



Stephenson Halliday

Hurst Farm

Biodiversity Assessment

2485667

JUNE 2023

RSK GENERAL NOTES

Project No.: 2485667

Title: Hurst Farm – Biodiversity Assessment

Client: Stephenson Halliday

Date: June 2023

Office: Tonbridge

Status: Rev 01

**Author &
Project
manager**

Ruby Hill

**Technical and
Quality
reviewer**

Sarah Harmer

Signature



Signature



12/06/2023

Date:

Rev 01: 07/07/2023

Date:

23/06/2023

RSK Biocensus (RSK) has prepared this report for the sole use of the client, showing reasonable skill and care, for the intended purposes as stated in the agreement under which this work was completed. The report may not be relied upon by any other party without the express agreement of the client and RSK. No other warranty, expressed or implied, is made as to the professional advice included in this report.

Where any data supplied by the client or from other sources have been used, it has been assumed that the information is correct. No responsibility can be accepted by RSK Biocensus for inaccuracies in the data supplied by any other party. The conclusions and recommendations in this report are based on the assumption that all relevant information has been supplied by those bodies from whom it was requested.

No part of this report may be copied or duplicated without the express permission of RSK and the party for whom it was prepared.

Where field investigations have been carried out, these have been restricted to a level of detail required to achieve the stated objectives of the work.

This work has been undertaken in accordance with the quality management system of RSK Biocensus.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. This assessment is a desk-based exercise carried out by RSK Biocensus for Homes England on 9 June 2023, to provide a baseline measure in biodiversity value at Hurst Farm, Haywards Heath (Ordnance Survey grid reference: TQ 338 223), using the Defra biodiversity metric 4.0.
2. Proposed habitat changes arising from future development and ecological enhancements based on a proposed site layout plan (post-construction) provided by the client are evaluated against the baseline (pre-construction) ecology to demonstrate net change in biodiversity units.
3. This report calculates 'biodiversity units' using the Defra biodiversity metric 4.0 and following the methods set out in Defra's biodiversity metric 4.0 user guide. The calculations are based on the area (or length), distinctiveness, condition and strategic significance of habitats found on the site.
4. The full biodiversity assessment calculation can be found in an accompanying Excel document 2485667 Hurst Farm Biodiversity Metric; however, screenshots of the main results tables are presented here in Appendix A and B.
5. The condition assessment of baseline and post-development habitats are listed in Appendix C and D. This includes any deviation from standard guidance, assumptions and justifications for habitat classification and condition.
6. The site was found to comprise a total of 11 habitat types with a baseline of 186.18 habitat area units (i.e. 'biodiversity units'), 6.72 linear hedgerow biodiversity units and 0.52 watercourse biodiversity units.
7. Post-development plans include the retention and enhancement of habitats with a total of 114.58 biodiversity area units, 6.09 hedgerow biodiversity units and 0.20 watercourse biodiversity units.
8. The biodiversity assessment thus concludes that the current proposed development will result in a change of -69.34 biodiversity area units (i.e. a 37.94% net loss), -0.63 hedgerow biodiversity units (a 9.31% net loss) and -0.32 watercourse biodiversity units (a 61.54% net loss).

CONTENTS

1.0 INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Purpose of this report	1
1.2 Landscape context	1
1.3 Policy context	1
2.0 METHODS.....	3
2.1 Overview.....	3
2.2 Biodiversity Assessment Methods.....	3
Habitat Distinctiveness	4
Habitat Condition	5
Strategic Significance	5
Difficulty of Creation and Restoration	5
Time to Target Condition	5
Off-site Risk	5
3.0 RESULTS	6
3.1 Biodiversity Baseline	6
3.2 Post-development Habitat Creation and Enhancement	6
3.3 Change in Biodiversity Value	6
3.4 Suggestions to Improve Biodiversity Gain	7
REFERENCES.....	8
FIGURES	9
APPENDIX A – DEFRA METRIC TABLES- BASELINE.....	10
APPENDIX B – DEFRA METRIC TABLES – POST-DEVELOPMENT.....	11
APPENDIX C – BASELINE DETAILED CONDITION ASSESSMENTS	12
APPENDIX D – POST-DEVELOPMENT DETAILED CONDITION ASSESSMENTS.....	15

TABLES

Table 1. Change in Biodiversity Units Calculation	7
---	---

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose of this report

- 1.1.1 In February 2021, RSK Biocensus carried out a biodiversity assessment as part of an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) of land at Hurst Farm in connection with a new housing development and associated infrastructure.
- 1.1.2 RSK Biocensus updated information relating to ecology at the site in a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) based on field surveys carried out in June 2021. The work also involved a review of the previous Environmental Statement (ES) produced by Ecological Planning and Research Ltd. dated 2017. An update to the ES was subsequently produced by RSK in 2022.
- 1.1.3 The field survey involved an ecologist with botanical expertise carrying out a site visit to map the habitat types present and establish the biodiversity baseline. Each habitat type was mapped using the standard habitat mapping convention UK Habitat Classification (Butcher et al., 2020) for the purposes of using the Defra metric.
- 1.1.4 The baseline unit values were then measured against predicted post-development habitat changes to determine if the works will result in a loss or gain in biodiversity.
- 1.1.5 Data from ecological surveys is typically valid for 18 months and so surveys were repeated in June 2023 to update the habitat mapping and inform the BNG assessment.

1.2 Landscape context

- 1.2.1 Hurst Farm (termed the 'site' in this report) is located on the southern edge of the town of Haywards Heath in the Mid Sussex District of West Sussex, adjacent to urban areas north and west of the site. To the south and east, there is a semi-rural landscape including woodland and agricultural land (*Figure 1*). A small area to the north-west of the site comprises an ongoing housing development.
- 1.2.2 The site comprises approximately 33 hectares of predominantly greenfield land with a net developable area of 17 hectares, divided into three areas separated by Hurstwood Lane running east to west and Hurstwood Grange running north to south. While most of the site is grassland, there are pockets of trees along boundaries and dense woodland to the north-east (Asylum Wood), south-east (edge of Hurst Wood) and west (Anscombe Wood). There are also several drainage ditches around the site, and ponds towards the west of the site.

1.3 Policy context

- 1.3.1 The primary aim of Biodiversity Net Gain is to secure a measurable improvement in habitat for biodiversity, to minimise biodiversity losses and to help to restore ecological networks whilst streamlining development processes.

- 1.3.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) makes provisions for the delivery of biodiversity net gain. Additionally, there is a proposed 10% net gain requirement in the Environment Act, which is due to become mandatory in November 2023.

2.0 METHODS

2.1 Overview

- 2.1.1 The biodiversity metric 4.0 is designed to quantify biodiversity to inform and improve planning, design, land management and decision-making (Natural England, 2023).
- 2.1.2 This study has been carried out as a desk-based exercise, using the results of field surveys carried out at the site by RSK and an Illustrative Landscape Plan (Mar 2022) provided by the client. The primary documents consulted as part of this study include:
- 2481825 – Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Report (RSK Biocensus, 2021)
 - Proposed Landscape plan provided by client
- 2.1.3 A map of the pre-construction habitats from the ecological appraisal is presented in Figure 2.

2.2 Biodiversity Assessment Methods

- 2.2.1 To calculate biodiversity units for the site and assess any changes arising from the proposed development this study uses methods set out the latest Biodiversity Metric 4.0 user guide (Natural England, 2023).
- 2.2.2 The biodiversity metric uses habitat area as its core measurement, except for linear features where it uses habitat length.¹ Additionally, linear habitats are split into two types: hedgerows (which includes lines of trees) and watercourses. Therefore, a site can have three biodiversity unit values, one for habitat areas, one for hedgerow features, and one for watercourse features. They are assessed using the same metric but cannot be summed together.
- 2.2.3 Habitat area is multiplied by several factors that indicate its quality: distinctiveness, condition and strategic location, this gives its biodiversity unit value. This can be used for existing and future created habitats.² This is shown in Image 1.

¹ Linear features are assessed by length rather than area to avoid underestimating their value and therefore failing to ensure adequate compensation for any losses.

² Where future habitats are to be enhanced or newly created, the risk of failure is accounted for by applying multipliers for risk factors (difficulty, time to target condition, and off-site risk).

PRE-intervention biodiversity calculation (the baseline)



POST-intervention biodiversity calculation (for newly created or enhanced habitats)



Calculation of gains or losses

The net effect of an intervention (or a series of interventions) on biodiversity is calculated as follows:

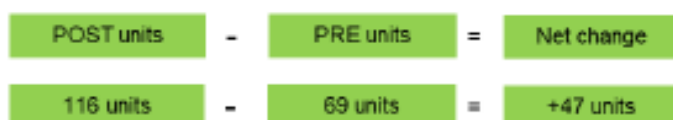


Image 1 Biodiversity Metric Calculation (Natural England, 2023)

Habitat Distinctiveness

- 2.2.4 Habitats are classified using the phase 1 habitat survey methodology (JNCC 2010) or the UK habitat classification system (Butcher et al., 2020).
- 2.2.5 The metric pre-assigns each habitat type to a distinctiveness band according to its distinguishing features, i.e. species richness, rarity (at local, regional, national and international scales), and the degree to which it supports species rarely found in other habitats.

Habitat Condition

- 2.2.6 Habitat condition measures the varying quality of similar habitats against what is perceived to be their optimal state. The biodiversity metric 4.0 technical Annex 1 and 2 (Natural England, 2023a) contains condition sheets and guidance for all habitats to which the metric can apply. The condition sheets contain a habitat description, contextual information to aid the assessment, and the assessment criteria. The criteria describe what components need to be present for a habitat to be in good, moderate or poor condition.

Strategic Significance

- 2.2.7 Strategic significance works at a landscape scale, allowing additional value to be added to habitats in biodiversity restoration and enhancement target areas. Habitats or areas formally listed in local plans and strategies receive a 1.15 multiplier. A 1.1 multiplier can be applied to habitats not listed within formal plans but within informal national initiatives or deemed sufficiently connected by an ecologist.

Difficulty of Creation and Restoration

- 2.2.8 The risks associated with creating new or enhancing existing habitats, are known as difficulty factors; for example, where habitats fail to establish owing to natural changes in local conditions, incorrect management or for unknown reasons. The biodiversity metric 4.0 contains default values for each habitat based on the average difficulty of creating or enhancing a habitat. Occasionally, under exceptional circumstances, these can be modified, but any deviation from the default value must be fully justified.

Time to Target Condition

- 2.2.9 There is often a lag between a habitat being removed and the new compensation habitats achieving their target condition. This gives reduced biodiversity value for a time. The biodiversity metric 4.0 preassigns the time to target condition based on good practice and typical conditions, and assigns a multiplier based on the number of years required to achieve it.
- 2.2.10 The time to target condition can be advanced or delayed. This function can be used when habitats are created prior to development works starting or if the development will last multiple years so enhancements may not be put in until several years after the initial loss. Advancing or delaying the time to target condition can also be used on sites where local conditions or bespoke enhancements may take more or less time to achieve target condition. In these situations, the adjustments to the time to target condition must be justified.

Off-site Risk

- 2.2.11 Sometimes it is not possible to compensate adequately for loss of biodiversity within the site boundary, so off-site compensation is required. If the off-site compensation is a significant distance from the development site, then there will be a local loss of biodiversity and a multiplier is applied to any off-site compensation. The off-site risk multiplier can be avoided by using an approved off-site biodiversity units provider.

3.0 RESULTS

3.1 Trading Summary Area Habitats

- 3.1.1 Under the current proposals, trading satisfaction has not been met by the high distinctiveness habitat as the lowland deciduous will be not fully retained. To satisfy this trading rule an offset of another area of high distinctiveness woodland will be required.
- 3.1.2 Under the current proposals, trading satisfaction has not been met by the medium distinctiveness habitat due to a large loss of other neutral which will not be replaced by another medium quality grassland or a higher quality habitat.
- 3.1.3 Under the current proposals, trading satisfaction has not been met by the low distinctiveness habitat due to a lack of surplus units from the medium habitats.

3.2 Biodiversity Baseline

- 3.2.1 The UKHab habitat survey map (*Figure 2*) has been used to identify 8 habitat areas, 3 linear features (including 2 hedgerows and 1 line of trees) and 2 watercourses. These habitats have been input into the Defra Biodiversity Metric 4.0 calculator and indicate a total of 186.18 area units, 6.72 hedgerow units and 0.52 watercourse units. The results of the calculations are presented in Appendix A. It should be noted that these represent screenshots from the calculator; the full biodiversity assessment calculation can be found in the Excel document '2485667 Hurst Farm Biodiversity Metric 4.0 Calculation'.
- 3.2.2 The condition assessments for each habitat are presented in Appendix C. Any justifications for deviations from the default methods for baseline habitats are presented.

3.3 Post-development Habitat Creation and Enhancement

- 3.3.1 A combination of the Illustrative Landscape Plan (February 2022) and Land Use Parameters Plan (February 2022) been used to identify that, post-intervention, the site will comprise a total of 114.58 biodiversity area units, 6.09 hedgerow biodiversity units and 0.20 watercourse biodiversity units.
- 3.3.2 The retained habitats include woodland, grassland, and hedgerows. The new habitat areas consist of: modified grassland; ponds; allotments; introduced shrub (used as an equivalent value placeholder for "suburban mosaic of nat/dev surfaces", as this is not a habitat in the Metric); other mixed woodland; vegetated gardens; and developed sealed-surface land.
- 3.3.3 Details of the assumptions made to achieve the proposed conditions are found in *Appendix D*.

3.4 Change in Biodiversity Value

- 3.4.1 Under the current proposals set out in the Illustrative Landscape Plan (February 2022) there will be a net loss of 69.34 biodiversity area units, 0.63 terrestrial linear biodiversity

units, and 0.32 watercourse biodiversity units. This is equivalent to -37.94%, -9.31%, and -61.54% respectively. This is shown in *Table 1*.

Table 1. Change in Biodiversity Units Calculation

Post-development Biodiversity Area Units		Baseline Biodiversity Area Units		Change in Biodiversity Area Units
116.84	-	186.18	=	-69.34
Post-development Biodiversity Hedgerow Units		Baseline Biodiversity Hedgerow Units		Change in Biodiversity Hedgerow Units
6.09	-	6.72	=	-0.63
Post-development Biodiversity Watercourse Units		Baseline Biodiversity Watercourse Units		Change in Biodiversity Watercourse Units
0.20	-	0.52	=	-0.32

3.4 Suggestions to Improve Biodiversity Gain

- 3.4.2 The change in biodiversity value for the Hurst Farm site as set out in *Table 1*, above, indicates that more clearly needs to be done if 10% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) is to be achieved. Post development, there is currently an expected net loss of habitat value across habitat area, linear features, and watercourses.
- 3.4.3 The best way to achieve this is always to reduce the amount of habitat being lost in the first place, if at all possible. If this is not achievable, then the next best alternative is to ensure that more habitat is created on-site, and to ensure that this represents enough Biodiversity Units to provide an overall 10% net gain. This will require modifications to the landscape drawings presented in *Figure 3*.
- 3.4.4 If there is insufficient available area within the development boundary, it may be necessary to look to enhance areas offsite and/or through third parties. The final alternative would be to pay for off-site biodiversity offsetting (for example through RSK Wilding). However, due to the associated expenses, all opportunities to retain and/or create more habitat on-site should be considered first. One advantage of offsetting off-site is that the liability for the long-term maintenance and management of the habitats is passed on.

REFERENCES

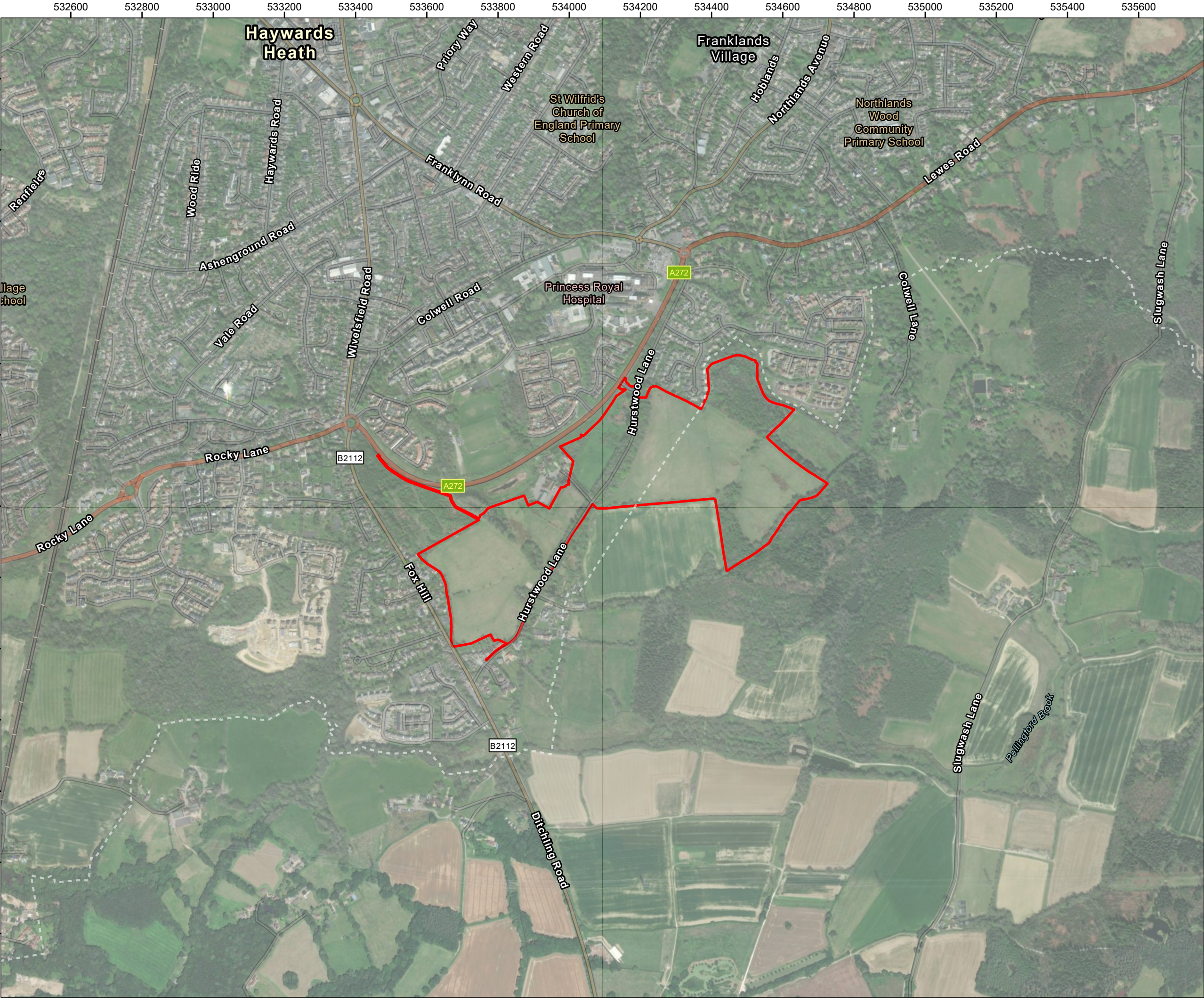
- Butcher, B., Carey, P., Edmonds, R., Norton, L. and Treweek, J. (2020), UK Habitat Classification – Habitat Definitions V1.1 at <http://ukhab.org>
- Natural England (2023), The Biodiversity Metric 4.0: User Guide (March 2023). Natural England.
- Natural England (2023a), The Biodiversity Metric 4.0: User Guide –Technical Annex (March 2023). Natural England.
- JNCC. (2010), Handbook for Phase 1 Habitat Survey (revised). JNCC, Peterborough.
- RSK Biocensus, 2023. 2485667 – Hurst Farm PEA 2023 (Rev00).
- C5116_010-16 Rev B Illustrative Masterplan_LR
- Draft Binder 2022-03-16_LR

FIGURES

Figure 1. Site Location Plan

Figure 2. UK Habs Map (Existing Baseline Habitats)

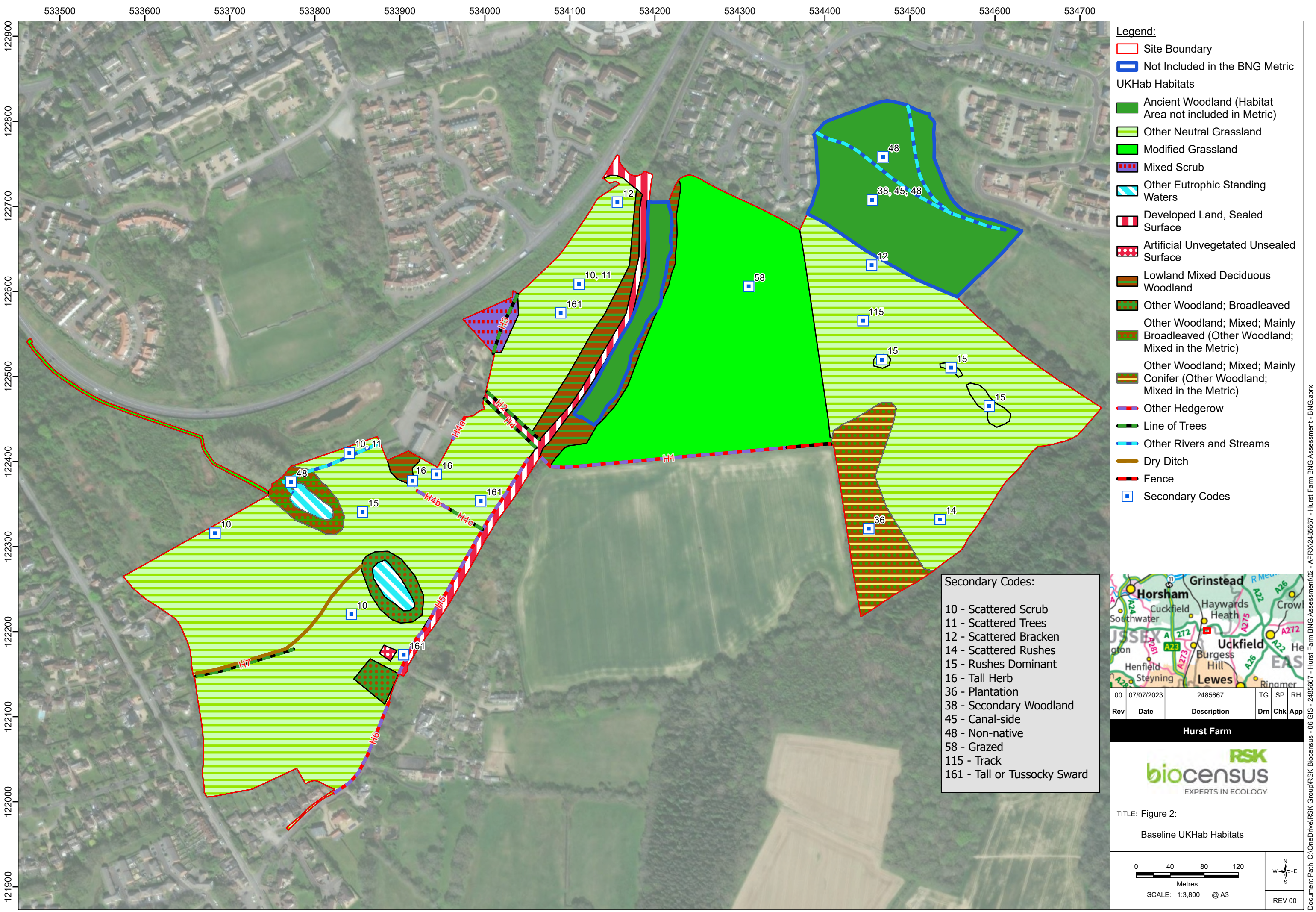
Figure 3. Proposed Development Habitats (based on landscaping plan provided by client)



Legend:

Site Boundary

00	26/06/2023	2485667	TG	SP	RH
Rev	Date	Description	Drn	Chk	App
Hurst Farm					
RSK biocensus EXPERTS IN ECOLOGY					
TITLE: Figure 1:					
Site Location Plan					
0125250375 Metres SCALE: 1:10,000 @ A3			N W E S REV 00		



- Legend:**
- Site Boundary
 - Not Included in the BNG Metric
 - UKHab Habitats**
 - Ancient Woodland (Habitat Area not included in Metric)
 - Other Neutral Grassland
 - Modified Grassland
 - Mixed Scrub
 - Other Eutrophic Standing Waters
 - Developed Land, Sealed Surface
 - Artificial Unvegetated Unsealed Surface
 - Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland
 - Other Woodland; Broadleaved
 - Other Woodland; Mixed; Mainly Broadleaved (Other Woodland; Mixed in the Metric)
 - Other Woodland; Mixed; Mainly Conifer (Other Woodland; Mixed in the Metric)
 - Other Hedgerow
 - Line of Trees
 - Other Rivers and Streams
 - Dry Ditch
 - Fence
 - Secondary Codes

- Secondary Codes:**
- 10 - Scattered Scrub
 - 11 - Scattered Trees
 - 12 - Scattered Bracken
 - 14 - Scattered Rushes
 - 15 - Rushes Dominant
 - 16 - Tall Herb
 - 36 - Plantation
 - 38 - Secondary Woodland
 - 45 - Canal-side
 - 48 - Non-native
 - 58 - Grazed
 - 115 - Track
 - 161 - Tall or Tussocky Sward



00	07/07/2023	2485667	TG	SP	RH
Rev	Date	Description	Drn	Chk	App

Hurst Farm

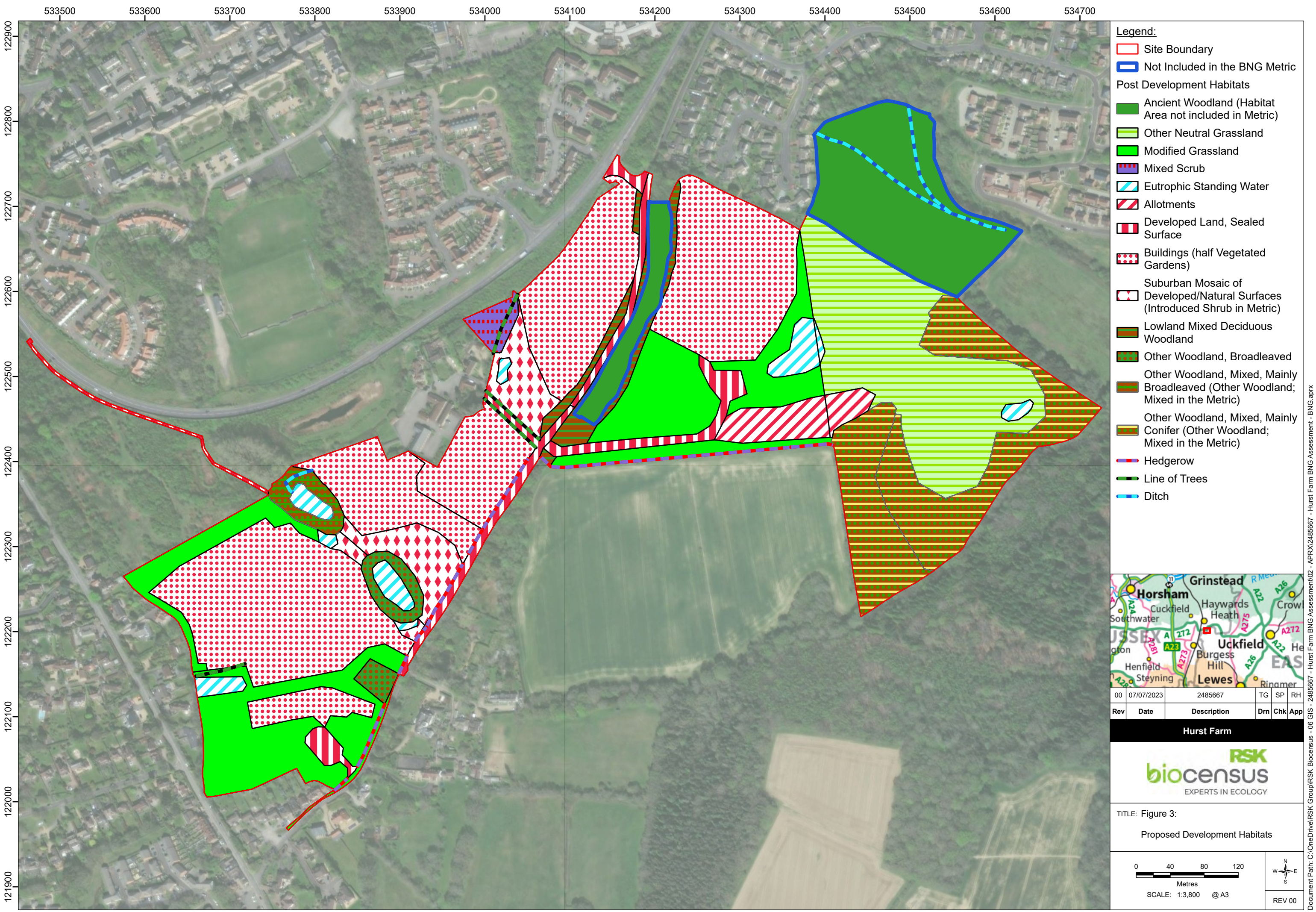


TITLE: Figure 2:
Baseline UKHab Habitats

04080120MetresSCALE: 1:3,800 @ A3

NWSE

REV 00



00	07/07/2023	2485667	TG	SP	RH
Rev	Date	Description	Drn	Chk	App

Hurst Farm



TITLE: Figure 3:
Proposed Development Habitats

04080120

Metres

SCALE: 1:3,800 @ A3

N
W
E
S

REV 00

APPENDIX A – DEFRA METRIC TABLES- BASELINE

Ref	Existing area habitats			Distinctiveness		Condition		Strategic significance			Required Action to Meet Trading Rules	Ecological baseline
	Broad Habitat	Habitat Type	Area (hectares)	Distinctiveness	Score	Condition	Score	Strategic significance	Strategic significance	Strategic Significance multiplier		
1	Grassland	Other neutral grassland	18.96	Medium	4	Moderate	2	Area/compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy	Low Strategic Significance	1	Same broad habitat or a higher distinctiveness habitat required	151.68
2	Grassland	Modified grassland	6.18	Low	2	Poor	1	Area/compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy	Low Strategic Significance	1	Same distinctiveness or better habitat required	12.36
3	Heathland and shrub	Mixed scrub	0.24	Medium	4	Moderate	2	Area/compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy	Low Strategic Significance	1	Same broad habitat or a higher distinctiveness habitat required	1.92
4	Urban	Developed land; sealed surface	0.73	V Low	0	N/A - Other	0	Area/compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy	Low Strategic Significance	1	Compensation Not Required	0.00
5	Lakes	Ponds (non-priority habitat)	0.27	Medium	4	Moderate	2	Area/compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy	Low Strategic Significance	1	Same broad habitat or a higher distinctiveness habitat required	2.16
6	Woodland and forest	Lowland mixed deciduous woodland	1.05	High	6	Poor	1	Area/compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy	Low Strategic Significance	1	Same habitat required =	6.30
7	Woodland and forest	Other woodland, broadleaved	0.42	Medium	4	Good	3	Area/compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy	Low Strategic Significance	1	Same broad habitat or a higher distinctiveness habitat required	5.04
8	Woodland and forest	Other woodland, mixed	1.68	Medium	4	Poor	1	Area/compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy	Low Strategic Significance	1	Same broad habitat or a higher distinctiveness habitat required	6.72
9	Urban	Artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface	0.02	V Low	0	N/A - Other	0	Area/compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy	Low Strategic Significance	1	Compensation Not Required	0.00

Baseline ref	Existing hedgerow habitats			Distinctiveness		Condition		Strategic significance			Required Action to Meet Trading Rules	Ecological baseline
	Hedge number	Hedgerow type	Length (km)	Distinctiveness	Score	Condition	Score	Strategic significance	Strategic significance	Strategic position multiplier		
1		Native hedgerow	0.49	Low	2	Good	3	Area/compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy	Low Strategic Significance	1	Same distinctiveness band or better	2.94
2		Native hedgerow	0.3	Low	2	Moderate	2	Area/compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy	Low Strategic Significance	1	Same distinctiveness band or better	1.20
3		Line of trees	0.43	Low	2	Good	3	Area/compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy	Low Strategic Significance	1	Same distinctiveness band or better	2.58

Baseline ref	Existing watercourse type		Distinctiveness		Condition		Strategic significance			Watercourse encroachment		Riparian encroachment		Required Action to Meet Trading Rules	Ecological baseline
	Watercourse type	Length (km)	Distinctiveness	Score	Condition	Score	Strategic significance	Strategic significance	Strategic significance multiplier	Extent of encroachment	Multiplier	Extent of encroachment for both banks	Multiplier		
1	Ditches	0.13	Medium	4	Poor	1	Area/compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy	Low Strategic Significance	1	No Encroachment	1	No Encroachment/ No Encroachment	1	Same habitat required =	0.52

APPENDIX B – DEFRA METRIC TABLES – POST-DEVELOPMENT

Post development / post intervention habitats																										
Broad Habitat		Proposed habitat	Area (hectares)	Distinctiveness	Score	Condition	Score	Strategic significance			Standard time to target condition (years)	Habitat created in advance (years)	Delay in starting habitat creation (years)	Standard or adjusted time to target condition	Final time to target condition (years)	Final time to target multiplier	Standard difficulty of creation	Applied difficulty multiplier	Final difficulty of creation	Difficulty multiplier applied	Habitat units delivered					
Grassland		Modified grassland	2.45	Low	2	Good	3	Area of compensation not in local strategy / no local strategy			1	7		Standard time to target condition applied	7	0.779	Low	Standard difficulty applied	Low	1	12.53					
Lake		Pond (non-priority habitat)	0.54	Medium	4	Moderate	2	Area of compensation not in local strategy / no local strategy			1	3		Standard time to target condition applied	3	0.599	Low	Standard difficulty applied	Low	1	3.88					
Urban		Allotments	0.71	Low	2	Moderate	2	Area of compensation not in local strategy / no local strategy			1	1		Standard time to target condition applied	1	0.945	Low	Standard difficulty applied	Low	1	2.74					
Urban		Developed land / developed area	6.41	Y Low	0	N/A - Other	0	Area of compensation not in local strategy / no local strategy			1	0		Standard time to target condition applied	0	1.000	Low	Standard difficulty applied	Medium	6.67	8.60					
Urban		Introducer / hub	1.20	Low	2	Condition Agreement N/A	1	Area of compensation not in local strategy / no local strategy			1	1		Standard time to target condition applied	1	0.945	Low	Standard difficulty applied	Low	1	2.47					
Woodland and forest		Other woodland, mixed	2.25	Medium	4	Moderate	2	Area of compensation not in local strategy / no local strategy			1	20		Standard time to target condition applied	20	0.243	Low	Standard difficulty applied	Low	1	6.21					
Urban		Vegetated garden	9.27	Low	2	Condition Agreement N/A	1	Area of compensation not in local strategy / no local strategy			1	1		Standard time to target condition applied	1	0.945	Low	Standard difficulty applied	Low	1	10.17					
Pre-populated but can be overridden																										
Proposed Broad Habitat		Proposed habitat	Distinctiveness change		Condition change		Area (hectares)	Distinctiveness	Score	Condition	Score	Strategic significance			Temporal risk multiplier			Difficulty risk multipliers				Habitat units delivered				
												Strategic significance	Strategic significance	Strategic position multiplier	Standard time to target condition (years)	Habitat enhanced in advance (years)	Delay in starting habitat enhancement (years)	Standard or adjusted time to target condition	Final time to target condition (years)	Final time to target multiplier	Standard difficulty of enhancement	Applied difficulty multiplier	Final difficulty of enhancement	Difficulty multiplier applied		
Woodland and forest		Other woodland, mixed	Medium - Medium		Poor - Moderate		1.03	Medium	4	Moderate	2	Area of compensation not in local strategy / no local strategy			Low Strategic Significance	1	10		Standard time to target condition applied	10	0.300	Low	Standard difficulty applied	Low	1	11.42
Proposed (Pre-populated but can be overridden)		Change in distinctiveness and condition		Length (km)	Distinctiveness		Condition		Strategic significance			Temporal multiplier			Difficulty risk multipliers				Hedge units delivered							
		Distinctiveness movement	Condition movement		Distinctiveness	Score	Condition	Score	Strategic significance	Strategic significance	Strategic position multiplier	Standard Time to target condition (years)	Habitat enhanced in advance (years)	Delay in starting habitat enhancement (years)	Standard or adjusted time to target condition	Final time to target condition (years)	Final Time to target multiplier	Standard difficulty of enhancement		Applied difficulty multiplier	Final difficulty of enhancement	Difficulty multiplier applied				
Native hedgerow		Low - Low	Moderate - Good	0.3	Low	2	Good	3	Area of compensation not in local strategy / no local strategy			Low Strategic Significance	1	2		Standard time to target condition applied	2	0.801	Low	Standard difficulty applied	Low	1	1.28			
Proposed habitats		Distinctiveness		Condition		Strategic significance			Temporal multiplier			Difficulty risk multipliers				Hedge units delivered										
Baseline ref	New hedge number	Habitat type	Length (km)	Distinctiveness	Score	Condition	Score	Strategic significance	Strategic significance	Strategic position multiplier	Standard Time to target condition (years)	Habitat created in advance (years)	Delay in starting habitat creation (years)	Standard or adjusted time to target condition	Final time to target condition (years)		Final time to target multiplier	Standard difficulty of creation	Applied difficulty multiplier	Final difficulty of creation	Difficulty multiplier applied					
1		Native hedgerow	0.08	Low	2	Good	3	Area of compensation not in local strategy / no local strategy			Low Strategic Significance	1	12		Standard time to target condition applied	12	0.682	Low	Standard difficulty applied	Low	1	0.20				

APPENDIX C – BASELINE DETAILED CONDITION ASSESSMENTS

This appendix presents the condition assessments of the baseline habitats against the condition sheets in the biodiversity metric 4.0 technical supplement published by Natural England, (2023a). Any deviations from the published guidance are explained and justified.

Baseline Habitat Ref 1

UKHAB classification	Grassland – Other Neutral Grassland		
Distinctiveness	Medium	Area / Length	18.96 ha
Condition Result	Moderate		
Justification	Seven habitat areas passed 4 out of 6 criteria, classifying habitat as “Moderate” condition.		

Baseline Habitat Ref 2

UKHAB classification	Grassland – Modified Grassland		
Distinctiveness	Low	Area / Length	6.18 ha
Condition Result	Poor		
Justification	Meeting assessment criteria for “Poor” condition.		

Baseline Habitat Ref 3

UKHAB classification	Heathland and shrub – Mixed Scrub		
Distinctiveness	Medium	Area / Length	0.24 ha
Condition Result	Moderate		
Justification	Meeting assessment criteria for “Moderate” condition.		

Baseline Habitat Ref 4

UKHAB classification	Urban – Developed land; Sealed surface		
Distinctiveness	Very Low	Area / Length	0.73 ha
Condition Result	N/A		
Justification	Hardstanding and buildings have no value in the biodiversity metric.		

Baseline Habitat Ref 5

UKHAB classification	Lakes – Ponds (non-priority habitat)		
Distinctiveness	Medium	Area / Length	0.27 ha
Condition Result	Moderate		
Justification	Retained.		

Baseline Habitat Ref 6

UKHAB classification	Woodland and Forest – Other woodland; mixed		
Distinctiveness	Medium	Area / Length	1.68 ha
Condition Result			Poor
Justification			
Mostly retained.			

Baseline Habitat Ref 7

UKHAB classification	Woodland and Forest – Lowland mixed deciduous woodland		
Distinctiveness	High	Area / Length	1.05 ha
Condition Result			Poor
Justification			
Meeting assessment criteria for “Poor” condition.			

Baseline Habitat Ref 8

UKHAB classification	Woodland and Forest - Other woodland; broadleaved		
Distinctiveness	Medium	Area / Length	0.42 ha
Condition Result			Good
Justification			
Of the 7 parcels with woodland, 4 were assessed as good condition, while 3 were assessed as being in moderate condition. However, access to Woodland 5 was not possible at the time of survey. Based on thirteen assessment criteria. Retained.			

Baseline Habitat Ref 9

UKHAB classification	Native hedgerow		
Distinctiveness	Low	Area / Length	0.49 km
Condition Result			Good
Justification			
Meeting conditions for “Good”, based on 8 criteria.			

Baseline Habitat Ref 10

UKHAB classification	Native hedgerow		
Distinctiveness	Low	Area / Length	0.3 km
Condition Result			Moderate
Justification			
Meeting conditions for "Moderate", based on 8 criteria.			

Baseline Habitat Ref 11

UKHAB classification	Line of trees		
Distinctiveness	Low	Area / Length	0.43 km
Condition Result			Good
Justification			
Based on 5 assessment criteria.			

Baseline Habitat Ref 12

UKHAB classification	Watercourses - Ditches		
Distinctiveness	Medium	Area / Length	0.13 km
Condition Result			Moderate / Poor
Justification			
Assessment based on 8 criteria, all of which need to be met to classify as “Good”.			

APPENDIX D – POST-DEVELOPMENT DETAILED CONDITION ASSESSMENTS

This appendix presents the assessment of the post-development habitats against the condition sheets in the biodiversity metric 4.0 technical supplement published by Natural England, (2023a). Any deviations from the published guidance are explained and justified.

Proposed Habitat Creation Ref 1

UKHAB classification	Grassland – Modified grassland		
Distinctiveness	Low	Area / Length	2.68 ha
Condition Result	Good		
Justification	Areas of wildflower grassland. It has been assumed that the grassland will be seeded and managed to achieve at least a moderate condition.		

Proposed Habitat Creation Ref 2

UKHAB classification	Lakes – Ponds (non-priority habitat)		
Distinctiveness	Medium	Area / Length	0.54 ha
Condition Result	Moderate		
Justification	Creation of a network of ponds throughout site.		

Proposed Habitat Creation Ref 3

UKHAB classification	Urban - Allotments		
Distinctiveness	Low	Area / Length	0.71 ha
Condition Result	Moderate		
Justification	Expected to reach target condition after 1 year, with low management.		

Proposed Habitat Creation Ref 4

UKHAB classification	Urban – Developed land; sealed surface		
Distinctiveness	Very Low	Area / Length	6.41 ha
Condition Result	N/A		
Justification	Hardstanding and buildings have no value in the biodiversity metric.		

Proposed Habitat Creation Ref 5

UKHAB classification	Urban – “Surburban mosaic of nat/dev surfaces”		
Distinctiveness	Low	Area / Length	1.28 ha
Condition Result	N/A		
Justification	Hardstanding and buildings have no value in the biodiversity metric.		

Proposed Habitat Creation Ref 6

UKHAB classification	Woodland and forest – Other woodland; mixed		
Distinctiveness	Medium	Area / Length	2.26 ha
Condition Result	Moderate		
Justification	Plantation of native trees, expected to take 30 years to reach target condition, with appropriate management.		

Proposed Habitat Creation Ref 7

UKHAB classification	Urban – Vegetated garden		
Distinctiveness	Low	Area / Length	5.27 ha
Condition Result	N/A		
Justification	It has been assumed that the gardens will be vegetated likely with lawn. This has a default poor condition.		

Proposed Habitat Creation Ref 8

UKHAB classification	Native Hedgerow		
Distinctiveness	Low	Area / Length	0.05 km
Condition Result	Good		
Justification	Planting of length of native, species-rich hedgerow which will attain “Good” condition with appropriate management.		

Proposed Habitat Enhancement Ref 1

UKHAB classification	Woodland and forest – Other woodland; mixed		
Distinctiveness	Medium	Area / Length	1.68 ha
Condition Result	Good		
Justification	Enhancement of “Poor” condition habitat to “Good” condition, delivering 13.31 Habitat units.		

Proposed Habitat Enhancement Ref 2

UKHAB classification	Grassland - Other neutral grassland		
Distinctiveness	Medium	Area / Length	4.16 ha
Condition Result	Good		
Justification	Enhancement of “Moderate” condition habitat to “Good” condition, delivering 44.93 Habitat units.		

UKHAB classification	Grassland – Modified		
Distinctiveness	Medium	Area / Length	2.28 ha
Condition Result	Moderate		
Justification	Enhancement of “Poor” condition habitat to “Moderate” condition, delivering 7.75 Habitat units.		

UKHAB classification	Native Hedgerow		
Distinctiveness	Low	Area / Length	0.3km
Condition Result	Good		
Justification	Enhancement from "Moderate" to "Good" condition, delivering 1.76 Linear Habitat Units		



RSK Biocensus is owned by RSK Environment Ltd
Registered office
Spring Lodge, 172, Chester Road, Helsby, Frodsham, England, WA6 0AR, UK
Registered in England No. 04364279
www.rsk.co.uk