TIM MOYA ASSOCIATES

Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment

Shepherds Cottage
Twineham
Hickstead
Mid Sussex
RH17 5NP

July 2025

250160-ED-01

Limitations and Copyright

Project	Shepherds Cottage, Sayers Common
Report Type	Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment
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Original Report Date	14.07.2025
Updates	

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NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

This report assesses the Biodiversity Net Gain or loss anticipated as a result of the proposed development at Shepherds Cottage, Sayers Common. The proposed development involves the construction of a domestic greenhouse, on an area of artificial unsealed surface and an access track consisting of an area of artificial unsealed surface connecting the greenhouse to the farmyard.

The baseline habitat calculations are based on-site habitat data collected prior to development-related activities (see report for details). The post-development habitat calculations are based on proposed landscape plans (see report for details).

The Statutory Biodiversity Metric calculation tool (DEFRA, 2023b) (Microsoft excel format) contains full details of the calculations and results. As such, the Statutory Biodiversity Metric calculator spreadsheet should always accompany this report and vice versa.

Key results and conclusions:

The development is anticipated to result in a Biodiversity Net Gain of **+0.37 biodiversity units (+52.62%)**, compared with the baseline habitats present. This is largely due to the retention of valuable habitats, the proposed enhancement of existing areas of other neutral grassland and the additional of fourteen newly planted trees.

The development is anticipated to result in no change in the number of hedgerow units due to the retention of the species-rich native hedgerow with trees along the northern boundary of the site. In order to achieve a 10% net gain in biodiversity value **0.09 hedgerow units** need to be provided. This shortfall in biodiversity units can either be compensated through the creation of 0.03 km of new species-rich native hedgerow in ‘moderate’ condition on site or via financial contribution to an established off-setting project to achieve biodiversity gains off-site.

1 INTRODUCTION

Background

1.1 This report has been instructed by Lisa Vohmann Architecture.

1.2 The proposed development involves the construction of a domestic greenhouse, on an area of artificial unsealed surface and an access track consisting of an area of artificial unsealed surface connecting the greenhouse to the farmyard.

Purpose of the report

1.3 This report assesses the biodiversity value of the baseline habitats present within the site before any clearance, and the proposed development-related changes to the development site. This report provides an overview of the change in biodiversity value (Biodiversity Net Gain/Loss) generated by the proposals.

Planning Legislation and Policy

1.4 In England, Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) is mandatory under Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as inserted by Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021). All planning permissions granted (with some exemptions) must deliver at least 10% Biodiversity Net Gain compared to the pre-development biodiversity value of the on-site habitat, resulting in more or better-quality natural habitats.

1.5 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, 2024) states that planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, and that plans should identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity.

Site description and location

1.6 The central grid reference for the site is TQ2614819138. The site covers approximately 0.19 hectares and is dominated by a grazed field classified as ‘other neutral grassland’. A native species-rich native hedgerow with trees defines the northern boundary of the site. A proportion of the other neutral grassland was removed in 2022 to facilitate the creation of areas of artificial unsealed surface at the location of the proposed greenhouse and an access track connecting the greenhouse to the farmyard.

1.7 These areas of other neutral grassland have been retrospectively included within the baseline habitats of the site in accordance with government guidance for undertaking BNG assessments which states:

'*Where unauthorised degradation of the onsite habitat has taken place on the land between 30 January 2020 and the date of relevant date, the biodiversity pre-development value of the onsite habitat should be calculated as the biodiversity value of the habitat on the date immediately before the carrying out of these degradation activities. The relevant date should therefore be set as a date immediately before these activities. Unauthorised degradation of onsite habitat is any degradation which is not in accordance with a previous planning permission.'*

1.8 The site is located in Sayers Common, Hickstead. The surrounding area is dominated by pasture and farmland with rural residential dwellings present throughout the landscape. Hickstead Racecourse is located to the north-east of the site.

Limitations and Exclusions

1.9 This assessment has been produced using the information available at this stage. As such, the assessment is based on a number of important assumptions. This report aims to make any such assumptions explicit so that they can be reviewed or updated as appropriate.

1.10 The Habitat Survey can only provide a snapshot of habitat classifications present at the time of the survey. As the attributes of the site and its habitats may change over time, this report is broadly considered valid for a duration of **two years**, after which time it is recommended that an updated site assessment is undertaken.

1.11 Biodiversity Net Gain assessments and calculations can only provide a proxy measure for the real long-term biodiversity changes that occur on any given site. Whilst the Statutory Biodiversity Metric calculation tool (DEFRA, 2023b) assesses the numerical losses and gains of habitats affected as part of the development, it does not include certain other important outcomes or benefits that cannot be assessed numerically, for example the use of a site by protected species. Such factors should be assessed separately.

2 METHODOLOGY

Pre-development habitat information

2.1 For reference, the pre-development habitat plan is included in Appendix 1 of this report.

2.2 This report is based on data collected during a survey undertaken on 17th March 2025 by Brooke Waites, Principal Ecologist of TMA, an experienced ecological consultant and Associate Member of the Chartered Institute for Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM). During the survey the weather conditions were not considered to pose any limitations to the survey. The vegetation and habitat types within the site were noted during the survey in accordance with the categories specified in the UK Habitat Classification system (UKHab Ltd., 2023), subsequently adjusted to fit the categories available within the Statutory Biodiversity Metric calculation tool (DEFRA, 2023b). Dominant plant species were recorded for each habitat present.

2.3 The site was accessed during March 2025, a time when some plant species may not be evident. Although the survey was not undertaken during the core season for botanical surveys, given the limited number of habitats present, this is not considered to constitute a limitation to this Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment. Where further botanical surveys are considered necessary, these have been recommended within this report.

2.4 All areas included within the Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment were accessed fully.

Post-development habitat information

2.5 The post-development habitat calculations are based on the following supplied plans, showing the proposed development layout and landscaping (at this stage):

- Proposed Layout, Lisa Vohmann Architecture, 26.04.2025
- Updated TOPO(1), Lisa Vohmann Architecture, 26.06.2025

2.6 For reference, a post-development habitat plan is included in Appendix 3 of this report. Please note, this plan may be superseded or updated without warranting an update of this report, if the changes are insignificant to the impact of the development on biodiversity. The version included within this report is for indicative purposes only and should not be relied upon as the definitive landscape design.

Habitat Classifications

2.7 Details of the habitats recorded within the development site are included in the 'User comments' columns of the Statutory Biodiversity Metric calculation tool (DEFRA, 2023b) accompanying this report.

Biodiversity Net Gain calculations

2.8 The value of the on-site habitats is calculated using the Statutory Biodiversity Metric calculation tool (DEFRA, 2023b). Once the biodiversity value of the baseline and proposed habitats is calculated, this tool is then used to measure the anticipated overall Biodiversity Net Gain or Loss of the proposed development.

2.9 The value for biodiversity of a habitat is measured using 'biodiversity units'. These are calculated based on the type of habitat (based on the UK Habitat Classification, "UKHab") and the size and condition of each habitat parcel. The metric also considers whether the habitat and/or its location is identified locally (typically in a relevant policy or plan) as being of strategic significance for nature.

2.10 Habitats which are to be created, restored or enhanced during the development are calculated with additional consideration given for the difficulty of creating or restoring the habitat and the length of time it takes for a habitat to establish. This means that if a high-quality habitat is removed from the site and re-created elsewhere on the site, it is likely to result in a biodiversity net loss due to the length of time it will take to establish the new habitat and the risk that the habitat will never fully establish.

Condition Assessment

2.11 Part of the Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment process requires an estimate for the 'condition' of baseline and proposed habitats, as defined by the Statutory Biodiversity Metric Condition Assessments (DEFRA, 2023a).

2.12 The pre-development site survey described above has included an on-site assessment of each habitat type in accordance with the condition criteria. The survey was undertaken at an appropriate time of year to be able to sufficiently assess the condition of the habitat types present within the site. The condition categories for each habitat type are given within the Statutory Biodiversity Metric calculation tool (DEFRA, 2023b) accompanying this report. The full condition assessment data for each habitat type are included in Appendix 4 of this report.

Strategic Significance

2.13 The Statutory Biodiversity Metric User Guide (DEFRA, 2024c) states that "*Strategic significance is the local significance of the habitat based on its location and habitat type. You should use the relevant published Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) … to assign strategic significance. If an LNRS has not yet been published, a relevant planning authority should specify alternative documents for assigning strategic significance whilst an LNRS is put in place*". Other plans, policies and strategies considered for the assessment of Strategic Significance include the following: Local Plans and Neighbourhood Plans, Local Planning Authority Local Ecological Networks, Tree Strategies, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plans, Biodiversity Action Plans, Species and protected sites conservation strategies, Woodland strategies, Green Infrastructure Strategies, River Basin Management Plans, Catchment Plans and Catchment Planning Systems, Shoreline management plans, Estuary Strategies.

2.14 The Strategic Significance categories are further explained in Appendix 6 of this report.

2.15 It is understood that Mid Sussex does not currently have a published Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS). TMA are also not aware of alternative plans, policies or strategies currently specified by the Local Planning Authority for the assessment of Strategic Importance for Biodiversity Net Gain assessment.

2.16 The following habitats have been classified as 'Formally identified in local strategy':

- Native species-rich native hedgerow with trees defining the northern boundary of the site.
- Fourteen proposed rural trees to be planted within the site.

The Mid Sussex District Plan 2014 – 2031 recognises that trees, woodland and hedgerows make a valuable landscape, amenity and biodiversity contribution to the District, both in urban and rural areas. Policy DP37: Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows formally supports the protection of trees, woodland and hedgerows, as well as encouraging new planting.

2.17 All other habitat types have been classed as 'Area/compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy'.

Trading Rules

2.18 As outlined in The Statutory Biodiversity Metric User Guide (DEFRA, 2024c) losses of habitat must be compensated for on a 'like for like or better' basis. If the Trading Rules are not satisfied, then a net gain is not achieved, even if the overall result shows an increase in value.

2.19 Low Distinctiveness habitat losses must be replaced with habitats of the same or higher distinctiveness. Medium Distinctiveness habitat losses must be replaced by habitats of either Medium Distinctiveness with the same broad habitat category as was lost, or any habitat of higher distinctiveness from any broad habitat category. High Distinctiveness habitat losses must be replaced with habitats of the same specific habitat type. Very High Distinctiveness Habitat (VHDH) losses should be avoided in line with planning policy. Any losses of VHDH require bespoke compensation to be agreed with the relevant planning authority.

2.20 The Trading Rules only apply up to the point of 'no net loss' for each habitat lost. Gains above 'no net loss' can be achieved using any habitat type.

The Biodiversity Gain Hierarchy

2.21 The Biodiversity Gain Hierarchy and its effect for the purpose of the statutory framework for biodiversity net gain is set out in Articles 37A and 37D of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015. This hierarchy (which does not apply to irreplaceable habitats) sets out a list of priority actions:

- First, in relation to habitats which have a medium, high and very high distinctiveness, the **avoidance** of adverse effects from the development must be prioritised and, if they cannot be avoided, those effects must be **mitigated**.
- Then, in relation to all habitats which are adversely affected by the development, the adverse effect should be compensated by prioritising in order, where possible, the **enhancement** of existing on-site habitats, **creation** of new on-site habitats, allocation of registered **off-site gains** and finally the purchase of **biodiversity credits**.

2.22 Planning authorities must take into account how the Biodiversity Gain Hierarchy has been applied.

3 SUMMARY OF IMPACTS

Purpose

3.1 This section describes the changes that are anticipated as a result of the proposed development. This is arranged to demonstrate how the Biodiversity Gain Hierarchy (see above) has been applied. The Statutory Biodiversity Metric calculation tool, accompanying this report, details the changes numerically. For reference, the pre-development habitat plan is included in Appendix 1 of this report and the post-development habitat plan is included in Appendix 3.

Description of baseline habitats

3.2 The 'baseline' habitats within the site prior to any development-related activity include a grazed field classified as 'other neutral grassland'. A native species-rich native hedgerow with trees defines the northern boundary of the site.

Unavoidable Habitat Losses

3.3 The following habitat losses are due to occur to accommodate the proposed development:

- An area of grassland approximately 0.04 ha is due to be removed to accommodate the development.

Impact Avoidance

3.4 Impacts on habitats of medium, high and very high distinctiveness have been **avoided** as follows:

- Other than the area noted above that will be removed, all remaining grassland will be protected.

Impact Mitigation

3.5 Impacts on habitats of medium, high and very high distinctiveness have been **mitigated** as follows:

- No mitigation recommended.

Enhancement of existing on-site habitats

3.6 The following existing habitats will be retained, and measures will be taken to **enhance** their condition:

- The majority of the retained other neutral grassland habitat dominating the site will be enhanced by additional seeding and improved long-term management. The aim of this measure is to improve the condition of the habitat from ‘Poor condition’ to ‘Moderate condition'.

Creation of new on-site habitats

3.7 The site planting and landscaping scheme for the proposed development will include the **creation** of the following habitat types:

- New trees will be planted adjacent to the greenhouse and along the northern and eastern boundaries of the site. Within the BNG metric calculation tool, these are classed as ‘Rural tree’.

Off-site gains

3.8 The following **off-site measures** will be implemented to create additional biodiversity value:

- No off-site measures recommended.

4 BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN ESTIMATE - RESULTS

Headline Results

4.1 The Statutory Biodiversity Metric calculation tool (DEFRA, 2023b) (Microsoft excel format) prepared for the proposed development contains full details of the calculations and results. As such, the Biodiversity Metric calculator spreadsheet should always accompany this report and vice versa. The figures given below provide an overview of key results only.

On-site baseline	*Habitat units*	0.70	
	Hedgerow units	0.91	
	Watercourse units	0.00	
On-site post-intervention (Including habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	*Habitat units*	1.07	
	Hedgerow units	0.91	
	Watercourse units	0.00	
On-site net change (units & percentage)	*Habitat units*	0.37	52.62%
	Hedgerow units	0.00	0.00%
	Watercourse units	0.00	0.00%

Total net unit change (Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	*Habitat units*	0.37
	Hedgerow units	0.00
	Watercourse units	0.00
Total net % change (Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	*Habitat units*	52.62%
	Hedgerow units	0.00%
	Watercourse units	0.00%
Trading rules satisfied?	Yes ✓	

Habitat Units

4.2 As shown above, the Statutory Biodiversity Metric calculation tool concludes that the development is anticipated to result in an **increase** in habitat units compared with the 'baseline' site prior to development activities. As can be seen in the calculation tool, this is largely due to the proposed retention and enhancement of valuable habitat types and addition of new areas of tree planting in the new development.

Trading Rules

4.3 As explained earlier in this report, losses of certain habitat types must be compensated for on a 'like for like or better' basis. If the Trading Rules are not satisfied, then a net gain is not achieved, even if the overall result shows an increase in value.

4.4 As can be seen in the results summary above, in this case the Trading Rules have been satisfied, by compensating any loss in habitat value with appropriate habitat types.

Hedgerow Units

4.5 Hedgerow units are counted separately. As shown above, the Statutory Biodiversity Metric calculation tool concludes that the development is anticipated to result in no overall change in hedgerow units. This is due to the retention of the native species-rich hedgerow with trees which is already considered to achieve 'good' condition.

5 NEXT STEPS

Achieving 10% Biodiversity Net Gain

5.1 While the development is expected to result in a net gain in habitat biodiversity value, the Statutory Biodiversity Metric calculation tool (DEFRA, 2023b) concludes that the development of the site is anticipated to result in no overall change in hedgerow biodiversity value.

5.2 In order to achieve a Biodiversity Net Gain of 10% above the baseline hedgerow value, and meet the necessary Trading Rules, based on the calculations informing this report, an **additional 0.09 hedgerow units** must be generated.

5.3 This outstanding shortfall in hedgerow units can either be compensated through the creation of 0.03 km of new species-rich native hedgerow in 'moderate' condition on site or via financial contribution to an established off-setting project to achieve biodiversity gains off-site.

Biodiversity Gain Plan

5.4 Once planning permission is granted, details of all on-site habitat commitments and/or off-site off-setting commitments (where applicable) should be established and detailed within a Biodiversity Gain Plan, to be secured by the standard Biodiversity Net Gain planning permission wording (Gov.uk, 2024). The Biodiversity Gain Plan is required to be submitted to and approved by the planning authority before development may commence.

Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan

5.5 Once planning permission is granted, a Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (HMMP) will be produced for significant on-site habitats and off-site habitats (if applicable). The HMMP will cover a 30-year period with more detail provided for the 1-3 year implementation and 3-5 year maintenance period. The HMMP will also contain proposals for monitoring visits and frequency of visits and scope for remedial works / changes to management prescriptions. Drawings and maps will be produced to allow accurate monitoring.

5.6 The HMMP should detail the following:

- Management of the on-site or off-site habitats.

- When and how habitats will be monitored (this will vary for different types of habitat).
- When and how monitoring results will be reported.
- When and how management proposals will be reviewed.
- How habitat management may change to achieve the habitats or wider outcome.

5.7 Appendix 5 of this report includes the criteria that new, retained and enhanced habitats must target in order to achieve the anticipated habitat condition categories and achieve the predicted Biodiversity Net Gain score.

5.8 If any biodiversity units will be purchased from an established off-setting project, the provider will provide the necessary Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan for those habitats.

6 REFERENCES

- Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) (2019). Net gain. Summary of responses and government responses.
- Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) (2023a). The Statutory Biodiversity Metric Condition Assessments at Statutory Biodiversity Metric Condition Assessments
- Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) (2023b). The Statutory Biodiversity Metric Calculation Tool at Statutory Biodiversity Metric Calculation Tool
- Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) (2024c). The Statutory Biodiversity Metric user guide at The Statutory Biodiversity Metric
- Gov.uk (2024). Suggested text for Biodiversity Gain Information on the written decision notice: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/663251d969098ded31fca800/BNG_Decision_Notice_Text.odt
- Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (2024). National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).
- UKHab Ltd (2023). UK Habitat Classification Version 2.0 at https://www.ukhab.org

7 APPENDICES

Appendix 1 - Baseline Habitat Plan

Appendix 2 - Photographs

Appendix 3 – Proposed Site Layout (subject to change)

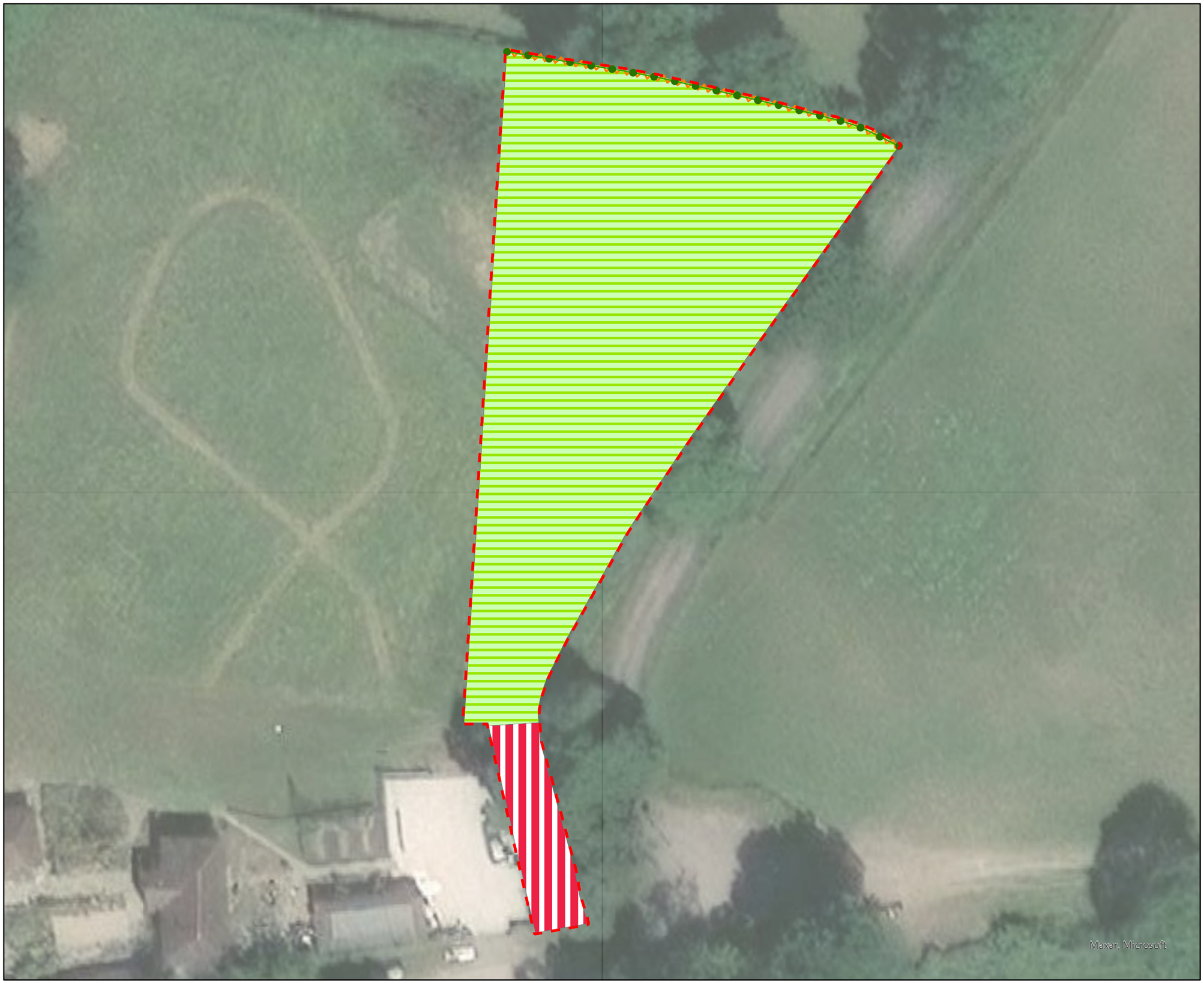
Appendix 4 - Baseline Habitat Condition Assessments

Appendix 5 - Targeted Habitat Condition Criteria

Appendix 6 – Strategic Significance Definitions

Appendix 1 - Baseline Habitat Plan

0 5 10 20 30 Metres



Legend

NORTH

- Site Boundary
- Species-rich native hedgerow with trees
- Other neutral grassland
- Developed land, sealed surface

REV	Date	Description	Drawn by
Base Drawing:		Shepherds Cottage Location - Site designation existing 2024	

Title:
BNG Baseline Habitat Plan

Client:
Lisa Vohmann Architecture

Project:
Shepherds Cottage, Sayers Common

Date	Drawn by	Authorised
10/07/2025	PK	PS
Drawing No	**Rev**	**Scale**
250160-EC-05	-	1:400@A3

Appendix 2 - Photographs

Photo 1 – Grassland habitats at greenhouse location	Photo 2 – Access track viewed facing north

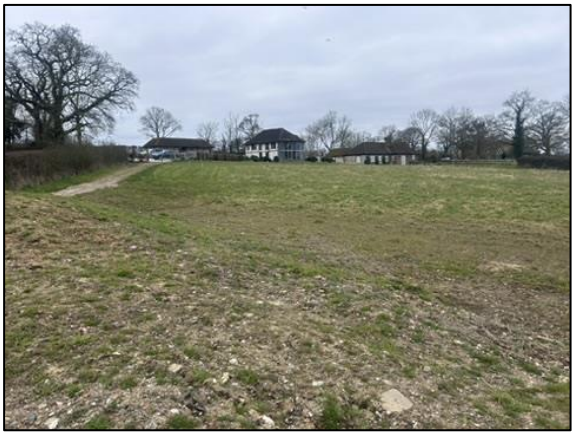
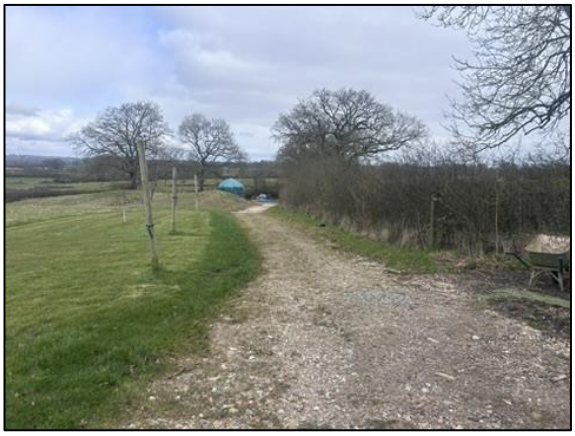
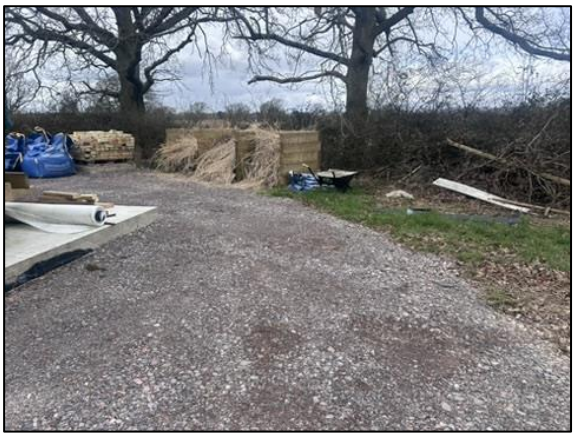
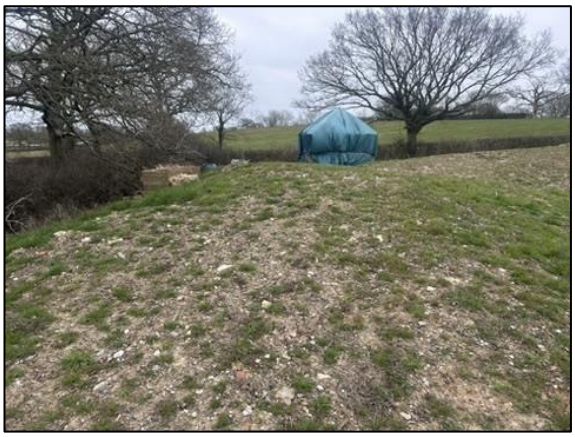
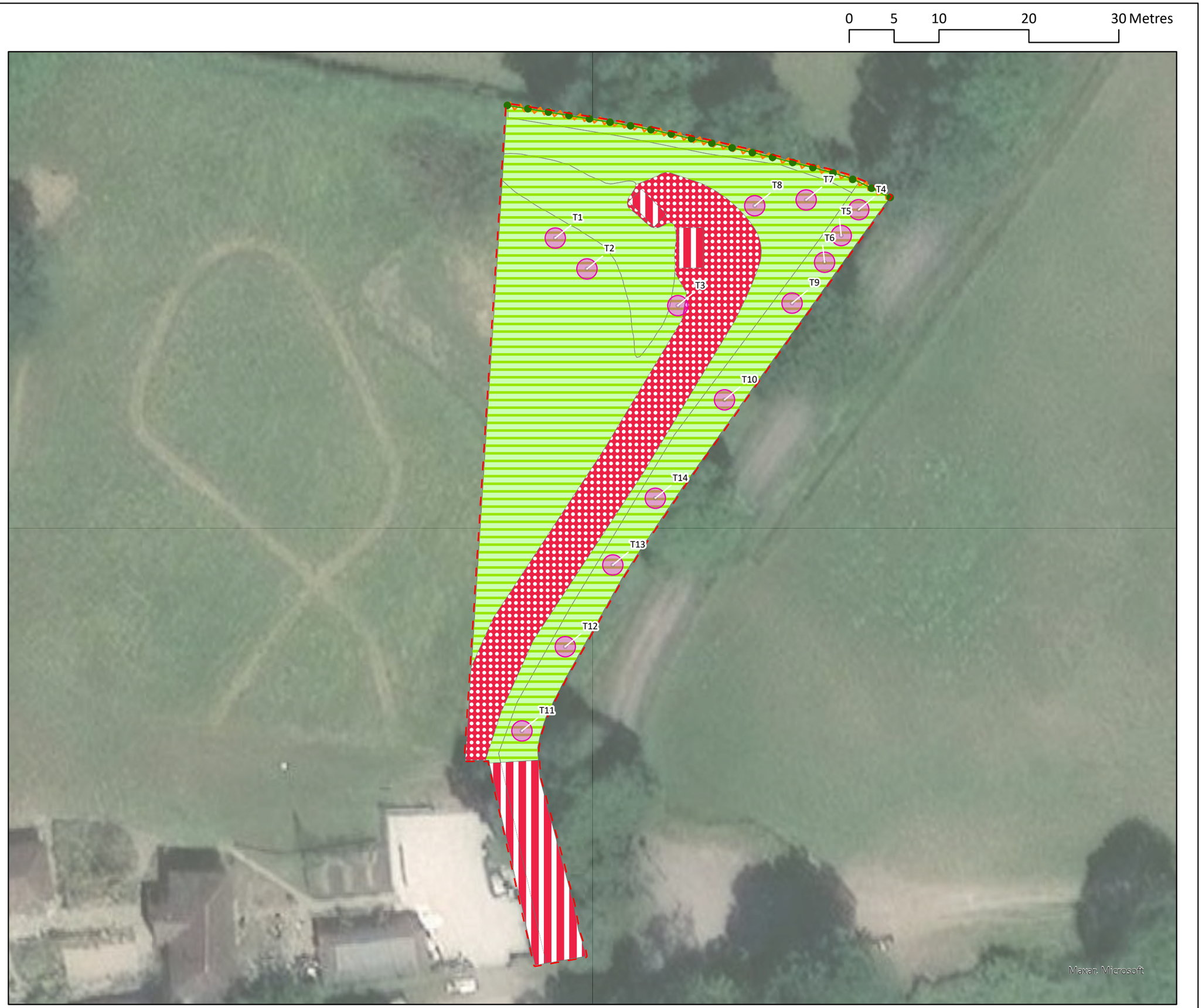

	

Photo 3 – Artificial unsealed surface present within the site.	Photo 4 – Grassland habitat at northern extent of the site.
	

Appendix 3 – Proposed Site Layout (subject to change)



Legend

NORTH

- Site Boundary
- Species-rich native hedgerow with trees
- Other neutral grassland
- Developed land, sealed surface
- Artificial unvegetated unsealed surface
- Proposed Trees

REV	Date	Description	Drawn by
Base Drawing:	Proposed layout / Updated TOPO		

Title:
BNG Proposed Habitat Plan

Client:
Lisa Vohmann Architecture

Project:
Shepherds Cottage, Sayers Common

Date	Drawn by	Authorised
10/07/2025	PK	PS
Drawing No	**Rev**	**Scale**
250160-EC-06	-	1:400@A3

Appendix 4 - Baseline Habitat Condition Assessments

BNG Condition Assessment Report

Item Code	Object ID	Habitat type	Note	Condition Score
HA	23	Grassland - Other neutral grassland	Grassland (Med-VHigh) (Lowland calcareous grassland, Lowland dry acid grassland, Lowland meadows, Other lowland acid grasslands, Other neutral grassland, Tall Herb communities, Upland acidic grassland, Upland calcareous grassland, Upland hay meadows, Sparsely vegetated land - Calaminarian grassland) A. The grassland is a good representation of the habitat type it has been identified as, based on its UKHab description - the appearance and composition of the vegetation closely matches the characteristics of the specific grassland habitat type. Indicator species listed by UKHab for the specific grassland habitat type are consistently present. Note - this criterion is essential for achieving Moderate or Good condition for non-acid grassland types only. Criterion passed(Y/N): N Notes/Justification: Grassland sward lacked indicator species and was not respresentative of habitat type. B. Sward height is varied (at least 20% of the sward is less than 7 cm and at least 20% is more than 7 cm) creating microclimates which provide opportunities for insects, birds and small mammals to live and breed. Criterion passed(Y/N): Y Notes/Justification: Unmanaged grassland with a varied sward height particularly along the boundaries. C. Cover of bare ground is between 1% and 5%, including localised areas, for example, rabbit warrens. Criterion passed(Y/N): N Notes/Justification: No notable areas of bare ground recorded. D. Cover of bracken Pteridium aquilinum is less than 20% and cover of scrub (including bramble Rubus fruticosus agg.) is less than 5%. Criterion passed(Y/N): Y Notes/Justification: No bracken recorded. E. Combined cover of species indicative of sub-optimal condition and physical damage (such as excessive poaching, damage from machinery use or storage, damaging levels of access, or any other damaging management activities) accounts for less than 5% of total area. If any invasive non-native plant species (Sch. 9) are present, this criterion is automatically failed. Criterion passed(Y/N): N Notes/Justification: No Non-native invasive plants were recorded, however, damage accounted for greater than 5% F. (Additional Criterion - must be assessed for all non-acid grassland types) There are 10 or more vascular plant species per m2 present, including forbs that are characteristic of the habitat type (species referenced in Footnote 2 and 4 cannot contribute towards this count). Note - this criterion is essential for achieving Good condition for non-acid grassland types only. Criterion passed(Y/N): N Notes/Justification: Not more than 10 vascular plant species per m2 present. Condition Assessment result Poor (1)- Passes 2 or fewer criteria OR Passes 3- 4 criteria (excluding criterion A)	Poor
HL	27	Hedgerow - Species-rich native hedgerow with trees	Hedgerow A1.Height: (Minimum for favourable condition)>1.5 m average along length: The average height of woody growth estimated from base of stem to the top of the shoots, excluding any bank beneath the hedgerow, any gaps or isolated trees. Newly laid or coppiced hedgerows are indicative of good management and pass this criterion for up to a maximum of four years (if undertaken according to good practice).	Good

Item Code	Object ID	Habitat type	Note	Condition Score
HL	27	Hedgerow - Species-rich native hedgerow with trees	A newly planted hedgerow does not pass this criterion (unless it is >1.5 m height). Criterion passed(Y/N): Y Notes/Justification: Average height above 1.5 m A2.Width: (Minimum for favourable condition)>1.5 m average along length: The average width of woody growth estimated at the widest point of the canopy, excluding gaps and isolated trees. Outgrowths (such as blackthorn Prunus spinosa suckers) are only included in the width estimate when they are >0.5 m in height. Laid, coppiced, cut and newly planted hedgerows are indicative of good management and pass this criterion for up to a maximum of four years (if undertaken according to good practice). Criterion passed(Y/N): N Notes/Justification: Average width approximately 1 m B1.Gap- hedge base: (Minimum for favourable condition) Gap between ground and base of canopy <0.5 m for >90% of length: This is the vertical 'gappiness' of the woody component of the hedgerow, and its distance from the ground to the lowest leafy growth. Certain exceptions to this criterion are acceptable (see page 65 of the Hedgerow Survey Handbook). Criterion passed(Y/N): Y Notes/Justification: B2.Gap - hedge canopy continuity: (Minimum for favourable condition) Gaps make up <10% of total length; and No canopy gaps >5 m: This is the horizontal 'gappiness' of the woody component of the hedgerow. Gaps are complete breaks in the woody canopy (no matter how small). Access points and gates contribute to the overall 'gappiness' but are not subject to the >5 m criterion (as this is the typical size of a gate). Criterion passed(Y/N): Y Notes/Justification: C1.Undisturbed ground and perennial vegetation: (Minimum for favourable condition) >1 m width of undisturbed ground with perennial herbaceous vegetation for >90% of length: · Measured from outer edge of hedgerow; and · Is present on one side of the hedgerow (at least): This is the level of disturbance (excluding wildlife disturbance) at the base of the hedgerow. Undisturbed ground is present for at least 90% of the hedgerow length, greater than 1 m in width and must be present along at least one side of the hedgerow. This criterion recognises the value of the hedgerow base as a boundary habitat with the capacity to support a wide range of species. Cultivation, heavily trodden footpaths, poached ground etc. can limit available habitat niches. Criterion passed(Y/N): Y Notes/Justification: C2.Nutrient-enriched perennial vegetation: (Minimum for favourable condition) Plant species indicative of nutrient enrichment of soils dominate <20% cover of the area of undisturbed ground: The indicator species used are nettles Urtica spp., cleavers Galium aparine and docks Rumex spp. Their presence, either singly or together, does not exceed the 20% cover threshold. Criterion passed(Y/N): Y Notes/Justification: Common nettle particularly dominant D1.Invasive and neophyte species: (Minimum for favourable condition) >90% of the hedgerow and undisturbed ground is free of invasive non-native plant species (Sch. 9) and recently introduced species:	Good

Item Code	Object ID	Habitat type	Note	Condition Score
HL	27	Hedgerow - Species-rich native hedgerow with trees	Recently introduced species refer to plants that have naturalised in the UK since AD 1500 (neophytes). Archaeophytes count as natives. For information on archaeophytes and neophytes see the JNCC website, as well as the BSBI website where the 'Online Atlas of the British and Irish Flora' contains an up-to-date list of the status of species. For information on invasive non-native species see the GB Non-Native Secretariat website. Criterion passed(Y/N): Y Notes/Justification: No evidence of Non-native invasive species D2.Current damage: (Minimum for favourable condition) >90% of the hedgerow or undisturbed ground is free of damage caused by human activities: This criterion addresses damaging activities that may have led to or lead to deterioration in other attributes. This could include evidence of pollution, piles of manure or rubble, or inappropriate management practices (e.g., excessive hedgerow cutting). Criterion passed(Y/N): Y Notes/Justification: No evidence of damage Criteria Met: 6 Condition Score: Good	Good

Appendix 5 - Targeted Habitat Condition Criteria

To achieve the Biodiversity Net Gain scores detailed within this report and the accompanying Biodiversity Metric calculator, the following criteria must be met for the habitats proposed for enhancement or creation. Habitat types not included below are exempt from Condition Assessment.

BNG Condition Assessment Report

Item Code	Object ID	Habitat type	Note	Condition Score
HA	5, 7, 8, 9, 12, 13, 14, 15	Grassland - Other neutral grassland	ENHANCED HABITAT AREA Grassland (Med-VHigh) (Lowland calcareous grassland, Lowland dry acid grassland, Lowland meadows, Other lowland acid grasslands, Other neutral grassland, Tall Herb communities, Upland acidic grassland, Upland calcareous grassland, Upland hay meadows, Sparsely vegetated land - Calaminarian grassland) A. The grassland is a good representation of the habitat type it has been identified as, based on its UKHab description - the appearance and composition of the vegetation closely matches the characteristics of the specific grassland habitat type. Indicator species listed by UKHab for the specific grassland habitat type are consistently present. Note - this criterion is essential for achieving Moderate or Good condition for non-acid grassland types only. Criterion passed(Y/N): Y Notes/Justification: This criterion will be addressed by selecting an appropriate turf or seed mix that will support the development of habitat representative of other natural grasslands. B. Sward height is varied (at least 20% of the sward is less than 7 cm and at least 20% is more than 7 cm) creating microclimates which provide opportunities for insects, birds and small mammals to live and breed. Criterion passed(Y/N): Y Notes/Justification: Site will be grazed allowing for the formation of a varied sward height. C. Cover of bare ground is between 1% and 5%, including localised areas, for example, rabbit warrens. Criterion passed(Y/N): N Notes/Justification: Small patches of bare ground are expected to develop naturally. However, coverage of bare ground between 1% and 5% can not be guarenteed and therefore this criteria has not been specifically targeted. D. Cover of bracken Pteridium aquilinum is less than 20% and cover of scrub (including bramble Rubus fruticosus agg.) is less than 5%. Criterion passed(Y/N): Y Notes/Justification: There is no bracken present on site, and scrub will not be permitted to develop in this area, with manual removal undertaken if necessary. E. Combined cover of species indicative of sub-optimal condition and physical damage (such as excessive poaching, damage from machinery use or storage, damaging levels of access, or any other damaging management activities) accounts for less than 5% of total area. If any invasive non-native plant species (Sch. 9) are present, this criterion is automatically failed. Criterion passed(Y/N): N Notes/Justification: Non-native invasive species are not present and are not expected to establish, however physical damage may account for more 5% and therefore this criterion will not be specifically targeted. F. (Additional Criterion - must be assessed for all non-acid grassland types) There are 10 or more vascular plant species per m2 present, including forbs that are characteristic of the habitat type (species referenced in Footnote 2 and 4 cannot contribute towards this count). Note - this criterion is essential for achieving Good condition for non-acid grassland types only. Criterion passed(Y/N): Y Notes/Justification: This criterion will be addressed by selecting an appropriate turf or seed mix that will support the development of habitat representative of other natural grasslands.	Moderate

Item Code	Object ID	Habitat type	Note	Condition Score
HA	5, 7, 8, 9, 12, 13, 14, 15	Grassland - Other neutral grassland	Condition Assessment result Moderate (2) - Passes 3 or 4 criteria including passing essential criterion A.	Moderate

250160 - Shepherds Cottage, Sayers Common

			Criteria								
Object ID	Size	Species	A	B	C	D	E	F	Number of Criteria met	Condition	Comments
T1	Small		N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	3	Moderate	
T2	Small		N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	3	Moderate	
T3	Small		N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	3	Moderate	
T4	Small		N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	3	Moderate	
T5	Small		N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	3	Moderate	
T6	Small		N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	3	Moderate	
T7	Small		N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	3	Moderate	
T8	Small		N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	3	Moderate	
T9	Small		N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	3	Moderate	
T10	Small		N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	3	Moderate	
T11	Small		N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	3	Moderate	
T12	Small		N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	3	Moderate	
T13	Small		N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	3	Moderate	
T14	Small		N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	3	Moderate	

Condition Assessment Criteria

Criteria A:	The tree is a native species (or at least 70% within the block are native species).
Criteria B:	The tree canopy is predominantly continuous, with gaps in canopy cover making up <10% of total area and no individual gap being >5m wide (individual trees automatically pass this criterion).
Criteria C:	The tree is mature (or more than 50% within the block is mature).
Criteria D:	There is little or no evidence of an adverse impact on tree health by human activities (such as vandalism, herbicide or detrimental agricultural activity). And there is no current regular pruning regime, so the trees retain >75% of expected canopy for their age range and height.
Criteria E:	Natural ecological niches for vertebrates and invertebrates are present, such as presence of deadwood, cavities, ivy or loose bark.
Criteria F:	More than 20% of the tree canopy area is oversailing vegetation beneath.

Appendix 6 – Strategic Significance Definitions

The Statutory Biodiversity Metric User Guide (DEFRA, 2023c) Strategic Significance categories are summarised as follows:

High (*Formally identified within the local strategy*)

Where there is a published Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS):

- The location of the habitat parcel has been mapped in the Local Habitat Map as an area where a potential measure has been proposed to help deliver the priorities of that LNRS; and
- The intervention is consistent with the potential measure proposed for that location.

Or, where there is no published LNRS and the habitat type is mapped and described as locally ecologically important within a specific location, within documents specified by the relevant planning authority. If your project delivers the mapped measure set out in the LNRS or alternative strategy (where the LNRS is not yet available) you should:

- Record strategic significance as low in the baseline.
- record strategic significance as high in post intervention sheets.
- record which plan you have used in the user comments.

Medium (*Location ecologically desirable but not in local strategy*)

This category cannot be applied where the LNRS is published, or where the habitat and location is included within other strategic documents specified by the relevant planning authority. Users should:

- Explain how the habitat type is ecologically important within a specific location.
- Demonstrate the importance of that habitat in providing ecological linkage to other strategically significant locations.
- Use professional judgement.

Low (*Area/compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy*)

Where the definitions for high and medium strategic significance are not met. Even if your project is within a plan area, if it does not deliver the specific actions outlined in these plans you should:

- record strategic significance as low in the baseline.
- record strategic significance as low in post-intervention sheet.