

Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan

September 2025

Project Reference: PR-0408-24

Morton House Farm

Birdy Brow

Clitheroe

BB7 9QY

National Grid Reference: SD 68804 40270



Morton House Farm, Birdy Brow, Clitheroe, BB7 9QY
Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan

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Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan Checklist		
Project and Development Information		Checklist of Contents (Mark Green if included, Red if not included)
Site or development name	Morton House Farm	<u>1. Project Background</u> Project Information Funding Legal Agreement Summary of Habitat Proposal and Plan Site Boundary Map Site Context Map Phasing Strategy Roles & Responsibilities Land Use Summary Site Context Photos Site Baseline and Environmental Information Checklist Environmental Information <u>2. Planned Management Activities</u> Management Plan Aims and Objectives Design Principles Informed by Baseline Information Habitat and Condition Targets Habitat Retention Habitat Retention and Protection Measures Plan Creation, Enhancement and Management Targets and Prescriptions Habitat Creation, Enhancement and Management – Risk Register and Remedial Measures <u>3. Monitoring Schedule</u> Monitoring Strategy Monitoring Methods and Intervals Monitoring Reports Adaptive Management
Planning application ref number (if applicable)	3/2024/0867	
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Developer or Client details	P Wilson & Company	
Author details	Rachel Brown Qualifying CIEEM Tyrer Ecological Consultants Ltd	
Name and reference of HMMP	PR-0408-24 Morton House Farm– HMMP	
Date checklist completed	26/09/2025	
Sections Excluded Justification		
Funding: to be agreed between client and LPA Legal Agreement: to be agreed between client and LPA Site Context Map: see previously produced ecological reports Phasing Strategy: not applicable Site Context Photos: see previously produced ecological reports Environmental Information: see previously produced ecological reports Habitat Retention and Protection Measures Map: not applicable Monitoring Reports: not clear whether council or private firm will undertake monitoring		

1.0 Introduction & Objectives

- 1.1 As part of a granted planning application with Ribble Valley Borough Council (Application Reference Number: **3/2024/0867**¹) regarding Morton House Farm, Clitheroe, Tyrer Ecological Consultants Ltd were commissioned to carry out a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Assessment (see **External Appendices**).
- 1.2 This follows on from a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal also undertaken at the site, although this report acts as an addendum to the BNG Assessment and does not aim to provide information in relation to any of the other conditions in respect of protected / priority species and habitats.
- 1.3 The nationwide introduction of mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) required by the Environment Act 2021 was implemented in February 2024 for major applications and April 2024 for minor applications. In summary, all developments, with minor exceptions, are required to achieve a 10% net gain in biodiversity units as calculated using the Defra Statutory Metric.
- 1.4 Where land is being enhanced to offset development, a 30-year management plan is typically required to secure the forecast gains in biodiversity units. This plan, referred to as a Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (HMMP), details habitat creation, enhancement and monitoring measures that will allow the habitats on site to achieve and maintain their required conditions in accordance with the provided BNG assessment.
- 1.5 As per government guidance, only 'Significant on-site enhancements' require HMMPs². Significant on-site enhancements are defined as creation / enhancement of habitats of medium or higher distinctiveness, enhancements to habitat condition, or creation / enhancement of habitats of lower distinctiveness which are significant relative to the size of the development / relative to the baseline biodiversity of the site³.
- 1.6 Tyrer Ecological Consultants Ltd (Tyrer Ecological) were therefore commissioned by P Wilson & Company to provide an HMMP for Morton House Farm ("the site", see **Figure 1.1** overleaf) by providing extensive information in relation to the creation, management and continued maintenance of relevant habitats for a period of 30 years, as per guidance within the Statutory BNG Metric and the Environment Act 2021.
- 1.7 Proposals are understood to involve the construction of a domestic equestrian riding area incorporating pathways for the applicant and their horses, with two additional area within the wider ownership set aside for habitat enhancement.
- 1.8 The above measures will result in a **11.16% net-gain in Habitat units** and a **13.57% net-gain in Hedgerow units**. In terms of specific unit changes, the metric output indicates a gain of **0.09 Habitat units** and **0.01 Hedgerow units**.
- 1.9 The Landowner (applicant), or their appointed agent (i.e. habitat management company) will be responsible for habitat creation, management, and maintenance within all areas of the offsetting areas; as well as commissioning regular monitoring to be undertaken by a suitably qualified person. Regular inspection of the site, keeping records of all work, inspections, issues and corrective action will be required. These records will feed into the wider monitoring of the site in accordance with Biodiversity Net Gain legislation and the site's HMMP. A list of

¹ See: <https://webportal.ribblevalley.gov.uk/planningApplication/36919>

² Guidance available here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/creating-a-habitat-management-and-monitoring-plan-for-biodiversity-net-gain>

³ Extracted from government guidance here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/make-on-site-biodiversity-gains-as-a-developer#significant-on-site-enhancements>

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Maintenance Operations will be included to help inform the body which takes on the management and maintenance of this landscape.

NB: *The body managing the habitat does not need to be an ecologist, but should be familiar with the Tyrer Ecological report(s) as a minimum, the projected aims and objectives for the site, target habitat conditions, ecological sensitives and have sufficient authority and presence to influence activities. In the event of any uncertainty about ecological issues surrounding the habitat, the body is responsible for contacting an Ecologist.*

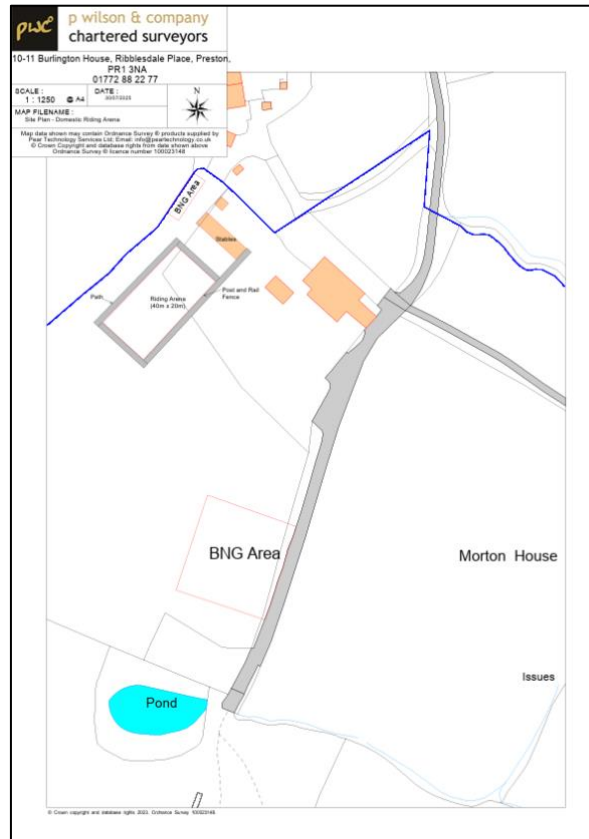


Figure 1.1 – Site Plan © P Wilson & Company

Aims

- 1.10 The general aims for the management and maintenance of the habitats at the site include the following:
- Maintain and manage the newly created / enhanced habitat at the stated target condition for the period of at least 30 years.
 - Ensure maintenance of the site habitat in a safe and secure condition.
 - Provide an enhanced / novel habitat on the site which will benefit biodiversity both within the site and the immediate vicinity and contributes towards the wider ecological network and nature recovery.

Possible Constraints to Creation, Management & Maintenance

- 1.11 Any management that would result in offences under protective legislation pertaining to wildlife **cannot** be undertaken and additional measures may be required to ensure wildlife is protected. As such, creation and management provisions are devised to ensure conformity with all relevant legislation, which includes (but is not limited to); the Wildlife and Countryside Act (WCA) 1981 (as amended), the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (NERC

Act) 2006, the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (EU Exit) (as amended) and the Invasive Alien Species (Enforcement and Permitting) Order (IASO) 2019.

1.12 The key species groups which have the potential to be present on-site both during enhancement works and at the post-development stage, therefore requiring careful consideration during any management and / or maintenance operations, are:

- **Amphibians:** Many amphibian species are protected under legislation, with common toad (*Bufo bufo*) being a UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UKBAP) species and common frog (*Rana temporaria*) legislated under a variety of local BAPs (LBAP), and great crested newt (GCN) (*Triturus cristatus*) are fully protected in all life stages by Schedule 2 of The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 (SI 2019/579) and the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) (as amended). They are listed a priority species under section 41 (s.41) of the Natural Environment Rural Communities Act 2006 (NERC Act). Should a GCN be observed at any time during management operations then work should cease and an ecologist be contacted for further advice.
- **Mammals:** Many mammalian species are protected under legislation, with hedgehog (*Erinaceus europaeus*) and brown hare (*Lepus europaeus*) listed as priority species under Section 41 (s.41) of the Natural Environment Rural Communities Act 2006 (NERC Act). These species alongside other small mammals are likely to be present within the various proposed habitats, at least in a foraging/commuting capacity. Should evidence of any protected species be observed onsite, Reasonable Avoidance Measures may be necessary to limit any impacts to the species.

1.13 Using the available baseline ecological information gathered, supported by the design information as has been communicated, the HMMP has been completed by the following author (see **Table 1.1** below):

Table 1.1 – HMMP Author credentials

Name	Description of most relevant credentials
Miss. R. Brown Qualifying CIEEM	• Consultant Ecologist with over two years of professional training and experience, • B.Sc. (Hons.) Environmental Science, • FISC 4 Botanist, • Undertaken a large number of BNG assessments and extensive training.

2.0 Baseline Site Conditions

- 2.1 The site comprises the development area and two additional parcels within the wider ownership to be utilised for habitat enhancement; the total area is 0.29 hectare (ha) comprising modified grassland, sparsely vegetated land and native hedgerow. The reader should refer to the site associated BNG and PEA reports (see **External Appendices**) for further information including site imagery. See **Figure 2.1** below for a UK Habitats map of the site at the baseline stage.

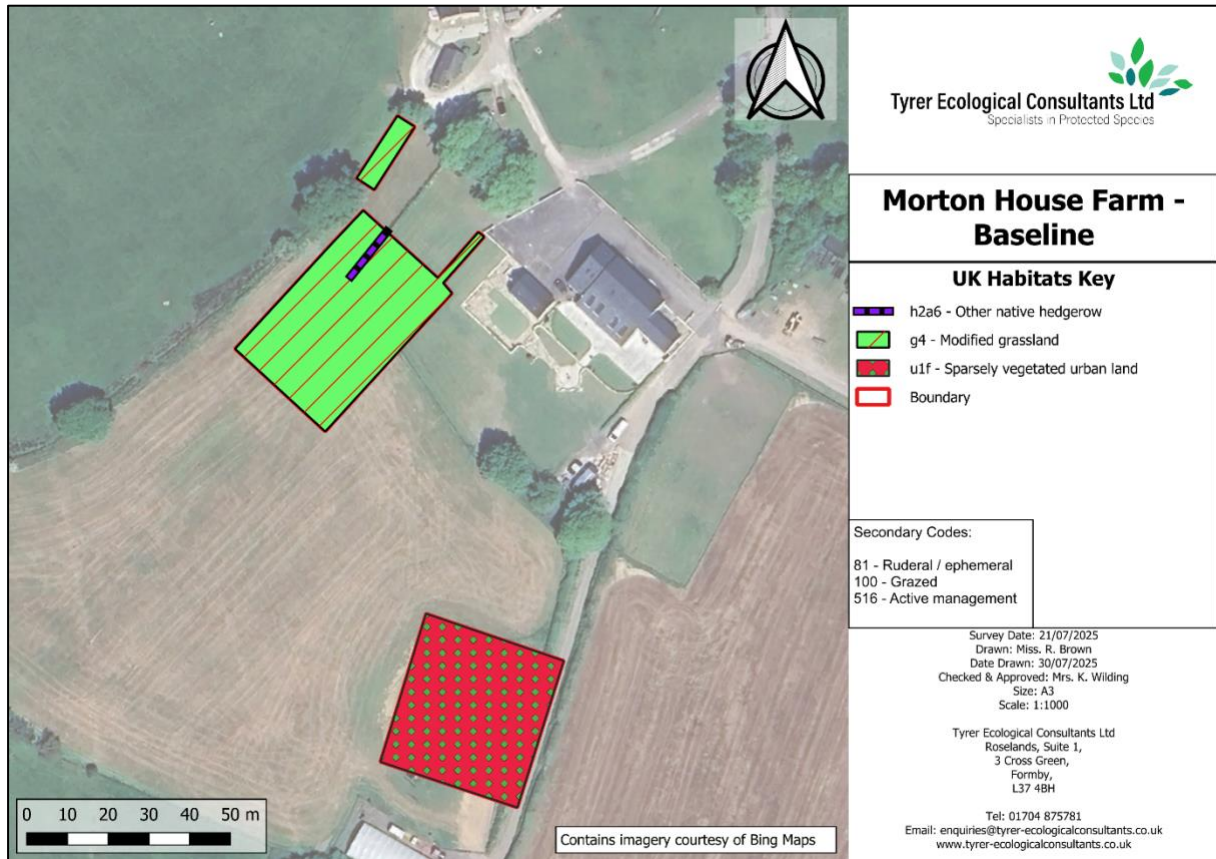


Figure 2.1 – Baseline UK Habitats Map

- 2.2 A summary of all baseline area and linear habitats identified are presented below in **Tables 2.1 – 2.2**, including area / length, condition summary, strategic significance and habitat / hedgerow units. For habitat specific condition assessment tables, please see **Appendix I**.

Table 2.1 – Baseline area habitat parcels recorded within the site boundary

Habitat Reference	Habitat Type	Area (ha)	Condition	Strategic Significance	Habitat units
1	g4	0.1413	Poor	Area/compensation not in local strategy	0.28
2	g4	0.0090	Poor	Area/compensation not in local strategy	0.02
3	u1f	0.1350	Moderate	Area/compensation not in local strategy	0.54

Table 2.2 – Baseline linear habitat recorded within the site boundary

Hedge Reference	Hedgerow Type	Length (km)	Condition	Strategic Significance	Hedgerow units
1	h2a6	0.0140	Moderate	Formally identified in local strategy	0.06

3.0 Habitat Management and Monitoring Plans

3.1 Summary

- 3.1.1 The proposed management prescriptions below have been created to ensure habitats achieve targeted criteria and reach intended habitat type and condition within their relevant times to target condition, as derived from the Statutory Metric, and are maintained for the full 30-year span of this HMMP. Targeted habitat types and conditions have been derived from the most recent BNG Assessment. See **Figure 3.1.1** below for a post-development habitat map.

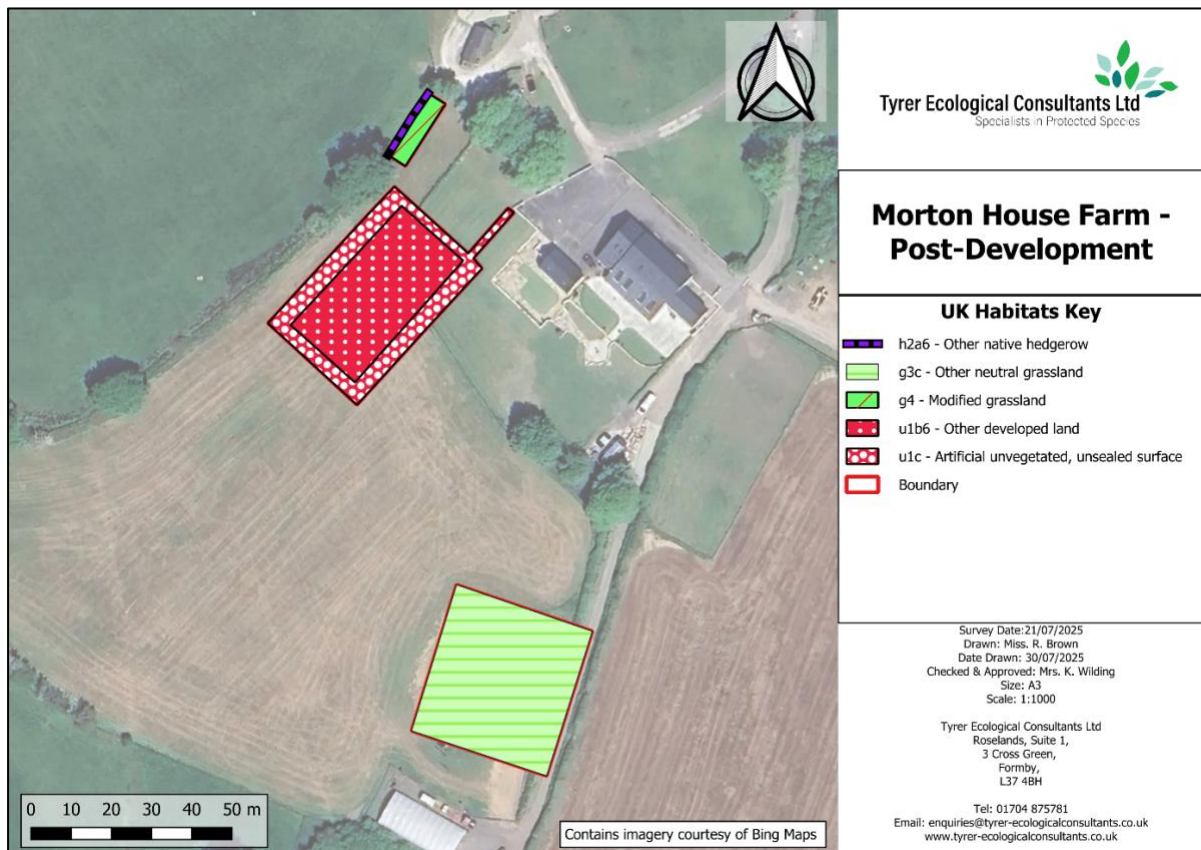


Figure 3.1.1 – Post-development UK Habitats Map

- 3.1.2 A summary of all post-development area and hedgerow habitats is presented below in **Table 3.1.1 – 3.1.2**, including area / length, condition summary, strategic significance and habitat / hedgerow units. For habitat specific condition assessment tables, please see **Appendix II**.

Table 3.1.1 – Post-development habitat parcels recorded within the site boundary

Habitat Reference	Habitat Type	Area (ha)	Condition	Strategic Significance	Habitat units
2	g4	0.0090	Moderate	Area/compensation not in local strategy	0.03
4	g3c	0.1350	Moderate	Area/compensation not in local strategy	0.90
5	u1b6	0.0853	N/A	Area/compensation not in local strategy	0.00
6	u1c	0.0560	N/A	Area/compensation not in local strategy	0.00

Table 3.2 – Post-development linear habitat recorded within the site boundary

Hedge Reference	Hedgerow Type	Length (km)	Condition	Strategic Significance	Hedgerow units
2	h2a6	0.0190	Moderate	Formally identified in local strategy	0.07

3.1.3 Per BNG user guidance regarding significant enhancements, the modified grassland and urban habitats to be created/enhanced on site (Habitat References 2, 5 & 6) are not considered 'significant' and thus have been excluded from this HMMP.

3.2 g3c – Other neutral grassland (Habitat Reference 4)

3.2.1 An area of other neutral grassland (Habitat Reference 4) will be created at the southern parcel; the area will be planted using 'Emorsgate Seeds EM3'. See Habitat Reference 4 in the associated BNG report.

3.2.2 UK Habitats v2.0⁴ defines other neutral grassland as the following:

"A neutral grassland that does not meet the definition of either g3a or g3b AND that meets at least three of these four criteria:

- 1. >20% cover of broadleaved herbs and sedges;*
- 2. >8 species per m² (including forbs, grasses, sedges and rushes, and excluding bryophytes);*
- 3. ≥1 grass species that is not generally sown for intensive agricultural production (ie. Rye-grasses Lolium spp., Timothy Phleum pratense, Cock's-foot Dactylis glomerata, Meadow fescue Festuca pratensis) is at least abundant;*
- 4. Cover of Rye-grasses Lolium spp. and White Clover Trifolium repens, where present, is <30%."*

Soil Conditions

3.2.3 Given the wide range of pH on which neutral grassland can develop, it is considered unlikely that soil conditions will be unsuitable for the establishment of neutral grasslands, with pH within the viable range, though fertility may be higher than desirable. High soil fertility, sometimes as a result of 'modification' through deliberate enrichment such as fertiliser application or other causes including runoff / nutrient input, can be gradually reduced through mowing and removal of cuttings. In the case of Morton House Farm, it is therefore considered likely that a mowing regime in combination with removal of cuttings will reduce enrichment over the course of the 30-year management period.

Species Assemblage

3.2.4 A variety of species are present within the selected seed mix, Emorsgate EM3 Special General Purpose Meadow Mixture⁵.

Habitat Creation

3.2.5 This habitat should be created through direct seeding of the above mix, following Emorsgate guidance on the rate of sowing. Initially, the area should be cleared and any perennial weeds

⁴ Available online: <https://ukhab.org/ukhab-documentation/>

⁵ See: <https://wildseed.co.uk/product/mixtures/complete-mixtures/general-purpose-meadow-mixtures/special-general-purpose-meadow-mixture/>

such as common nettle (*Urtica dioica*), docks (*Rumex sp.*) or thistles (*Cirsium sp.*) dug out. The land should then be raked, making it as level as possible.

- 3.2.6 When using a seed mix, the suitable seed mix should be sown on prepared ground, by digging and creating a fine seedbed or scarifying the grass. The seed mix should then be cast over the bare ground (typically in late August or September), ensuring the area is not too wet to avoid the seed sitting in standing water, before being trodden in and watered regularly, but not covered with soil. A sowing rate of four grams of seed per m² of habitat should be utilised. These species are generally perennial, and as such will be slow to germinate and grow and will not normally flower during the first season. Raking of seed should be avoided, as this can concentrate the seed distribution or bury the seed too deep. If there is a prolonged dry period, the seeded area may be lightly watered. Birds and other seed predators should be kept off the land as much as possible; deterrents can be installed to discourage predation where required.
- 3.2.7 Throughout the first growing season seeded areas should be topped up and mown in regular, two monthly intervals to ensure weeds do not become dominant, cutting height during this first year should be to approximately 50mm with a focus on establishment of grasses and removal of nutrients. For a minimum of two years following this first growing season, a biannual cut should take place to ensure establishment with the first, partial cut in mid-July to September leaving 10-20% uncut, and a second full cut in October – December removing late-season growth. All cut materials should be removed from site in order to prevent nutrient build-up within the soil.
- 3.2.8 Once the grassland is established, an annual varied cut will be carried out using a mower in late summer / early autumn (reducing sward height to no lower than 30mm, and no longer than 100mm, with at least 20% over 70mm and 20% under 70mm) to allow the seeds of late flowering species to fall prior to a cut. Cuttings will remain on-site for three to five days to following the cut to allow seeds to disperse, and then be removed in order to remove nutrients and promote the development of a species-rich sward and placed on habitat piles located on site.

Targeted Criteria Prescriptions

- 3.2.9 For the other neutral grassland to achieve 'Moderate' condition, three – five of the six condition assessment criteria need to be met including criterion A; for the context of this HMMP, only the criteria included in **Table 3.2.1** below will be targeted:

Table 3.2.1 – Specific management prescriptions in relation to each criterion

Criterion A
<i>"The parcel represents a good example of its habitat type, with a consistently high proportion of characteristic indicator species present relevant to the specific habitat type (and relative to Footnote 3 suboptimal species which may be listed in the UKHab description).</i> <i>Note – this criterion is essential for achieving Moderate or Good condition for non-acid grassland types only."</i>
Objective: To ensure that the habitat is representative of a UKHab description; that is to say, the habitat meets the specific criteria outlined in its description.
Management Prescriptions: 1. Planting of broadleaved herbs and sedges to cover a minimum of 20% of the habitat parcel.

2. Planting of additional species to meet a minimum of 8 species per m², targeting the incorporation of indicator species.
3. Planting of at least one grass species to abundance that is not generally sown for intensive agricultural production, such as common bent, false oat-grass, crested dog's-tail, or rough meadow-grass.
4. Removal of rye grasses and white clover where present to ensure a maximum of 30% cover of the habitat parcel.

Regular management prescriptions as per the other criteria below will all help to contribute to meeting the UKHabs description for each grassland type.

Criterion 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."

Objective: To ensure there is a varied sward throughout, ensuring that specific microclimates exist within the parcel to support a wide variety of fauna.

Management Prescriptions:

1. An annual and targeted cutting by mower in late summer / early autumn to allow the seeds of the later flowering species to fall prior to the cut.
2. Cut height should be varied using staggered bursts, leaving some areas (minimum of 20% of the habitat) uncut and above 7cm, and other areas (minimum of 20% of the habitat) cut to below 7cm.
3. Cuttings will remain on-site for three to five days following the cut to allow seeds to disperse, and then be removed in order to remove nutrients and promote the development of a species rich sward and placed on habitat piles located on site.
4. Sufficient variety of species should be present (see **Criterion A** above) so as to naturally achieve different heights at throughout the year a naturally varied sward height.

Criterion D

"Cover of bracken Pteridium aquilinum is less than 20% and cover of scrub (including bramble Rubus fruticosus agg.) is less than 5%."

Objective: To prevent encroachment of scrub or bracken, which may outcompete the specific species indicative of the habitat parcel and eventually change the habitat type.

Management Prescriptions:

1. Targeted thinning and removal of bracken when encroaching on the habitat, ensuring that it never exceeds 5% of cover within the parcel.
2. Targeted thinning and removal of scrub species when encroaching on the habitat, ensuring that they never exceed 20% of cover within the parcel.

NB: Scrub removal must not be undertaken during the breeding bird season which is 1st March to 31st August inclusive.

Criterion 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 (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA) are present, this criterion is automatically failed.”

Objective: To ensure that the indicator species indicative of the habitat identified are not outcompeted by noxious weeds or invasive species or are damaged due to over exposure and physical damage, leading to degradation of the habitat and potential loss of species.

Management Prescriptions:

1. Initial and continued removal of species indicative of sub-optimal condition when present. These species include creeping thistle, spear thistle, curled dock, broad-leaved dock, common nettle, creeping buttercup, greater plantain, white clover and cow parsley.
2. Preventing heavy machinery / excess grazing / high access levels to the habitat, meaning that areas with resulting damage make up less than 5% of the total habitat area. This may involve signage or fencing around the habitat parcel to prevent interference.
3. Initial and continued removal of any invasive non-native species, listed as such under Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) or Schedule 2 of the Alien Invasive Species Order (2019) by a qualified invasive species contractor in line with a precautionary working method statement with appropriate biosecurity protocol.

Schedule of Works

- 3.2.10 Inspect grassland annually when vegetation is beginning to flower (typically July – August) to ensure a diverse structure is maintained, check for signs of disease, invasive species and informing ensuing management prescriptions based on target habitat type.
- 3.2.11 **Table 3.2.2** below outlines a yearly calendar for the undertaking of the above management prescriptions.

Table 3.2.2 – Maintenance operations schedule for grassland

Operation	Months												Notes
	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	
Visual inspection of grassland							✓	✓					Inspect grassland annually
Year 1 management			a/r										Grassland should be reseeded, watered and mown as required
Year 2 onward cutting								✓	✓				Annual cut
INNS and injurious plants removal	a/r												Identify invasive plants and notify site manager, remove by hand or with aid of INNS contractor

Operation	Months												Notes
	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	
Remove injurious plants, scrub and bracken	✓	✓							✓	✓	✓	✓	Identify injurious plants and notify site manager, remove by hand
Reseeding/ seeding of bare areas								a/r					Following the creation processes
Table Key One operation per specified month – ✓ As required = a/r													

3.3 h2a6 – Other native Hedgerow (Hedge Reference 2)

3.3.1 A 19m length of native hedgerow will be planted within the northern site parcel. See Hedge Reference 2 in the associated BNG report.

3.3.2 The hedgerow must meet the qualifying threshold for the h2a6 habitat type. UK Habitats v2.0 defines native hedgerows as the following:

“A hedgerow with >80% canopy cover of UK native or archaeophyte woody species.”

Species Assemblage

3.3.3 Any planting scheme should consist of native species which are within their native range in northern England, though the wider ecological context should also be taken into consideration when selecting species; as well as creating a diverse species list, the scheme should aim to complement, enhance, and/or extend what native habitat exists on the site or in its immediacy. Suitable species for planting in the north can be found in **Table 3.3.1** below:

Table 3.3.1 – Suitable native species for planting to create/enhance hedgerows.

Hedgerow species		
Common Name	Scientific Name	Preferred Habitats
Blackthorn	<i>Prunus spinosa</i>	Scrub edges, hedgerow, moist, well-drained soil
Broom	<i>Cytisus scoparius</i>	Coastal, heathland, woodland, along hedgerows
Buckthorn	<i>Rhamnus catharticum</i>	Wet soils, woodland, wet heathland, riverbanks
Dogwood	<i>Cornus sanguinea</i>	Damp soils, clay substrate, generalist
Guelder-rose	<i>Viburnum opulus</i>	Damp, neutral/chalky soils
Hawthorn	<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>	Generalist, full sun
Hazel	<i>Corylus avellana</i>	Woods and hedgerow understories, drier soils
Holly	<i>Ilex aquifolium</i>	Non-chalky, free-draining soils
Honeysuckle	<i>Lonicera periclymenum</i>	Shade tolerant, woodland
Juniper	<i>Juniperus communis</i>	Chalk soils, lowland, moorland, rocky
Spindle	<i>Euonymus europaeus</i>	Woodland, nutrient rich soils

Habitat Creation

- 3.3.4 Planting is the most commonly used method for hedgerow creation and involves planting a chosen species mix of whips. Risks with the method are associated with the vulnerability of the whips during the first few years after planting. Plants may suffer from transplant shock, when they are more vulnerable to grazing and damage; however, through careful management these issues can be corrected / mitigated for through measures including replacing any dead whips, the introduction of protective fencing and shrub-guards. Taking this into account, along with the more rapid establishment of hedgerow and greater control of spacing under this method, planting is the recommended method for hedgerow creation.
- 3.3.5 Hedgerows should be double planted, with each line approximately 50cm apart. Individual whips should be spaced out roughly 20 – 30cm apart in a zig-zag pattern, planted following the 'Notch planting' technique, whereby 5 – 10 individuals of the same species are placed together at a density of at least 5 whips per metre. Whips should be 125cm – 150cm high, feathered from the bottom with breaks, and cut back to 60cm in height once in location on site.
- 3.3.6 To establish a wide base, during the first spring the branches should be cut back by 50% or to 60cm in height (with the exception of holly which should be left unmanaged in the first season). Any dead or diseased individuals should be removed, and the hedge should be 'Gapped up' hedge by replanting failed whips. The hedge should then be lightly trimmed every 2 years with the base trimmed every three years from the initial first trim during the first spring. The hedge should never be cut back to the same point, allowing it to grow outwards, which should create an 'A' shaped hedgerow. Trimming should occur in January and February.
- 3.3.7 Whips should be sourced from local UK provenances where possible to achieve a native species hedgerow which is best adapted to local conditions (British Standard 3936:1992 – Nursery Stock – Part 1), and to avoid introduction of pests and diseases such as ash dieback. Where local/community tree nurseries are not available, UK and Ireland Sourced and Grown (UKISG) certified stock should be utilised, sourced from seed zone 302.
- 3.3.8 All planting should be undertaken in the first planting season of habitat creation, with bare root stock to be planted between October – March and outside of periods of heavy rain/flooding, frost, or drought.
- 3.3.9 Holes for whips will be dug to a depth of 50cm; during digging any contaminants including rubbish will be removed. Whips should be protected from grazing/recreational activity while the hedgerow establishes, either by fencing or the use of shrub guards. Where recreational activity is likely, it is recommended that a timber post and wire netting fence is erected at least 1m either side of the newly established hedgerow alternatively where recreational activities are not predicted to cause damage to the whips, shrub guards should be used to protect them from grazing.
- 3.3.10 The whips should not need watering except in summer during times of drought; however, regular assessment should be made through the first two years to check for dry and curling leaves. Should watering be required, the earth around the whips should be thoroughly saturated to encourage roots to grow down to groundwater as opposed to up towards surface water.

Targeted Criteria Prescriptions

- 3.3.11 For the hedgerow to achieve 'Moderate' condition, it can fail no more than five criteria in total, and cannot fail both attributes in more than one functional group; for the context of this HMMP, only the criteria included in **Table 3.3.2** overleaf will be targeted:

Table 3.3.2 – Specific management prescriptions in relation to each criterion

Criterion B1: Gap – hedge base
<i>“Gap between ground and base of canopy <0.5 m for >90% of length</i> <i>This is the vertical ‘gappiness’ of the woody component of the hedgerow, and its distance from the ground to the lowest leafy growth.</i> <i>Certain exceptions to this criterion are acceptable (see page 65 of the Hedgerow Survey Handbook).”</i>
Objectives: To ensure that the gap between ground and base of canopy <0.5 m for >90% of length
Management Prescriptions: 1. After the initial trim in the first spring (see previous), the hedgerow should be trimmed every 2 years, these trims should follow the incremental cutting methodology whereby the hedge is not cut back to the same width each year and is instead allowed to increase in width the base should be cut every 3 / 5years. 2. If the hedgerow is mature and has been improperly managed the vertical gappiness of the hedgerow may need to be addressed through either coppicing or laying the hedge.
Criterion B2: Gap – hedge canopy continuity
<i>“Gaps make up <10% of total length; and</i> <i>No canopy gaps >5m</i> <i>This is the horizontal ‘gappiness’ of the woody component of the hedgerow. Gaps are complete breaks in the woody canopy (no matter how small).</i> <i>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).”</i>
Objectives: To ensure that gaps make up <10% of total length and no canopy gaps >5 m
Management Prescriptions: 1. The hedgerow should be monitored, and dead specimens replaced (a process known as ‘gapping up’). After the first 3 years of growth, care should be taken when planting new whips as shading may result in them failing. 2. Where re-planting is not considered suitable owing to the height/width or age of the hedgerow, the gappy section of hedgerow should be laid once mature enough.
Criterion C2: Nutrient-enriched perennial vegetation
<i>“Plant species indicative of nutrient enrichment of soils dominate <20% cover of the area of undisturbed ground.</i> <i>The indicator species used are nettles <i>Urtica</i> spp., cleavers <i>Galium aparine</i> and docks <i>Rumex</i> spp. Their presence, either singly or together, does not exceed the 20% cover threshold.”</i>
Objectives: To ensure that plant species indicative of nutrient enrichment of soils dominate <20% cover of the area of undisturbed ground.

Management Prescriptions:

1. The hedgerow margins should be monitored for species indicative of nutrient enrichment, these should be removed where they are considered to exceed the 20% threshold.
2. Avoidance of the use of fertilisers or other chemicals on the hedgerow or surrounding habitats to reduce nutrient enrichment.
3. Nutrient enrichment should be further avoided through raking and removal of any cuttings resulting from ground flora management such as mowing.

Criterion D1: Invasive and neophyte species

">90% of the hedgerow and undisturbed ground is free of invasive non-native plant species (including those listed on Schedule 9 of WCA) and recently introduced species.

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."

Objectives: To ensure that >90% of the hedgerow and undisturbed ground is free of invasive non-native plant species (including those listed on Schedule 9 of WCA) and recently introduced species.

Management Prescriptions:

1. Creation of an Invasive Non-Native Species (INNS) eradication method statement by a suitably qualified invasive species contractor, to include identification and mapping of all INNS where applicable.
2. Regular monitoring of the hedgerow should take place to ensure it remains free of invasive species after eradication.
3. Removal of neophyte species such as common field-speedwell (*Veronica persica*), Oxford ragwort (*Senecio squalidus*) and hedgerow crane's-bill (*Geranium pyrenaicum*). There are over 1,487 species of neophyte in the UK⁶.

Criterion D2: Current damage

">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)."

Objectives: To ensure that >90% of the hedgerow or undisturbed ground is free of damage caused by human activities.

Management Prescriptions:

1. Temporary fencing of areas suffering damage to the ground layer from pedestrian access along 'desire paths' through hedgerows.
2. Temporary fencing while hedgerows and their margins are establishing.
3. Sympathetic hedgerow management to follow the above prescriptions.

⁶ BSBI Plant Atlas 2020 - <https://plantatlas2020.org/background>

Schedule of Works

3.3.12 Inspect on a biannual basis when the majority of shrubs are in full leaf (typically May) to ensure that all individuals are healthy, and in winter prior to the undertaking of management activities. Any defects requiring remedial action should be recorded during these inspections.

3.3.13 **Table 3.3.3** below outlines a yearly calendar for the undertaking of the above management prescriptions.

Table 3.3.3 – Maintenance operations schedule for hedgerows

Operation	Months												Notes
	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	
Planting whips	✓	✓	✓							✓	✓	✓	Planting of suitable native species
First incremental trim	✓	✓											The hedgerow should be cut back to a height of 80cm to encourage growth
Following incremental trims	✓	✓											The hedge should be cut back every two years following its first trim.
Cutting the base of the hedge	✓	✓											The base of the hedge should be cut in increments as above every 3 years from planting.
Watering					a/r								Water once a week during the growing season or as required, and as necessary in periods of drought.
Biannual Monitoring/Maintenance					2						2	2	Twice yearly the hedgerow should be inspected.
Routine pruning										✓			Should not be required for the first few years.

Table Key

One operation per specified month – ✓
 As required = a/r

4.0 Monitoring Scheme

- 4.1 Through the 30-year duration for which this management plan covers, records should be kept of all operations carried out in relation to any part of the management plan. The actual management operations carried out can then be compared to the theoretical plan and any areas where there are discrepancies can be investigated further and changes can be made, either to the operation schedule or to the plan itself, to better reflect the nature of the habitat in question and to improve the efficacy of the scheme.
- 4.2 In the final year of the plan, the actual progress should be reviewed against the predicted status of the grassland and hedgerow in order to evaluate the effectiveness of the operations carried out up to that point. This information can then be used to inform a subsequent long-term management plan if it is deemed necessary by the local authority and/or site manager.
- 4.3 All of the species suggested within this plan have been carefully selected in accordance with local suitability for the north-west, and any plant material which is unsuitable or defective in any other way should not be considered.

Grassland Monitoring Scheme

- 4.4 Grassland reviews should be undertaken by an Ecologist or other suitably experienced botanist (i.e. FISC 4+) on the second, fourth, and fifth years, and every 5 years subsequent for the lifetime of the management plan, to assess whether the habitats are meeting the specific definitions. The extent of grassland establishment will be monitored, including percentage of ground cover, bare areas and presence of leaf litter. Sward composition will also be reviewed, with grass to herb ratio and indicator species considered. These reviews will then allow any parts of the plan which may not be achieving their objectives to be adjusted to better develop the scheme.

Hedgerow Monitoring Scheme

- 4.5 5-year monitoring reviews should only be undertaken by a suitably qualified person, typically an ecologist with an equivalent FISC 4 or greater botanical qualification, or an arborist. As a part of this, along with monitoring for presence of INNS/ undesirable botanical species and the success of shrubs, an updated condition assessment should be carried out using the appropriate BNG Metric condition assessment sheets, and changes in condition through increase or decrease in criteria scores relative to the baseline recorded.

Summary

- 4.6 For a summary of the monitoring scheme, see **Table 4.1** below:

Table 4.1 – Monitoring timetable for habitat monitoring scheme

Operation	Years										Notes
	1	2	3	4	5	10	15	20	25	30	
Grassland monitoring		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	See previous
Hedgerow monitoring		✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	See previous

Appendix I: Baseline Condition Assessment Sheets

Condition Assessment Score – Modified Grassland (Low) (Habitat Refs.: 1 & 2)

Condition Assessment Criteria		Habitat Reference	
		1	2
		Criterion passed (Y/N)	
A	There are 6-8 vascular plant species per m ² present, including at least 2 forbs. Note - this criterion is essential for achieving Moderate or Good condition. Where the vascular plant species present are characteristic of medium, high or very high distinctiveness grassland, or there are 9 or more of these characteristic species per m ² , please review the full UKHab description to assess whether the grassland should instead be classified as a higher distinctiveness grassland. Where a grassland is classed as medium, high, or very high distinctiveness, please use the relevant condition sheet.	N	N
B	Sward height is varied (at least 20% of the sward is less than 7 cm and at least 20% is more than 7 cm) creating microclimates which provide opportunities for vertebrates and invertebrates to live and breed.	N	N
C	Any scrub present accounts for less than 20% of the total grassland area. (Some scattered scrub such as bramble <i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg. may be present). Note - patches of scrub with continuous (more than 90%) cover should be classified as the relevant scrub habitat type.	Y	Y
D	Physical damage is evident in less than 5% of total grassland area. Examples of physical damage include excessive poaching, damage from machinery use or storage, erosion caused by high levels of access, or any other damaging management activities.	Y	Y
E	Cover of bare ground is between 1% and 10%, including localised areas (for example, a concentration of rabbit warrens).	Y	N
F	Cover of bracken <i>Pteridium aquilinum</i> is less than 20%.	Y	Y
G	There is an absence of invasive non-native plant species (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA).	Y	Y
Total Score		5	4
Condition Assessment Result		Condition Assessment Score	
Passes 6 or 7 criteria including passing essential criterion A		Good	
Passes 4 or 5 criteria including passing essential criterion A		Moderate	
Passes 3 or fewer criteria; OR Passes 4 - 6 criteria (excluding criterion A)		Poor	Y

Condition Assessment Score – Sparsely vegetated land (Habitat Ref.: 3)

Condition Assessment Criteria		Habitat Reference
		3
		Criterion passed (Y/N)
A	Vegetation structure is varied, providing opportunities for vertebrates and invertebrates to live, eat and breed. A single structural habitat component or vegetation type does not account for more than 80% of the total habitat area.	N
B	The habitat parcel contains different plant species that are beneficial for wildlife, for example flowering species providing nectar sources for a range of invertebrates at different times of year.	Y
C	Invasive non-native plant species (listed on Schedule 9 of WCA ¹) and others which are to the detriment of native wildlife (using professional judgement) cover less than 5% of the total vegetated area ³ . Note - to achieve Good condition, this criterion must be satisfied by a complete absence of invasive non-native species (rather than <5% cover).	Y
Total Score		2
Condition Assessment Result		Condition Assessment Score
• Passes all 3 core criteria; AND • Meets the requirements for Good condition within criterion C.		Good
• Passes 2 of 3 core criteria; OR • Passes 3 of 3 core criteria but does not meet the requirements for Good condition within criterion C.		Moderate
• Passes 0 or 1 of 3 core criteria.		Poor

Condition Assessment Score – Hedgerows (Hedge Ref.: 1)

Attributes and functional groupings (A, B, C, D & E)		Criteria	Description	Hedge Reference
				1 Criterion passed (Y/N)
A1.	Height	>1.5 m average along length	The average height of woody growth estimated from base of stem to the top of 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). A newly planted hedgerow does not pass this criterion (unless it is > 1.5 m height).	Y
A2.	Width	>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 <i>Prunus spinosa</i> 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).	N
B1.	Gap - hedge base	Gap between ground and base of canopy <0.5 m for >90% of length (unless 'line of trees')	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).	Y
B2.	Gap - hedge canopy continuity	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).	N
C1.	Undisturbed ground and perennial vegetation	>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 hedge (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.	Y

Morton House Farm, Birdy Brow, Clitheroe, BB7 9QY
Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan

Attributes and functional groupings (A, B, C, D & E)		Criteria	Description	Hedge Reference
				1
				Criterion passed (Y/N)
			Cultivation, heavily trodden footpaths, poached ground etc. can limit available habitat niches.	
C2.	Nutrient-enriched perennial vegetation	Plant species indicative of nutrient enrichment of soils dominate <20% cover of the area of undisturbed ground	The indicator species used are nettles <i>Urtica</i> spp., cleavers <i>Galium aparine</i> and docks <i>Rumex</i> spp. Their presence, either singly or together, does not exceed the 20% cover threshold.	Y
D1.	Invasive and neophyte species	>90% of the hedgerow and undisturbed ground is free of invasive non-native plant species (including those listed on Schedule 9 of WCA) and recently introduced species.	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 ⁴ , 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.	Y
D2.	Current damage	>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 (for example, excessive hedgerow cutting).	Y
Number of Criteria failed				2
Number of Functional Groups failed				0
Condition Assessment Result			Condition Assessment Score	
No more than 2 failures in total; AND No more than 1 failure in any functional group.			Good	
No more than 5 failures in total; AND Does not fail both attributes in more than one functional group (for example, fails attributes A1, A2, B1, C2 and E1 = Moderate condition).			Moderate	
Fails a total of more than 5 attributes; OR Fails both attributes in more than one functional group (for example, fails attributes A1, A2, B1 and B2 = Poor condition).			Poor	

Appendix II: Post-development Condition Assessment Sheets

Condition Assessment Score – Grassland (Low) (Habitat Ref.: 2)

Condition Assessment Criteria		Habitat Reference
		2
		Criterion passed (Y/N)
A	There are 6-8 vascular plant species per m ² present, including at least 2 forbs. Note - this criterion is essential for achieving Moderate or Good condition. Where the vascular plant species present are characteristic of medium, high or very high distinctiveness grassland, or there are 9 or more of these characteristic species per m ² (excluding those listed in Footnote 1), please review the full UKHab description to assess whether the grassland should instead be classified as a higher distinctiveness grassland. Where a grassland is classed as medium, high, or very high distinctiveness, please use the relevant condition sheet.	Y
B	Sward height is varied (at least 20% of the sward is less than 7 cm and at least 20% is more than 7 cm) creating microclimates which provide opportunities for vertebrates and invertebrates to live and breed.	N
C	Any scrub present accounts for less than 20% of the total grassland area. (Some scattered scrub such as bramble <i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg. may be present). Note - patches of scrub with continuous (more than 90%) cover should be classified as the relevant scrub habitat type.	Y
D	Physical damage is evident in less than 5% of total grassland area. Examples of physical damage include excessive poaching, damage from machinery use or storage, erosion caused by high levels of access, or any other damaging management activities.	Y
E	Cover of bare ground is between 1% and 10%, including localised areas (for example, a concentration of rabbit warrens).	N
F	Cover of bracken <i>Pteridium aquilinum</i> is less than 20%.	Y
G	There is an absence of invasive non-native plant species (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA).	Y
Total Score		5
Condition Assessment Result		Condition Assessment Score
Passes 6 or 7 criteria including passing essential criterion A		Good
Passes 4 or 5 criteria including passing essential criterion A		Moderate
Passes 3 or fewer criteria; OR Passes 4 - 6 criteria (excluding criterion A)		Poor

Post-development Condition Assessment Score – Grassland (Medium – Very High) (Habitat Ref.: 4)

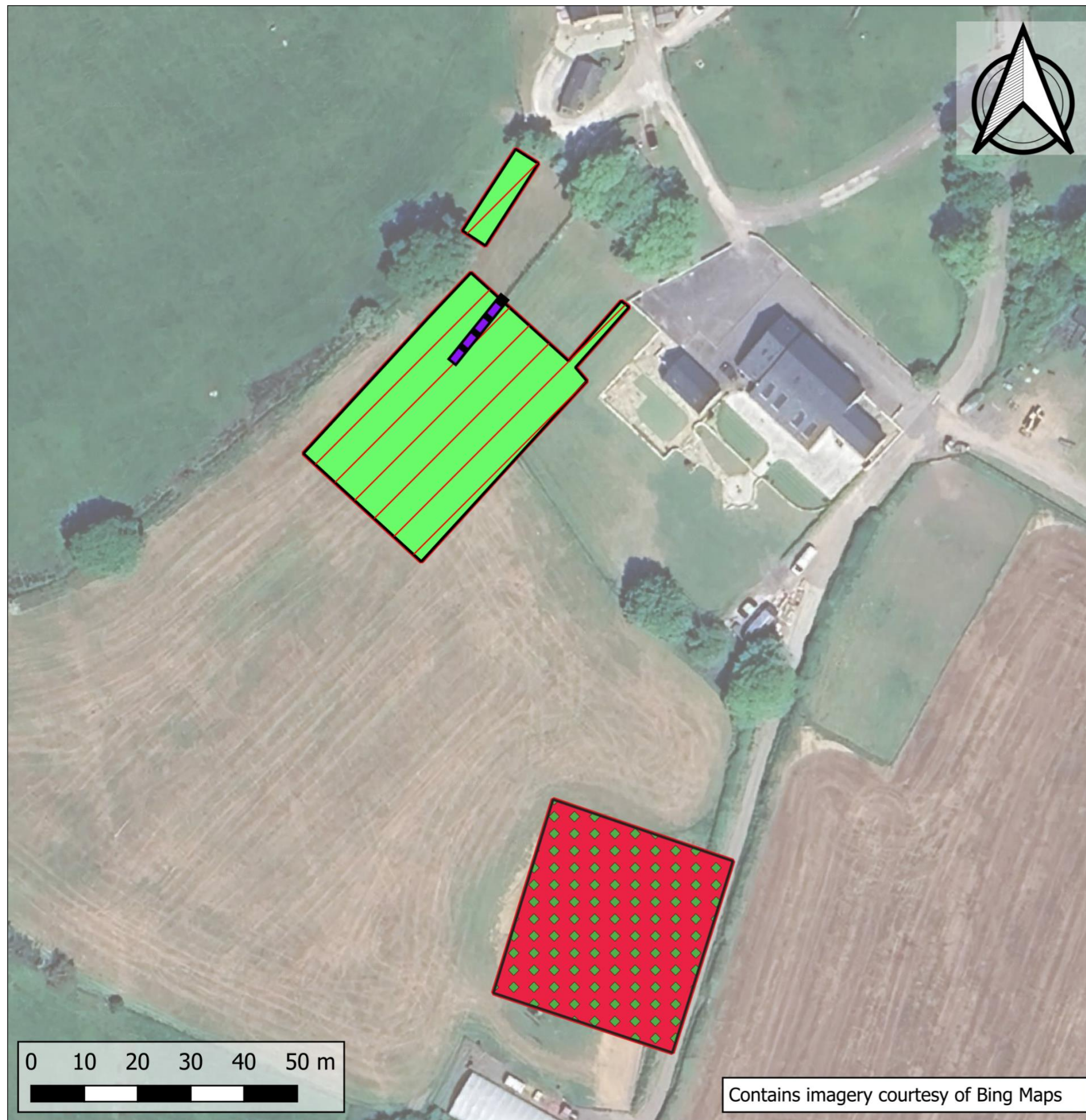
Condition Assessment Criteria		Habitat Reference
		4
		Criterion passed (Yes or No)
A	The grassland is a good representation of the habitat type it has been identified as, based on its UKHab description - the appearance and composition of the vegetation closely matches the characteristics of the specific 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.	Y
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.	Y
C	Cover of bare ground is between 1% and 5%, including localised areas, for example, rabbit warrens ¹ .	N
D	Cover of bracken <i>Pteridium aquilinum</i> is less than 20% and cover of scrub (including bramble <i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg.) is less than 5%.	Y
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 (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA) are present, this criterion is automatically failed.	Y
Additional Criterion - must be assessed for all non-acid grassland types		
F	There are 10 or more vascular plant species per m² present, including forbs that are characteristic of the habitat type. Note - this criterion is essential for achieving Good condition for non-acid grassland types only.	N
Total Score		4
Condition Assessment Result		Condition Assessment Score
Passes 5 or 6 criteria, including essential criterion A and additional criterion F.		Good
Passes 3 - 5 criteria, including essential criterion A.		Moderate
Passes 2 or fewer criteria; OR Passes 3 or 4 criteria excluding criterion A and F.		Poor

Condition Assessment Score – Hedgerow (Hedge Ref.:2)

Attributes and functional groupings (A, B, C, D & E)		Criteria	Description	Hedge Reference
				2
				Criterion passed (Y/N)
A1.	Height	>1.5 m average along length	The average height of woody growth estimated from base of stem to the top of 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). A newly planted hedgerow does not pass this criterion (unless it is > 1.5 m height).	N
A2.	Width	>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 <i>Prunus spinosa</i> 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).	N
B1.	Gap - hedge base	Gap between ground and base of canopy <0.5 m for >90% of length (unless 'line of trees')	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).	Y
B2.	Gap - hedge canopy continuity	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).	Y
C1.	Undisturbed ground and perennial vegetation	>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	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	N

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Attributes and functional groupings (A, B, C, D & E)		Criteria	Description	Hedge Reference
				2
				Criterion passed (Y/N)
		side of the hedge (at least)	capacity to support a wide range of species. Cultivation, heavily trodden footpaths, poached ground etc. can limit available habitat niches.	
C2.	Nutrient-enriched perennial vegetation	Plant species indicative of nutrient enrichment of soils dominate <20% cover of the area of undisturbed ground	The indicator species used are nettles <i>Urtica</i> spp., cleavers <i>Galium aparine</i> and docks <i>Rumex</i> spp. Their presence, either singly or together, does not exceed the 20% cover threshold.	Y
D1.	Invasive and neophyte species	>90% of the hedgerow and undisturbed ground is free of invasive non-native plant species (including those listed on Schedule 9 of WCA) and recently introduced species.	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 ⁴ , 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.	Y
D2.	Current damage	>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 (for example, excessive hedgerow cutting).	Y
Number of Criteria failed				3
Number of Functional Groups failed				1
Condition Assessment Result			Condition Assessment Score	
No more than 2 failures in total; AND No more than 1 failure in any functional group.			Good	
No more than 5 failures in total; AND Does not fail both attributes in more than one functional group (for example, fails attributes A1, A2, B1, C2 and E1 = Moderate condition).			Moderate	
Fails a total of more than 5 attributes; OR Fails both attributes in more than one functional group (for example, fails attributes A1, A2, B1 and B2 = Poor condition).			Poor	



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Specialists in Protected Species

Morton House Farm - Baseline

UK Habitats Key

-  h2a6 - Other native hedgerow
-  g4 - Modified grassland
-  u1f - Sparsely vegetated urban land
-  Boundary

Secondary Codes:

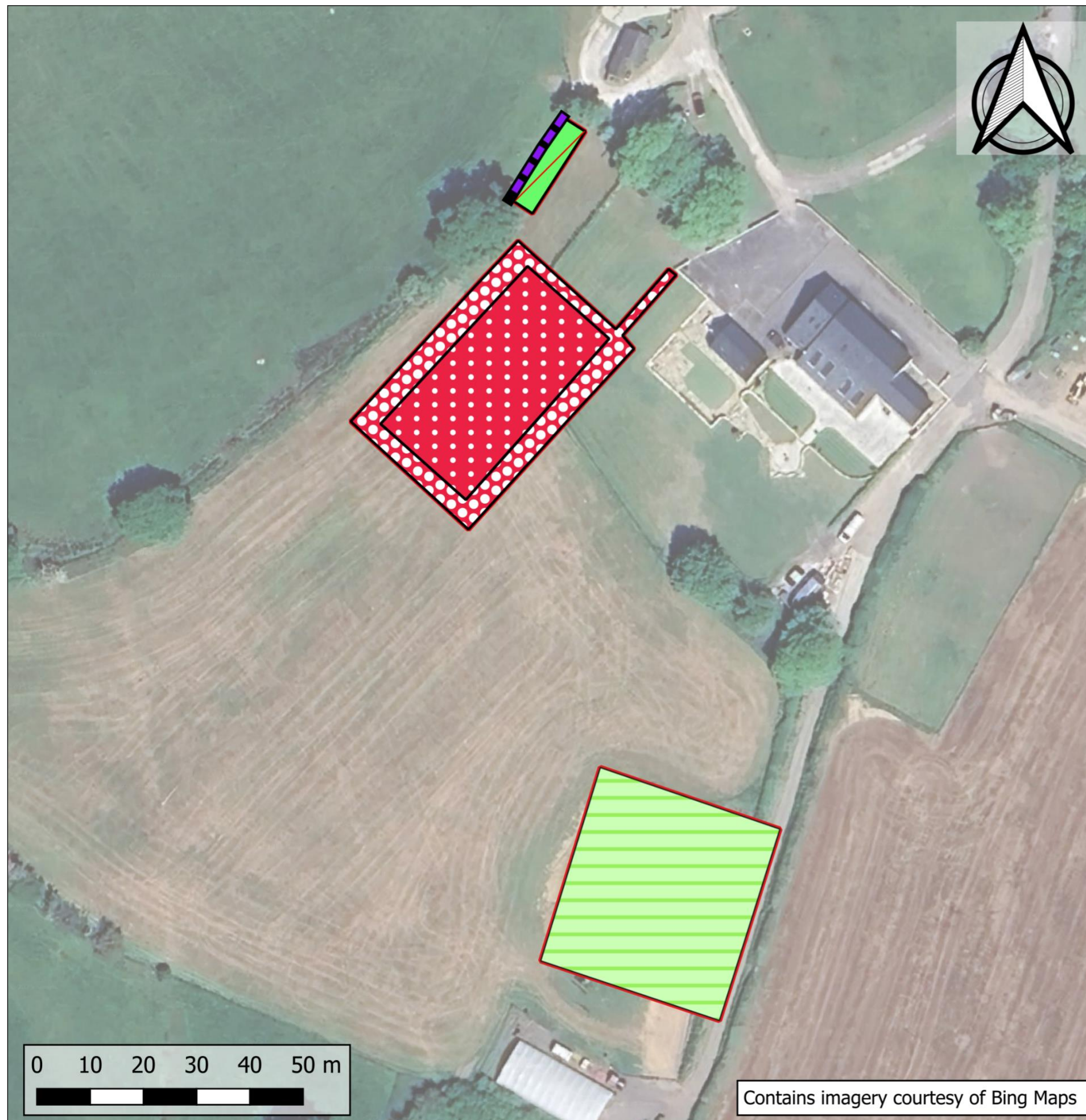
81 - Ruderal / ephemeral
100 - Grazed
516 - Active management

Survey Date: 21/07/2025
Drawn: Miss. R. Brown
Date Drawn: 30/07/2025
Checked & Approved: Mrs. K. Wilding
Size: A3
Scale: 1:1000

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Contains imagery courtesy of Bing Maps



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Morton House Farm - Post-Development

UK Habitats Key

-  h2a6 - Other native hedgerow
-  g3c - Other neutral grassland
-  g4 - Modified grassland
-  u1b6 - Other developed land
-  u1c - Artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface
-  Boundary

Survey Date: 21/07/2025
Drawn: Miss. R. Brown
Date Drawn: 30/07/2025
Checked & Approved: Mrs. K. Wilding
Size: A3
Scale: 1:1000

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