 2023, 'GN08/23 Bats and Artificial Lighting at Night to ensure, wherever possible, that existing and new habitat resources are not negatively affected by artificial lighting during the construction or operational phases. This can be secured via a planning condition. Should proposals change, advice from an ecologist should be sought regarding the need for further assessment, surveys, licencing and mitigation.

Important Ecological Feature:	Bats
Residual Effects	Not significant negative impact due to residual losses of foraging habitat and potential roosting opportunities.
Compensation/ enhancement	Existing retained hedgerows will be enhanced with species-rich planting, including a small, wooded area to the northwest, along the central water course, and individual trees throughout, which will support a higher diversity of invertebrates. This will improve the foraging resource for bats in these areas. The strengthened existing hedgerows and new proposed planting will ensure that potential commuting corridors on Site will not be negatively impacted. The detailed design should incorporate enhancements such as additional native hedgerow planting and design of the SUDS to incorporate areas of permanent water and planting of suitable wetland and/or riparian species, with a varied vegetation structure. The development will include replacement roosting opportunities in tress and buildings via provision of suitable long lasting bat boxes, and will seek to increase the number of roosting opportunities to those which are lost. These measures will have a positive impact on the available resources for bats in the local area.

Breeding Birds	
Assessment of Impacts	Construction operations have the potential to disturb birds using the development area for breeding, roosting, and foraging. Operations likely to disturb breeding birds include noise and displacement during vegetation clearance, initial ground works and some construction activities. If work is carried out during the breeding season, disturbance may lead to nest desertion or the avoidance of the area, thus reducing the suitability of retained nesting areas, such as the woodland and hedgerows.
Mitigation	To avoid disturbance to breeding birds, ground and vegetation clearance works will be undertaken prior to the bird-breeding season (March to August, inclusive). If this is not possible, the area will be checked prior to removal of vegetation or ground works by an experienced ecologist. If active nests are found, vegetation will be left untouched and suitably buffered from works until all birds have fledged. Specific advice will be provided prior to undertaking the clearance. This would be a statutory requirement due to the protection of all nesting birds and their nests under the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981. A suitably qualified ecologist would supervise this.
Enhancement	Further enhancements that could be integrated with the on-going management of the site include the erection of a mixture of bird nest box types and/or bat boxes. The following provides details of other suitable nest box types to be erected at suitable locations:

Breeding Birds	
	• External starling nest boxes such as Schwegler 3S starling boxes (or equivalent) should be placed in suitable locations on newly constructed properties or retained trees; • A mixture of small hole (26mm and 32mm) boxes placed along the retained habitat around the proposed development area will provide nesting opportunities for blue tit Cyanistes caeruleus and great tit Parus major. These boxes generally have a high uptake rate; and • Small open fronted nest boxes again should be placed throughout the site especially on trees which support a climber such as ivy which provides a degree of concealment. These boxes typically attract robin Erithacus rubecula and blackbird Turdus merula. Given the urbanised nature of the habitats bordering the Site to the south, consideration should be given to the provision of nest boxes for urban birds. The implementation of universal swift bricks within the buildings can support swifts and other species such as house sparrow and bats.

Reptiles	
Assessment of Impacts	All common reptile species, including grass snake, slow worm, common lizard and adder are partially protected under the WCA. In summary, this legislation protects the species from intentional killing, injury or sale, offering for sale, or possessing, transporting or publishing advertisements for the purposes of sale. Within the Site, the woodland and scrub edges, ponds, hedge bases, and rough grassland offer limited suitable foraging and sheltering habitat for reptile species, should they be present.
Mitigation	During construction, appropriate precautions will be incorporated into a CEMP which will be implemented to prevent intentional killing or injury which would be a breach of the WCA. This would include a method statement for clearance works in suitable habitat. The method statement would set out appropriate measures which could include: • Timing: works in suitable habitat to be undertaken during the active season for reptiles (which runs March to October); • Hand searching for refuge features; • Vegetation management; • Destructive search, under the supervision of an Ecological Clerk of Works (ECoW); and • Relocation of any individuals found to suitable (new or existing) habitats outside the active construction site.

INNS – Himalayan balsam	
Assessment of Impacts	The invasive plant Himalayan balsam was noted in W1, W3, ONG6, ONG8, P1, SC1, H1, R1, R2 and D1.

INNS – Himalayan balsam	
	Left untreated this may form large stands and potentially out compete native species. Additionally, within the completed development this will likely interfere with landscape planting and cause a nuisance in new gardens. Himalayan balsam is listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), which imparts a legal obligation for no action to take place which might result in this species being caused to grow in the wild. Furthermore, the presence of this species is undesirable for biodiversity value of the Site. In the absence of mitigation, it is possible that an offence could be committed.
Mitigation	The detailed CEMP will include a strategy for the monitoring and eradication or control of this species prior to, during and after development. Further information can be gained from the Environment Agency information booklet, Guidance for the Control of Invasive Species in or near Fresh Water[21] and Guidance on Japanese Knotweed, Giant Hogweed and Other Invasive Species produced by DEFRA [22].

Other Species

6.13 Given the presence of local records and habitats onsite, it is considered likely that hedgehog would be present. The habitat enhancements to be delivered by the proposals will improve the Site for these species. As a further measure, it is recommended that at the detailed design stage, a 'hedgehog highway' is implemented across proposed gardens whereby a small hole measuring 13x13cm is cut into the base of garden fences to provide an escape route to prevent hedgehogs becoming trapped in gardens.

Additional Enhancements

6.14 Additional planting will be incorporated into the Site's green infrastructure. Priority will be given to the provision of native, fruit bearing species of local origin to provide an optimal breeding and foraging resource for the species recorded.

6.15 Deadwood piles could be created in areas of retained open space to provide a habitat niche for amphibians and small mammals as well as deadwood for invertebrates such as saproxylic beetles;

6.16 Invertebrates would benefit from the inclusion of log piles and hibernacula designed for reptiles but would also benefit from specific features such as insect houses or integral insect bricks incorporated in new buildings.

Biodiversity Net Gain

6.17 The planning application is accompanied by a standalone Biodiversity Net Gain strategy which provides a detailed appraisal of the baseline biodiversity value of the Site, as determined

[21] Environment Agency, 2003, Guidance for the Control of Invasive Species in or near Fresh Water
[22] Department of Food and Rural Affairs, 2013, Guidance: Japanese knotweed, Giant Hogweed and Other Invasive Species available at https://www.gov.uk/japanese-knotweed-giant-hogweed-and-other-invasive-plants

through detailed UKHab survey and Condition Assessment and by use of the Statutory Biodiversity Metric.

6.18 In summary, the Biodiversity Net Gain strategy has determined that the Site has a baseline biodiversity value of 145.52 area habitat units, 6.41 watercourse units and 3.94 hedgerow units.

6.19 A Biodiversity Net Gain calculation was then completed for the Site, with the onsite post-development habitats based on the Illustrative Masterplan (333101612_MR_MP_VW0101F), the Landscape Masterplan (P24-2318_07B) and guided by ecological professional judgement.

6.20 The report goes on to outline a realistic and deliverable series of habitat creation and enhancement measures for the Site to be undertaken to contribute to delivering a 10% gain in Biodiversity Value. At present, based on the above, on-site post intervention consists of 111.16 habitat units, 4.90 hedgerow units and 7.26 watercourse units. As such, the development will result in a 23.61% loss in habitat units, but a 24.37% hedgerow gain and 13.3% watercourse gain.

6.21 To achieve a net gain of 10%, subsequent approval(s) will require an additional 51.73 units of medium distinctiveness grassland to satisfy trading rules.

6.22 In order to achieve a net gain of 10% for the scheme, the applicant has reserved the purchase of 10.02 lowland meadow units and 42.02 other neutral grassland units from a local habitat bank located in close proximity to the Site. The provision of additional lowland meadow units and an increased offer of other neutral grassland units has sought to over compensate for the losses to the grassland habitats on site and will result in an increase of 113% and 5.2% in biodiversity units of the respective habitat types locally.

6.23 Overall, the purchase of these units will result in the scheme providing a 12.15% gain in biodiversity value, with all trading rules satisfied.

6.24 Given the above, it is concluded that proposals can deliver a biodiversity net gain for the scheme, which would be secured by the Biodiversity Net Gain Condition, attached to any planning permission for the proposed development.

7.0 CONCLUSION

7.1 The suite of ecology surveys identified a range of important ecological features on Site and within its zone of influence. The impacts on these were assessed against the proposals for a proposed residential development as illustrated on the Illustrative Masterplan (33310612_MR_MP_VW0101F).

7.2 The assessment has demonstrated that in the absence of mitigation measures, proposals would lead to:

- A Significant Negative Effect at a County Scale on Lowland Meadow Habitat; with the inclusion of habitat mitigation measures as outlined in Section 6.0 these effects are reduced to the risk of a Not Significant Negative Effect at a County scale, but a Significant Negative Effect at a District scale. The bespoke compensation measures as outlined within the detailed Biodiversity Offsetting Strategy, will ensure that the Development provides a 113% net gain in Lowland Meadow Habitat overall which is considered to be a Not-significant positive effect to Lowland Meadow at a District Scale.
- A Significant Negative Effect at a Local Scale on Good Quality Other neutral grassland Mitigation will not reduce the scale of impact, though compensation measures secured by the BNG condition will ensure the Development provides an overall minimum 10% net gain in good quality grassland habitats which is a not-significant positive effect at a Local Scale.
- A Significant Negative Effect at a Local Scale on other rivers and streams. With mitigation this is reduced to a Not Significant Effect. Compensation measures secured by the BNG condition will ensure the Development provides an overall minimum 10% net gain in watercourse habitat overall.
- A Not Significant Negative Effect at a Local Scale on Lowland mixed deciduous and Ancient Woodland, non-priority ponds, mature trees and hedgerows. With the inclusion of habitat mitigation and the effects are reduced to Neutral for Lowland mixed deciduous and Ancient Woodland only. Mitigation will not reduce the scale of impact for non-priority ponds, mature trees and hedgerows, though compensation measures secured by the BNG condition will ensure the Development provides an overall minimum 10% net gain in hedgerows and habitats overall.
- A Not Significant Negative Effect at a Local Scale is predicted for bats. Residual not significant impacts remain following mitigation. Compensation measures proposed include provision of additional roosting and high quality foraging habitat.
- Mitigation has been provided for breeding birds, reptiles and Himalayan balsam, to comply with legislation regarding these species.
- Features on Site will be enhanced and created that will benefit biodiversity, particular fauna species, although these are not necessarily represented with the net gain metric. Additional enhancements are suggested including provision of integral bat, bird and invertebrate boxes within buildings, provision of external bat and bird boxes on suitable trees.

APPENDIX A:

RELEVANT LEGISLATION, POLICY AND GUIDANCE

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (CHSR) 2017 (as amended)

7.3 The CHSR ratifies into UK law the "Habitats Directive" (92/43/EEC) and the "Birds Directive" (79/409/EEC).

European Protected Sites

7.4 The CHSR places a duty on the Secretary of State to propose a list of sites which are important for species listed in Annex I and II of the Habitats Directive respectively to the European Commission. Once the Commission and EU Member States have agreed that the sites submitted are worthy of designation, they are identified as Sites of Community Importance (SCIs). The EU Member States must then designate these sites as Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) within six years.

7.5 The CHSR requires the compilation and maintenance of a register of European sites to include SACs as well as Special Protection Areas (SPAs) designated for birds. The SACs and SPAs under the CHSR are referred to as national site networks, Ramsar sites are of international importance and do not form part of the national site networks; but boundaries might overlap SAC and SPA designations.

European Protected Species

7.6 The CHSR includes a list of animals and plant species taken from the Annex IV of the Habitats Directive that have a natural range in Great Britain. These are collectively known as European Protected Species (EPS) and are listed in *Table 1*. The regulations make it an offence to deliberately capture, kill, disturb, take or destroy eggs of, or damage or destroy a breeding or resting place of animals listed in Schedule 2 of the Regulations, and to pick, collect, cut, uproot or destroy wild plants listed in Schedule 5 of the Regulations. They also protect these species alive or dead and parts thereof from various forms of possession and trade.

7.7 These actions may be made lawful in certain circumstances through the granting of licences by the appropriate authority (Natural England). Licences must only be granted after the appropriate authority is satisfied that no satisfactory alternatives are available. In most circumstances, licences are only applied for and granted following full planning permission.

7.8 In determining whether or not to grant a licence, Natural England must apply the requirements of the CHSR and, in particular, the three derogation tests:

- Test 1: A licence can be granted for the purposes of "preserving public health or public safety or other imperative reasons of overriding public interest including those of a social or economic nature and beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment";
- Test 2: The appropriate authority shall not grant a licence unless they are satisfied "that there is no satisfactory alternative"; and
- Test 3: The appropriate authority shall not grant a licence unless they are satisfied "that the action authorised will not be detrimental to the maintenance of the population of the species concerned at a favourable conservation status in their natural range.

Table 9: The Habitats Regulations Schedule 2 and Schedule 5 species

	Common Name	Scientific Name
Schedule 2 – European Protected Animal Species	Horseshoe bats – all species	*Rhinolophidae*
	Bats – all species	*Vespertilionidae*
	Large blue butterfly	*Maculinea arion*
	Wild cat	*Felis silvestris*
	Dolphins, porpoises & whales - all species	*Cetacea*
	Hazel dormouse	*Muscardinus avellanarius*
	Pool frog	*Rana lessonae*
	Sand lizard	*Lacerta agilis*
	Fisher's estuarine moth	*Gortyna borelii lunata*
	Great Crested Newt	*Triturus cristatus*
	Otter	*Lutra lutra*
	Lesser Whirlpool Ram's-horn snail	*Anisus vorticulus*
	Smooth snake	*Coronella austriaca*
	Sturgeon	*Acipenser sturio*
	Natterjack toad	*Bufo calamita*
	Marine turtles	Caretta caretta Chelonia mydas Lepidochelys kempii Eretmochelys imbricata Dermochelys coriacea
Schedule 5 – European Protected Plant Species	Shore dock	*Rumex rupestris*
	Killarney fern	*Trichomanes speciosum*
	Early gentian	*Gentianella anglica*
	Lady's-slipper	*Cypripedium calceolus*
	Creeping marshwort	*Apium repens*
	Slender naiad	*Najas flexilis*
	Fen orchid	*Liparis loeselii*
	Floating-leaved water plantain	*Luronium natans*
	Yellow marsh saxifrage	*Saxifraga hirculus*

Wildlife and Countryside Act (WCA) 1981 (as amended)

7.9 The WCA 1981 (as amended) is the principal legislation providing protection for wildlife in the UK. It prescribes legislation for wild birds, other animals, wild plants and non-native species. In addition, it provides for the designation of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) in England.

Wild birds

7.10 The WCA as amended by Schedule 12 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 makes it an offence (with exception to species listed in Schedule 2) to intentionally or recklessly:

- Kill, injure, or take any wild bird;
- Take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while that nest is in use or being built (also [take, damage or destroy the nest of a wild bird included in Schedule ZA1] under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006); or
- Take or destroy an egg of any wild bird.

7.11 For birds listed on Schedule 1 of the WCA, protection extends to offences relating to the intentional or reckless disturbance of these birds while at their nests or their dependent young.

Other animals

7.12 The WCA (as amended) makes it an offence to (subject to exceptions) intentionally or recklessly kill, injure or take wild animals listed on Schedule 5 of the Act. For some species, the protection extends to interference with places used for shelter or protection, or disturbing animals occupying or obstructing access to such places. These species are regarded as "fully protected" and as well as the EPS species listed above include the mammal species water vole *Arvicola terrestris*, pine marten *Martes martes* and red squirrel *Sciurus vulgaris* as well as selected others from a range of species groups including, fish, butterflies, hemipteran bugs, beetles, crickets, dragonflies, moths, spiders, crustaceans, sea-mats, molluscs, Annelid worms and sea anemones (and allies).

7.13 There are seven species on Schedule 5 of the Act that not fully protected but are still protected against killing and injuring these include the common reptile species slow worm *Anguis fragilis*, viviparous lizard *Lacerta vivipara*, grass snake *Natrix natrix* and adder *Vipera berus*.

7.14 The Act prohibits certain methods of killing, injuring, or taking wild animals, and numerous species are protected against sale only as well as other variations for example Atlantic stream (white-clawed) crayfish *Austropotamobius pallipes* are protected against taking and sale.

Vascular plants, bryophytes, lichens and fungi

7.15 With regards to native flora, the Act makes it an offence to (subject to exceptions) intentionally or recklessly pick, uproot or destroy any wild plant listed in Schedule 8. Similarly, the Act prevents the sale, offer or expose for sale, or possess (for the purposes of trade), any live or dead wild plant included in Schedule 8, or any part of, or anything derived from, such a plant.

Non-native species

7.16 The Act contains measures for preventing the establishment of non-native species which may be detrimental to native wildlife, prohibiting the release of animals and planting of plants listed in Schedule 9 in England and Wales.

Sites of Special Scientific Interest

7.17 The Act provides for the notification and confirmation of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs). These sites can be identified for their flora, fauna, geological or physiological interest. In England, the power to confirm an SSSI lies with Natural England.

7.18 Laws protecting areas designated as SSSIs are described in Sections 28 to 33 of Part 2 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). SSSIs are the principle statutory designation of sites in the UK and offences are enforced through Natural England. Offences include the following:

SSSI owners and occupiers

- Carrying out, causing or allowing operations likely to damage an SSSI without Natural England consent;
- Failing to keep to a management notice; and
- Failing to let us know about a change in ownership or occupation of land in an SSSI.

Public bodies

- Carrying out or authorising operations likely to damage an SSSI without meeting the requirements to notify Natural England; and
- Failing to minimise any damage to an SSSI and if there is any damage, failing to restore it to its former state so far as is reasonably practical and possible.

Any person

- Intentionally or recklessly damaging, destroying or disturbing any of the habitats or features of an SSSI;
- intentionally or recklessly damaging, destroying, obscuring or taking down a site notice put up on land within an SSSI; and
- preventing a Natural England officer lawfully accessing an SSSI.

Environment Act 2021

7.19 The Act was passed on 10th November 2021 and covers a range of environmental protections and enhancements. It is enforced by an independent Office for Environmental Protection (OEP). In relation to nature and biodiversity, the act will deliver:

- Strengthened biodiversity duty;
- A requirement for developments to deliver at least 10% biodiversity net gain;
- Local Nature Recovery Strategies;
- Protected Site Strategies and Species Conservation Strategies;
- Conservation Covenants; and
- Strengthened woodland protection enforcement measures

Protection of Badgers Act 1992

7.20 Badgers and their setts are protected under the Protection of Badgers Act 1992. This act is based on the need to protect badgers from persecution by baiting and deliberate harm or injury. The act makes it an offence to:

- Intentionally capture, kill or injure a badger;
- Damage, destroy or block access to their setts;
- Disturb badgers in setts;
- Treat a badger cruelly;
- Deliberately send or intentionally allow a dog into a sett; and
- Bait or dig for badgers.

7.21 A sett is defined as: *"Any structure or place that displays signs indicating current use by a badger".*

Natural Environmental and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006

7.22 Section 40 of the NERC Act 2006 imposes a duty on every public authority to conserve biodiversity in exercising its functions, have regard, so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity. Conserving biodiversity includes, in relation to a living organism or type of habitat, restoring or enhancing a population or habitat.

7.23 Section 41 (S41) of the NERC Act 2006 requires the Secretary of State to publish a list of habitats and species that are of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity in England. The list (including 56 habitats and 943 species) has been drawn up in consultation with Natural England and draws upon the UK BAP List of Priority Species and Habitats. The S41 list is used to guide decision-makers such as public bodies, including local and regional authorities, in implementing their duty under section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2025

7.24 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's planning policy for England. As such, the NPPF must be a material consideration for local authorities when considering planning decisions. The following relate to ecology/biodiversity:

Policy 15 – Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

187. Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:

a) Protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan);

b) Recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland;

c) Maintaining the character of the undeveloped coast, while improving public access to it where possible;

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 and incorporating features which support priority or threatened species such as swifts, bats and hedgehogs;

e) Preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability. Development should, wherever possible, help to improve local environmental conditions such as air and water quality, taking into account relevant information such as river basin management plans; and

f) Remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate.

188. Plans should: distinguish between the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites; allocate land with the least environmental or amenity value, where consistent with other policies in this Framework; take a strategic approach to maintaining and enhancing networks of habitats and green infrastructure; and plan for the enhancement of natural capital at a catchment or landscape scale across local authority boundaries.

189. Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues. The conservation and enhancement of wildlife and cultural heritage are also important considerations in these areas and should be given great weight in National Parks and the Broads. The scale and extent of development within all these designated areas should be limited, while development within their setting should be sensitively located and designed to avoid or minimise impacts on the designated areas.

190. When considering applications for development within National Parks, the Broads and National Landscapes, permission should be refused for major development other than in exceptional circumstances, and where it can be demonstrated that the development is in the public interest. Consideration of such applications should include an assessment of:

a) The need for the development, including in terms of any national considerations, and the impact of permitting it, or refusing it, upon the local economy;
b) The cost of, and scope for, developing outside the designated area, or meeting the need for it in some other way; and
c) Any detrimental effect on the environment, the landscape and recreational opportunities, and the extent to which that could be moderated.

191. Within areas defined as Heritage Coast (and that do not already fall within one of the designated areas mentioned in paragraph 189), planning policies and decisions should be

consistent with the special character of the area and the importance of its conservation. Major development within a Heritage Coast is unlikely to be appropriate, unless it is compatible with its special character.

192. To protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity, plans should:
- *a) Identify, map and safeguard components of local wildlife-rich habitats and wider ecological networks, including the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity, wildlife corridors and stepping stones that connect them; and areas identified by national and local partnerships for habitat management, enhancement, restoration and creation; and*
- *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.*

193. When determining planning applications, local planning authorities should apply the following principles:
- *a) If significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused;*
- *b) Development on land within or outside a Site of Special Scientific Interest, and which is likely to have an adverse effect on it (either individually or in combination with other developments), should not normally be permitted. The only exception is where the benefits of the development in the location proposed clearly outweigh both its likely impact on the features of the site that make it of special scientific interest, and any broader impacts on the national network of Sites of Special Scientific Interest;*
- *c) Development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as Ancient Woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists; and*
- *d) Development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to incorporate biodiversity improvements in and around developments should be encouraged, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity.*

194. The following should be given the same protection as habitats sites:
- *a) Potential Special Protection Areas and possible Special Areas of Conservation;*
- *b) Listed or proposed Ramsar sites; and*
- *c) Sites identified, or required, as compensatory measures for adverse effects on habitats sites, potential Special Protection Areas, possible Special Area of Conservation, and listed or proposed Ramsar sites.*

195. The presumption in favour of sustainable development does not apply where the plan or project is likely to have a significant effect on a habitats site (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects), unless an appropriate assessment has concluded that the plan or project will not adversely affect the integrity of the habitats site.

Local Planning Policy

The Core Strategy 2008 – 2028 A Local Plan for Ribble Valley[23]*. The document contains policies and proposals for using and developing land throughout the Borough of Ribble Valley. The Core Strategy forms the central document of the Local Development Framwork, establishing the vision, underlying objectives and key principles that will guide the development of the area to 2028.*

[23] Core Strategy 2008 – 2028 A Local Plan for Ribble Valley adopted 2014

The following policies include considerations and guidance concerning ecology and biodiversity within developments:

KEY STATEMENT EN4: BIODIVERSITY AND GEODIVERSITY

The Council will seek wherever possible to conserve and enhance the area's biodiversity and geodiversity and to avoid the fragmentation and isolation of natural habitats and help develop green corridors. Where appropriate, cross-Local Authority boundary working will continue to take place to achieve this. Negative impacts on biodiversity through development proposals should be avoided. Development proposals that negatively affect a site of recognised environmental or ecological importance will only be permitted where a developer can demonstrate that the negative effects of a proposed development can be mitigated, or as a last resort, compensated for. It will be the developer's responsibility to identify and agree an acceptable scheme, accompanied by appropriate survey information, before an application is determined. There should, as a principle be a net enhancement of biodiversity. These sites are as follows:

- *Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs)*;
- *Local Nature Reserves (LNRs)*;
- *Local Biological Heritage sites (CBHs)*;
- *Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs)*;
- *Local Geodiversity Heritage Sites*;
- *Ancient Woodlands*;
- *Lancashire Biodiversity Action Plan priority habitats and species*;
- *European Directive on Protected Species and Habitats - Annex 1 Habitats and Annex II Species*; and
- *Habitats and Species of Principal Importance in England*

With respect to sites designated through European legislation the Authority will be bound by the provisions of the relevant Habitats Directives and Regulations.

For those sites that are not statutorily designated and compensation could be managed through a mechanism such as biodiversity off-setting via conservation credits.

POLICY DME1: PROTECTING TREES AND WOODLANDS

There will be a presumption against the clearance of broad-leaved woodland for development proposes. The council will seek to ensure that woodland management safe guards the structural integrity and visual amenity value of woodland, enhances biodiversity and provides environmental health benefits for the residents of the borough. The council encourages successional tree planting to ensure tree cover is maintained into the future.

Where applications are likely to have a substantial effect on tree cover, the borough council will require detailed arboricultural survey information and tree constraint plans including appropriate plans and particulars. These will include the position of every tree on site that could be influenced by the proposed development and any tree on neighbouring land that is also likely to be with in influencing distance and could also include other relevant information such as stem diameter and crown spread.

The borough council will ensure that:

1. The visual, botanical and historical value, together with the useful and safe life expectancy of tree cover, are important factors in determining planning applications. This will include an assessment of the impact of the density of development, lay out of roads, access points and services on any affected trees.

2. That a detailed tree protection plan is submitted with appropriate levels of detail.

3. Site-specific tree protection planning conditions are attached to planning permissions.

TREE PRESERVATION ORDERS

The borough council will make tree preservation orders where important individual trees or groups of trees and woodland of visual, and/or botanical and/or historical value appears to be under threat. The council will expect every tree work application for work to protected trees to be in accordance with modern arboricultural practices and current british standards.

ANCIENT WOODLANDS DEVELOPMENT

Proposals that would result in loss or damage to Ancient Woodlands will be refused unless the need for, and the benefits of, the development in that location outweigh the loss of the woodland habitat. In addition, in circumstances where a development would affect an Ancient Woodland, the borough council will seek to include appropriate woodland planting and management regimes through planning conditions and agreements.

VETERAN AND ANCIENT TREES

The borough council will take measures through appropriate planning conditions, legislation and management regimes to ensure that any tree classified identified as veteran/ancient tree is afforded sufficient level of protection and appropriate management in order to ensure its long term survivability.

HEDGEROWS

The borough council will use the hedgerow regulations to protect hedgerows considered to be under threat and use planning conditions to protect and enhance hedgerows through the use of traditional management regimes and planting with appropriate hedgerow species mix.

FELLING LICENCES

When consulted on felling licence applications, the council will attempt to minimise the short-term negative impact on the landscape and ensure replanting schemes contain an appropriate balance of species to safeguard and enhance the biodiversity and landscape value of woodland.

The contribution that trees and woodlands make to the character of the area is recognised by the council to be of significance. The council in establishing this approach to their management and protection is seeking to conserve and enhance the quality of the local area whilst recognising the need for sustainable development to be achieved.

POLICY DME3: SITE AND SPECIES PROTECTION AND CONSERVATION

Development proposals that are likely to negatively affect the following will not be granted planning permission. Exceptions will only be made where it can clearly be demonstrated that the benefits of a development at a site outweigh both the local and the wider impacts. Planning

conditions or agreements will be used to secure protection or, in the case of any exceptional development as defined above, to mitigate any harm, unless arrangements can be made through planning conditions or agreements to secure their protection:

1. Wildlife species protected by law;

2. Sssi's;

3. Priority habitats or species identified in the lancashire biodiversity action plan;

4. Local nature reserves;

5. County biological heritage sites;

6. Special areas of conservation (sacs) ;

7. Special protected areas (spas); and

8. Any acknowledged nature conservation value of sites or species.

Developers are encouraged to consider incorporating measures to enhance biodiversity where appropriate that will complement priority habitats and species identified in the Lancashire BAP.

With regard to sites designated under European legislation the authority will follow the relevant processes as defined within the habitats regulations 2010. Development will not be permitted unless either it is established that it is not likely to have a significant effect on any RAMSAR site or natura 2000 site (including special protection areas, potential special protection areas, special areas of conservation, candidate special areas of conservation), either alone or in combination with other projects, or it is ascertained, following appropriate assessment, that it will not negatively affect the integrity of any RAMSAR site or natura 2000 site. The habitats regulations include provision for development which may cause a negative effect on integrity to be allowed under exceptional circumstances. These include where there are no alternative solutions, imperative reasons of overriding public interest can be demonstrated and appropriate compensatory measures are implemented. In terms of the protection of the soil resource and high quality agricultural land development and land management practices should seek to avoid soil erosion; avoid contamination of land and promote restoration, protect the peat resource and recognise the importance of peat in particular for its carbon sequestration value, water quality improvements for both drinking water and biodiversity, reduction of local flood risk and reduction of moorland wildfire risk. The important link between soil quality, the natural environment and the landscape should be recognised. By proactively considering these important features through the development management process the Council will deliver the Core Strategy vision and support the delivery of sustainable development reflecting the development strategy and key statements.

APPENDIX B: SPECIES RECORDS SUMMARY TABLE:

Species	Conservation Status	Total number of records within 2km	Location/minimum distance of records from Site Boundary
Amphibians			
Common Toad, *Bufo bufo*	S.41, WCA Sch 5 (section 9(5) only), LBAP	2	Closest record from 2020, 858m ESE of the Site.
Great Crested Newt, *Triturus cristatus*	S. 41, Regs, WCA Sch 5 (section 9(4)(b) and (c) and (5) only), LBAP	6	All records from 2017, 1.91km NNE of the Site.
Smooth Newt, *Lissotriton vulgaris*	WCA Sch 5 (section 9(5) only)	1	Single record 1.92km North of the Site.
Bats			
Common Pipistrelle, *Pipistrellus pipistrellus*	WCA Sch 5 (section 9(4)(b) and (c) and (5) only), LBAP	5	Closest record from 2014, 197m SSW of the Site.
Pipistrelle Bat Species, *Pipistrellus*	S. 41, WCA Sch 5 (section 9(4)(b) and (c) and (5) only), LBAP	5	Closest record from 2007, 327m South of the Site.
Soprano Pipistrelle, *Pipistrelle pygmaeus*	S. 41, WCA Sch 5 (section 9(4)(b) and (c) and (5) only), LBAP	1	Single record from 2008, 1.54km North of the Site.
Birds			
Cuckoo, *Cuculus canorus*	Red, LBAP	1	Single record from 2018, 1.53km SSE of the Site.
Curlew, *Numenius arquata*	S. 41, Red, LBAP	9	Recorded within 1km square which encompasses the Site. Records from 2004, 2005, and 2019
Grasshopper Warbler, *Locustella naevia*	S. 41, Red, LBAP	1	Single record from 2004, over 1.15km South from the Site.
Greenfinch, *Chloris chloris*	Red	2	Both records from 2013. Recorded within 1km square which encompasses the Site.
Grey Partridge, *Perdix perdix*	S. 41, Red, LBAP	4	Recorded within 1km square which encompasses the Site. Records from 2004 and 2005.
House Sparrow, *Passer domesticus*	S. 41, Red, LBAP	4	Records from 2012 and 2013. Closest record over 594m ESE of the Site.
Kestrel, *Falco tinnunculus*	Amber, LBAP	1	Single record from 2012, over 1.31km North of the Site.
Lapwing, *Vanellus vanellus*	S. 41, Red, LBAP	6	Recorded within 1km square which encompasses the Site.Records from 2004 and 2005.
Lesser Redpoll, *Acanthis cabaret*	S. 41	2	Both records from 2004. Closest record over 1.15km South of the Site.
Mallard, *Anas platyrhynchos*	Amber	2	Closest record from 2013, over 309m NNE of the Site.
Oystercatcher, *Haematopus ostralegus*	Amber, LBAP	1	Single record from 2005, 1.68km NW of the site.
Redstart, *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*	Amber	1	Single record from 2004, over 1.15km South of the Site.
Snipe, *Gallinago gallinago*	Amber, LBAP	1	Single record from 2005, over 1.15km South of the Site.

Spotted Flycatcher, *Muscicapa striata*	S. 41, Amber, LBAP	1	Single record from 2004, over 1.15km South of the Site.
Starling, *Sturnus vulgaris*	S. 41, Red, LBAP	3	Recorded within 1km square which encompasses the Site. Most recent from 2013.
Swift, *Apus apus*	Red, LBAP	1	Single record from 2021, 1.86km ENE of the Site.
Tawny Owl, *Strix aluco*	Amber	1	Single record from 2005, 1.86km NW of the Site.
Wren, *Troglodytes troglodytes*	Amber	1	Single record from 2005, 1.68km NW of the Site.
Fish			
Bullhead, *Cottus gobio*	LBAP	2	Both records from 2011. Closest record 975m North of the Site.
European Eel, *Anguilla anguilla*	S. 41, LBAP	1	Single record from 2011, 975m North of the Site.
Invertebrates			
Chimney Sweeper, *Odezia atrata*	LBAP	1	Single record from 2018, 1.65km NNW of the Site.
Cinnabar, *Tyria jacobaeae*	S. 41	1	Single record from 2019, over 1.46km East of the Site.
Ringlet, *Aphantopus hyperantus*	LBAP	5	Closest record from 2017, 1.51km ESE of the Site.
Wall, *Lasiommata megera*	S. 41, LBAP	1	Single record from 2006, over 1.46km East of the Site.
Plants			
Bluebell, *Hyacinthoides non-scripta*	WCA Sch 8 (section 13(2) only)	14	Recorded within 1km square which encompasses the Site. Most recent from 2013.
Japanese Knotweed, *Fallopia japonica*	WCA Sch 9 part 2	2	Closest record from 2011, over 153m SSW of the Site.
Rhododendron, *Rhododendron ponticum*	WCA Sch 9 part 2	3	Closest record from 2012, over 153m SSW of the Site.
Other Mammals			
American Mink, *Neovison vison*	WCA Sch 9 part 1	1	Single record from 2012, 1.77km North of the Site.
Brown Hare, *Lepus europaeus*	S. 41, LBAP	10	Closest record from 2015, 660m SSW of the Site.
West European Hedgehog, *Erinaceus europaeus*	S. 41, LBAP	15	Closest record from 2019, 410m SE of the Site.

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N

0 0.25 0.5 km

Site Boundary and Buffers
- Red line boundary
- 250m Buffer
- 1km Buffer
- Waterbodies

Priority Habitat Inventory (PHI)
- Deciduous woodland
- Good quality semi-improved grassland
- Lowland fens
- Lowland meadows
- Biological Heritage Sites

Ancient Woodland Inventory (revised)
- Ancient & Semi-Natural Woodland
- Ancient Replanted Woodland

Ref	Site Name	Designation
1	Dinckley Bridge Wood	BHS
2	Park Brook Pastures	BHS
3	Cronshaw Chair	BHS
4	Dean Clough Reservoir	BHS

date 18/11/25

drwn/chkd HK / SH

client
Hallam Land Management

project
Land south of Longsight Road, Langho

title
SITE LOCATION AND DESIGNATED SITES

scale 1:9,400 @ A3

number
FIGURE 1

rev -

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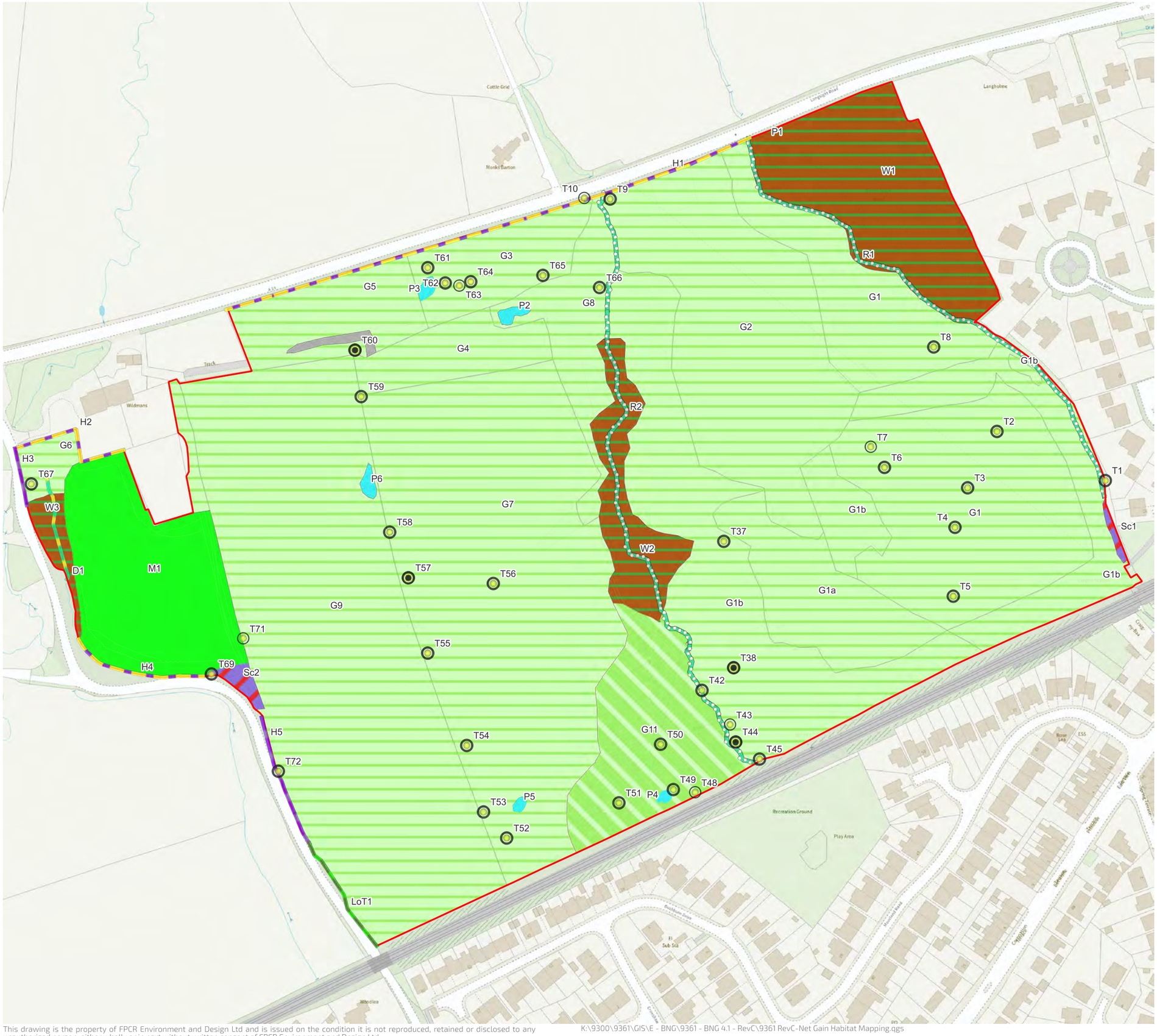

N

0 50 100 m

Redline Boundary

Baseline Habitats

- Blackthorn scrub
- Hawthorn scrub
- Lowland meadows
- Lowland mixed deciduous woodland
- Modified grassland
- Ponds (non-priority habitat)
- Tall forbs
- Other neutral grassland

Baseline Hedgerow

- Ecologically valuable line of trees
- Native hedgerow
- Species-rich native hedgerow

Baseline Watercourse

- Ditches
- Other rivers and streams

Baseline Individual Trees

- Existing very large rural tree
- Existing large rural tree
- Existing medium rural tree

date: 18/11/25

drwn/chkd: DV / ET

client: **Hallam Land Management Ltd**

project: **Land South of Longsight Road Langho**

title: **BASELINE HABITAT PLAN**

scale: 1:2,300 @ A3

number: **FIGURE 2**

rev: -

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K:\9300\9361\GIS\E - BNG\9361 - BNG 4.1 - RevC\9361 RevC-Net Gain Habitat Mapping.qgs

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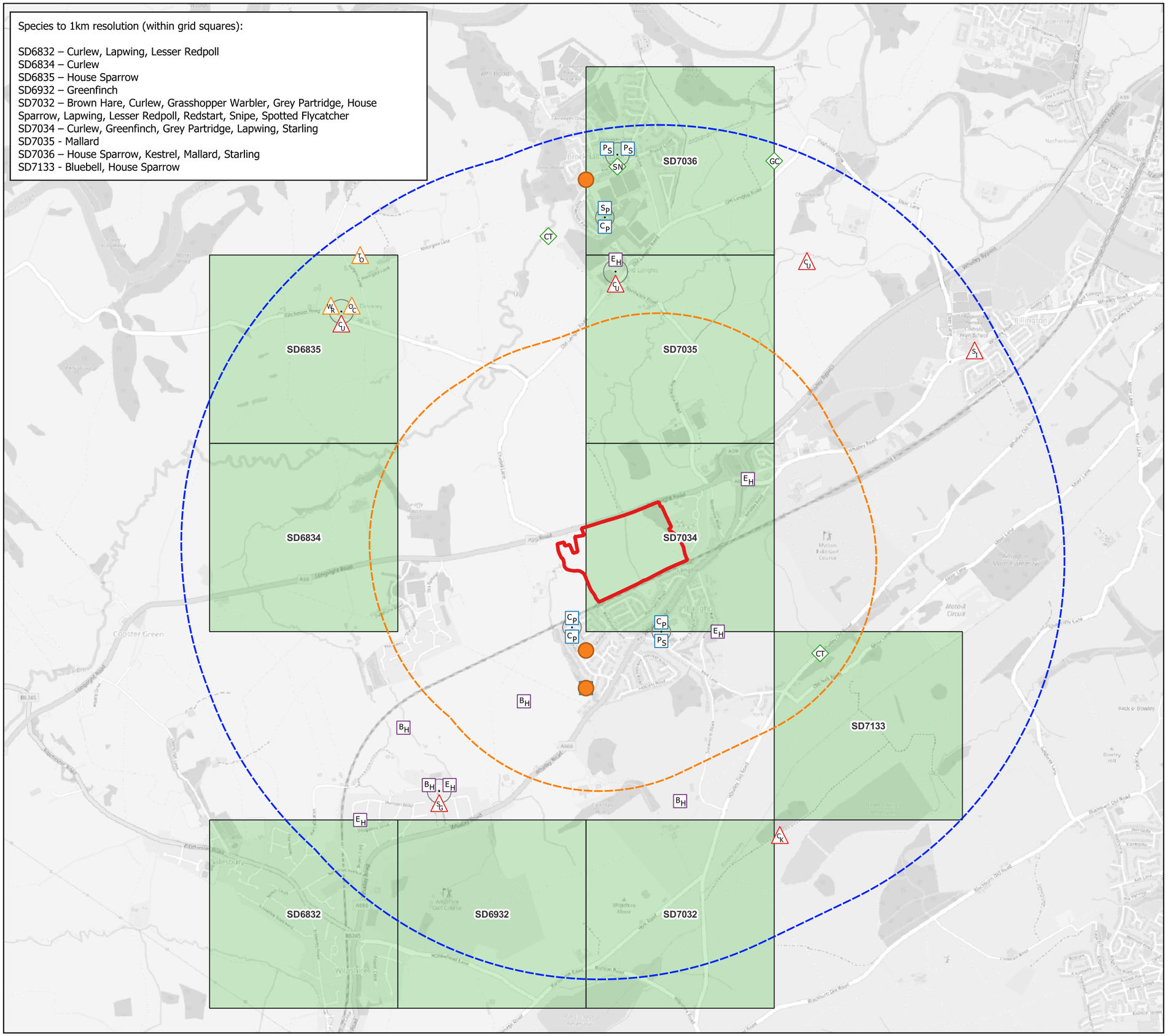
Species to 1km resolution (within grid squares):

SD6832 – Curlew, Lapwing, Lesser Redpoll
SD6834 – Curlew
SD6835 – House Sparrow
SD6932 – Greenfinch
SD7032 – Brown Hare, Curlew, Grasshopper Warbler, Grey Partridge, House Sparrow, Lapwing, Lesser Redpoll, Redstart, Snipe, Spotted Flycatcher
SD7034 – Curlew, Greenfinch, Grey Partridge, Lapwing, Starling
SD7035 - Mallard
SD7036 – House Sparrow, Kestrel, Mallard, Starling
SD7133 - Bluebell, House Sparrow



N

0 0.5 1 km

Key:

- Red line boundary
- 1km Buffer
- 2km Buffer

Species records

- BH Brown hare
- CP Common pipistrelle
- CT Common toad
- CK Cuckoo
- CU Curlew
- GC Great crested newt
- OC Oystercatcher
- PS Pipstrelle species
- SN Smooth newt
- SP Soprano pipistrelle
- SG Starling
- SI Swift
- TO Tawny owl
- EH Western European hedgehog
- WR Wren
- Bat maternity roost record

date	drwn/chkd
27/02/25	HK / ET

client
Hallam Land Management

project
Land south of Longsight Rd, Langho

title	scale
CONSULTATION PLAN - SPECIES RECORDS	1:20,000 @ A3

number	rev
FIGURE 3	-

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