

The Orchard, Ridding Lane, Whalley BB7 9TW

ASSESSMENT OF BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN

December 2025

ERAP (Consultant Ecologists) Ltd Reference: 2025-249b

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Document Control

Survey Type:	Surveyors	Survey Date(s)
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Reporting	Personnel	Date
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Checked by	Brian Robinson B.Sc. Hons MCIIEEM	19 th December 2025
Revised and issued by	Victoria Burrows	19 th December 2025
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background and Rationale

- 1.1.1 ERAP (Consultant Ecologists) Ltd was commissioned by to carry out an assessment of Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) at the land known as ‘The Orchard’ off Ridding Lane, Whalley BB7 9TW (hereafter the ‘site’). The Ordnance Survey (OS) grid reference at the centre of the site is SD 72855 36156.
- 1.1.2 The site is currently used on an irregular basis to host events in teepees / marquees. A planning application seeks to expand the use and have the facilities in place from May to September each year. Although the proposals and impacted habitat area are relatively minor, it is understood that this will require an application for change in use class from agriculture to commercial and, based on the size of the site, this triggers statutory biodiversity net gain.
- 1.1.3 This BNG assessment has been prepared to provide an assessment of the biodiversity value of the baseline of the site, an assessment of the value of post-intervention habitats based on the site proposals, and provides guidance in relation to the requirements to attain a net gain in accordance with *Biodiversity Net Gain: Good Practice Principles for Development* (CIEEM, 2016).
- 1.1.4 This report also advises on how compliance with Chapter 15, paragraph 193(d) of the *National Planning Policy Framework* (Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government, 2024)¹ can be achieved, which states ‘opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around developments should be integrated as part of their design, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity or enhance public access to nature where this is appropriate’.

1.2 Site Description

- 1.2.1 An aerial image of the site is appended at **Figure 1**. The total site area is **0.7394 hectares**².
- 1.2.2 The habitats present within the site are described and assessed in a *Preliminary Ecological Appraisal* (ERAP (Consultant Ecologists) Ltd, 2025), hereafter referred to as the ‘PEA’. A summary of the habitats present within the site is presented at **Section 3.1** of this report.

1.3 Proposed Development Description

- 1.3.1 The proposals are presented on the *Proposed Site Plan* (Wilson Mason, 2025).

1.4 Scope of Study

- 1.4.1 This report has been prepared to accompany a completed assessment of BNG using *The Statutory Biodiversity Metric Calculation Tool* (Natural England, 2025). The completed Microsoft Excel spreadsheet assessment is presented as a separate document, named ‘ERAP Ltd 2025-249b The Orchard, Whalley Statutory Metric v1 19.12.25, hereafter referred to as the ‘BNG Metric’.
- 1.4.2 It is intended that this report provides a transparent assessment to demonstrate the calculation of net gain, based on the reasonable parameters assumed for the proposals (refer to **Section 2.3**). This approach has been applied on a number of sites ERAP (Consultant Ecologists) Ltd has assisted

¹ Hereafter the NPPF

² As measured by ERAP (Consultant Ecologists) Ltd; detail on the methods used to measure the area of the site are presented at **Section 2.0**. It has been considered suitable in this instance to measure the area habitats in hectares to four decimal places (i.e. to a m² level of accuracy).

with and has been accepted by the relevant Local Planning Authorities (LPA) and their ecological advisors to enable a planning application to progress.

2.0 METHOD OF SURVEY

2.1 Habitat Assessment and Mapping

Baseline Habitats

- 2.1.1 A UK Habitats Classification survey and condition assessments of the habitats present were carried out by Victoria Burrows B.Sc. (Hons) M.Sc. CEnv MCIEEM on 13th August 2025. The weather conditions were dry and sunny with a light air (Beaufort scale 1) and an air temperature of 30°C.
- 2.1.2 On site habitat mapping was assisted via use of GPS technology, using a Land Registry plan as a base plan. Each of the habitats within the site has been assessed in accordance with the UKHab to determine each habitat type present. This has allowed a reliable classification of habitats in accordance with those used by the BNG Metric.
- 2.1.3 The UKHab has been designed to function at two scales: fine scale (25m² or 5 metres length) and large scale (400m² or 20m² length). It has been considered for the purposes of this survey (where the UKHab has been used to inform the BNG calculation of a relatively small area) that a finer scale of 5m² is appropriate for the classification of habitats.
- 2.1.4 A plan showing the baseline habitats present within the site in accordance with UKHab symbology is appended at **Figure 2**.
- 2.1.5 Condition Assessments for each of the habitats present within the site have been completed in accordance with *The Statutory Biodiversity Metric – Technical Annex 1: Condition Assessment Sheets and Methodology* (Natural England, November 2023) and are appended at **Section 7.2**.

Post-intervention Habitats

- 2.1.6 The post-intervention habitats have been calculated with reference to the *Proposed Site Plan* (Wilson Mason, 2025), hereafter the ‘proposals plan’.

2.2 Survey and Reporting Limitations

- 2.2.1 All measurements have been either estimated whilst on site or measured using QGIS.
- 2.2.2 No limitations on the intended scope of survey were experienced.

2.3 Evaluation Methods and Rules Applied

Habitats and Assessment

- 2.3.1 Habitats have been assessed to determine whether they meet those described in *UK Biodiversity Action Plan: Priority Habitat Descriptions* (Maddock, A (ed), 2008); these lists are used to help draw up the statutory lists of Priority Habitats, as required under Section 41 of the *Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006*. Where suitable, the ecological value of the habitats present have been assessed using the terms outlined in *Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland: Terrestrial, Freshwater, Coastal and Marine* (CIEEM, 2018).

2.3.2 QGIS has been used to calculate the total area of each baseline habitat present within the site and the area of the proposed habitats at the site.

2.3.3 Each habitat and individual trees have been assessed to determine whether they are 'irreplaceable habitat', defined in NPPF as '*Habitats which would be technically very difficult (or take a very significant time) to restore, recreate or replace once destroyed, taking into account their age, uniqueness, species diversity or rarity. They include ancient woodland, ancient and veteran trees, blanket bog, limestone pavement, sand dunes, salt marsh and lowland fen*'. The further detail presented in *The Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Irreplaceable Habitat) Regulations 2024* (GOV.UK, 2025) has also been referred to.

Relevant Guidance

2.3.4 Government advice on wildlife, as set out in the NPPF and associated government circulars has been taken into consideration.

Strategic Significance

2.3.5 No areas of site lie within an 'Area of Particular Importance' as detailed on the Lancashire Local Nature Recovery Strategy area.

2.3.6 The site (and adjoining land) are identified on the 'Potential Measures' layer of the Lancashire Local Nature Recovery Strategy area. The following measures are suggested:

- *Bioengineering and nature-based solutions for moderation of water flows, such as reedbed filters, living dams, living revetments, tree and hedge planting and kested hedgerows.*
- *Create more connected pollinator wildflower-rich habitat in and through urban centres seeking connectivity to the B-Lines approach for example hedgerows, arable margins and headlands, green roofs, and with parks and gardens containing wetland features, wilder areas with native plants including tall ruderals.*
- *Wooded habitat creation and enhancement in urban open spaces such as orchards, street trees, micro-woods, urban woodland and hedgerows.*
- *Create and enhance waterbodies, wetlands and other aquatic habitats in urban areas, considering connectivity such as garden ponds, aerial ponds, bioswales, rain gardens and biodiverse sustainable drainage systems.*
- *Establish riparian woodland and trees along water courses, riparian corridors and floodplains, through appropriate planting or natural colonisation, where biodiversity gains and improved habitat connectivity can be achieved.*

2.3.7 Based on the above and, as the Lancashire LNRS has not been published at the time of writing, in accordance with the guidance in Table 8 of *The Statutory Biodiversity Metric User Guide* (DEFRA, 2025) a strategic significance of 'Formally identified in local plan' has been applied to all relevant habitats (i.e. all habitats that are not hardstanding and bare ground) at both the baseline and post-intervention stages. This is discussed further in **Section 4.1**.

3.0 BASELINE HABITATS

3.1 Description of Baseline Habitats

3.1.1 Refer to photographs at **Section 7.1**.

3.1.2 The site comprises a field of mown modified grassland with margins of tall forbs and areas of planted mixed scrub. At the far eastern area of the site is an area of less frequently mown other neutral grassland. The site also contains an area of traditional orchard which is identified on MAGIC Maps as a Priority Habitat.

3.1.3 In addition to a semi-mature Pear and small fruit trees within the orchard, there are 11 individual trees within the site comprising 10 mature Horse-chestnut trees along the northern site margin (T01 to T10) and a young Silver Birch (T11) at the southern site margin.

3.1.4 All other tree species at the site have a diameter at breast height lower than 75mm and are not therefore classed as trees under BNG.

3.1.5 No irreplaceable habitats or other Priority Habitats are present at the site.

3.2 Assessment of Baseline Habitats

3.2.1 **Tables 3.1** and **3.2** provide a summary of the baseline habitats present, their condition assessment result and their area within the site. The habitats are shown on **Figure 2**. Photographs of the habitats are appended at **Section 7.1** and condition assessments for each habitat are appended at **Section 7.2**.

Table 3.1: Summary of Baseline Area Based Habitats within the Site

Habitat Reference	UK Habitat Classification Type	BNG Habitat Equivalent	Habitat Distinctiveness	Condition Assessment Result	Area (ha)
Habitat 1 Modified grassland	g4 modified grassland with the secondary code 106 mown	Grassland – modified grassland	Low	Poor	0.4634
Habitat 2 Mixed scrub	h3h mixed scrub	Heathland and shrub – mixed scrub	Medium	Poor	0.0353
Habitat 3 Tall forbs	g3c other neutral grassland with the secondary code 16 tall forbs	Sparsely vegetated land – tall forbs	Low	Poor	0.0259
Habitat 4 Other neutral grassland	g3c other neutral grassland	Grassland – other neutral grassland	Medium	Poor	0.0440
Habitat 5 Bare ground beneath trees	u urban	Urban – bare ground	Low	Poor	0.0583

Habitat Reference	UK Habitat Classification Type	BNG Habitat Equivalent	Habitat Distinctiveness	Condition Assessment Result	Area (ha)
Habitat 6 Sparse ruderal on compacted ground	u1f sparsely vegetated urban land	Sparsely vegetated land – ruderal / ephemeral	Low	Poor	0.0107
Habitat 7 Hardstanding	u16b other developed land	Urban – developed land; sealed surface	V.low	N/a – other	0.0272
Habitat 8 Bare ground on path	u1c artificial unvegetated; unsealed surface	Urban - artificial unvegetated; unsealed surface	V.low	N/a – other	0.0020
Habitat 9 Orchard	g4 modified grassland with the secondary code 27 traditional orchard	Grassland – traditional orchards	High	Moderate	0.0726
Total:					0.7394

Table 3.2: Summary of Individual Trees within the Site

Habitat Reference	UK Habitat Classification Type	BNG Habitat Equivalent	Habitat Distinctiveness	Condition Assessment Result	Area (ha)
Habitat 10 T01 very large Horse-chestnut	secondary code 200 tree within g4 modified grassland	Individual trees – urban tree	Medium	Good	0.0765
Habitat 11 T02 large Horse-chestnut	secondary code 200 tree within g4 modified grassland	Individual trees – urban tree	Medium	Good	0.0366
Habitat 12 T03 large Horse-chestnut	secondary code 200 tree within g4 modified grassland	Individual trees – urban tree	Medium	Good	0.0366
Habitat 13 T04 large Horse-chestnut	secondary code 200 tree within g4 modified grassland	Individual trees – urban tree	Medium	Good	0.0366
Habitat 14 T05 very large Horse-chestnut	secondary code 200 tree within g4 modified grassland	Individual trees – urban tree	Medium	Good	0.0765
Habitat 15 T06 medium Horse-chestnut	secondary code 200 tree within g4 modified grassland	Individual trees – urban tree	Medium	Good	0.0163
Habitat 16 T07 large Horse-chestnut	secondary code 200 tree within g4 modified grassland	Individual trees – urban tree	Medium	Good	0.0366

Habitat Reference	UK Habitat Classification Type	BNG Habitat Equivalent	Habitat Distinctiveness	Condition Assessment Result	Area (ha)
Habitat 17 T08 very large Horse-chestnut	secondary code 200 tree within g4 modified grassland	Individual trees – urban tree	Medium	Good	0.0366
Habitat 18 T09 medium Horse-chestnut	secondary code 200 tree within g4 modified grassland	Individual trees – urban tree	Medium	Good	0.0163
Habitat 19 T10 very large Horse-chestnut	secondary code 200 tree within g4 modified grassland	Individual trees – urban tree	Medium	Good	0.0765
Habitat 20 T11 small Silver Birch	secondary code 200 tree within g4 modified grassland	Individual trees – urban tree	Medium	Moderate	0.0041
Total:					0.4492

3.2.2 The baseline BNG score for the site is provided at **Section 5.0**, below.

4.0 POST INTERVENTION HABITATS

4.1 Consideration of Mitigation Hierarchy and Site Proposals

4.1.1 The proposals will not directly impact any habitats with the exception of the following:

- Loss of 0.0129 ha of modified grassland (Habitat 1) for use as a larger car park. Although the car park area will not be a formal surface, as the car park area is likely to be more frequently used resulting in compaction and shading the modified grassland will be ‘lost’ and an area of sparse, ruderal vegetation (Habitat C) is likely;
- Loss of 0.0442 ha of modified grassland (Habitat 1) on the footprint of the teepee. Although the teepee is a temporary structure, it’s presence between May to September will compact the ground and shade out the modified grassland. This will result in the loss of the modified grassland in this area and it was considered to be appropriate and proportionate to record this area as bare ground (Habitat A);
- Loss of 0.005 ha of modified grassland (Habitat 1) as a result of the extension of the informal paths and likely more regular use which will result in likely loss of modified grassland and creation of an artificial unvegetated; unsealed surface (Habitats B and D).
- Note the footprint of the generator, toilet and bin store have not been included in the post-intervention habitats as these features are moveable and transient.

4.1.2 Habitat 1: Modified grassland will be retained, as appropriate, to provide amenity use for the visitors. To assist with securing statutory BNG, 0.0447ha of modified grassland at Habitat 1 and 0.0440ha of other neutral grassland at Habitat 4 will be enhanced by appropriate seeding and management to secure other neutral grassland in moderate condition.

4.1.3 To secure BNG the footprint of Habitat 3: Tall forbs and Habitat 5: Bare ground beneath the trees will be modified to create Habitats E and F, other neutral grassland in moderate condition.

- 4.1.4 An appropriate Habitat Management Plan will be required to secure the target condition assessments as presented in **Section 7.3**.
- 4.1.5 It is considered that the habitat creation and enhancement proposals are appropriate for the continued use of the site for hosting events. It is also considered that the proposals make a contribution to the Potential Measures identified for the site in the Lancashire Local Nature Recovery Strategy (refer to **Section 2.3**). For example, the creation of additional areas of wildflower habitat for the attraction of invertebrates and their prey such as bird and bat species. In addition, it is considered that the proposed habitats are complementary to the riverside location of the site.
- 4.1.6 The post-intervention habitats are shown on **Figure 3** and detailed in **Tables 4.1 to 4.2**.

4.2 Post-intervention Habitats

Table 4.1: Summary of Area-based Habitats to be Retained and Created at the Site

Habitat Type	BNG Equivalent Habitat	Habitat Distinctiveness	Target Condition	Area (ha)	Sub-totals (ha)
Retained Habitats					
Habitat 1 Modified grassland	Grassland – modified grassland	Low	Poor	0.3566	
Habitat 2 Mixed scrub	Heathland and shrub – mixed scrub	Medium	Poor	0.0353	
Habitat 6 Sparse ruderal on compacted ground	Sparsely vegetated land – ruderal / ephemeral	Low	Poor	0.0107	
Habitat 7 Hardstanding	Urban – developed land; sealed surface	V.low	N/a – other	0.0272	
Habitat 8 Bare ground on path	Urban - artificial unvegetated; unsealed surface	V.low	N/a – other	0.0020	
Habitat 9 Orchard	Grassland – traditional orchards	High	Moderate	0.0726	0.5044
Enhanced Habitats					
Habitat 1 Modified grassland enhanced to other neutral grassland	Grassland – modified grassland enhanced to other neutral grassland	Medium	Moderate	0.0447	
Habitat 4 Other neutral grassland	Grassland - other neutral grassland	Medium	Moderate	0.0440	0.0887
Proposed Habitats					
Habitat A Teepee structure / bare ground	Urban – bare ground	V.low	Poor	0.0442	
Habitat B Extended path	Urban - artificial unvegetated; unsealed surface	V.low	N/A - other	0.0032	
Habitat C Compacted ground with sparse ruderal vegetation at car park	Sparsely vegetated land – ruderal / ephemeral	Low	Poor	0.0129	

Habitat Type	BNG Equivalent Habitat	Habitat Distinctiveness	Target Condition	Area (ha)	Sub-totals (ha)
Habitat D Compacted ground / path near teepee	Urban – artificial unvegetated; unsealed surface	V.low	N/a – other	0.0018	
Habitat E Shade tolerant wildflowers beneath trees	Grassland - other neutral grassland	Medium	Moderate	0.0583	
Habitat F Wildflower grassland	Grassland - other neutral grassland	Medium	Moderate	0.0259	0.1463
Total				0.7394	0.7394

Note: Trees T01 to T11 will be retained; please refer back to **Table 3.2** for information

5.0 HEADLINE RESULTS, EVALUATION AND CONCLUSION

5.1 The headline results of the BNG Metric are presented at **Table 5.1** below.

Table 5.1: Results of Statutory Biodiversity Metric Calculation Tool

On-site Baseline	Area habitat units	8.81	
	Hedgerow units	0.00	
	Watercourse units	0.00	
On-site Post Intervention	Area habitat units	9.70	
	Hedgerow units	0.00	
	Watercourse units	0.00	
On-site net change (units % percentage)	Area habitat units	0.89	10.13%
	Hedgerow units	0.00	0.00%
	Watercourse units	0.00	0.00%

Total Net Unit Change	Area habitat units	0.89
	Hedgerow units	0.00
	Watercourse units	0.00
Total Net % Change	Area habitat units	10.13%
	Hedgerow units	0.00%
	Watercourse units	0.00%

Trading Rules Satisfied?	Yes
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Unit Type	Target	Baseline Units	Units Required	Unit Deficit	Comment
Area habitat units	10%	8.81	9.69	0.00	No additional area habitat units required to meet target
Hedgerow units	10%	0.00	0.00	0.00	No additional hedgerow units required to meet target
Watercourse units	10%	0.00	0.00	0.00	No additional watercourse units required to meet target

5.2 A net gain for area-based habitats is demonstrated by the BNG Metric and the trading rules are satisfied.

- 5.3 To secure statutory biodiversity net gain at the site the proposals must work within the parameters detailed at **Tables 4.1 to 4.2** and annotated on **Figure 3**, although there is margin for some flexibility and the ecologist can advise on this, as needed.
- 5.4 It is essential that, in addition to the result of the BNG Metric, the assessment of biodiversity net gain takes into account the measures to be accommodated and implemented at the site to secure gains and betterment for biodiversity that the BNG Metric cannot take account of. At this site it is advised that the following measures are also considered as part of the assessment of biodiversity net gain:
- a. Incorporation of opportunities for use by nesting birds at the retained trees by the installation of bird boxes;
 - b. Creation of dead wood habitat piles beneath the retained trees; and
 - c. Preparation and implementation of a Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (or similar) to secure long-term management of the retained and created habitats in accordance with conservation targets and objectives.

6.0 REFERENCES

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7.0 APPENDIX: PHOTOGRAPHS, CONDITION ASSESSMENTS AND FIGURES

7.1 Photographs

Table 7.1: Photographs of Baseline Habitats



Photo 1: Habitat 1: Modified grassland



Photo 2: Habitat 2: Mixed scrub



Photo 3: Habitat 4: Other neutral grassland (in background)



Photo 4: Habitat 5: Bare ground beneath Horse-chestnut



Photo 5: Habitat 6: Ruderal / ephemeral vegetation



Photo 6: Habitat 8: Artificial unvegetated; unsealed surface on path



Photo 7: Habitat 9: Orchard



Photo 8: Habitat 10 to 13: Trees T01 to T04



Photo 9: Habitat 14 to 19: Trees T05 to T10



Photo 10: Habitat 20: Tree T11

7.2 Condition Assessments of Baseline Habitats

Note: Condition Assessments are not required for Habitat 7: Hardstanding and Habitat 8: Artificial unvegetated; unsealed surface.

Table 7.2: Condition Assessments for Habitat 1 : Low Distinctiveness / Modified Grassland

Habitat Reference	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	Total No. of Criterion Passed	Condition Assessment Result ¹
Habitat 1: Modified grassland	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	4	Poor
Good: Passes 6 or 7 criteria including essential criterion A									
Moderate: Passes 4 or 5 criteria including essential criterion A									
Poor: Passes 3 or fewer criteria OR passes 4 to 6 criteria, but failing criterion A									

Condition Assessment Criteria
<p>A. There are 6 to 8 vascular plant species per m² present, including at least 2 forbs (this may include those listed in below). Note - this criterion is essential for achieving Moderate or Good condition.</p> <p>Where the vascular plant species present are characteristic of medium, high or very high distinctiveness grassland, or there are 9 or more of these characteristic species per m² (excluding those listed below), please review the full UKHab description to assess whether the grassland should instead be classified as a higher distinctiveness grassland. Where a grassland is classed as medium, high, or very high distinctiveness, please use the relevant condition sheet.</p> <p><i>Plant Species:</i> Creeping Thistle (<i>Cirsium arvense</i>), Spear Thistle (<i>Cirsium vulgare</i>), Curled Dock (<i>Rumex crispus</i>), Broad-leaved Dock (<i>Rumex obtusifolius</i>), Common Nettle (<i>Urtica dioica</i>), Creeping Buttercup (<i>Ranunculus repens</i>), Greater Plantain (<i>Plantago major</i>), White Clover (<i>Trifolium repens</i>) and Cow Parsley (<i>Anthriscus sylvestris</i>).</p>
<p>B. Sward height is varied (at least 20% of the sward is less than 7 cm and at least 20 per cent is more than 7 cm) creating microclimates which provide opportunities for insects, birds and small mammals to live and breed.</p>
<p>C. Any scrub present accounts for less than 20% of total grassland area (some scattered scrub such as Bramble may be present).</p> <p>Note - patches of shrubs with continuous (more than 90%) cover should be classified as the relevant scrub habitat type.</p>
<p>D. Physical damage evident in less than 5% of total grassland area. Examples of physical damage include excessive poaching, damage from machinery use or storage, erosion caused by high levels of access, or any other damaging management activities.</p>
<p>E. Cover of bare ground between 1% and 10%, including localised areas, for example, rabbit warrens.</p> <p>For example, this could include small, scattered areas of bare ground allowing establishment of new species, or localised patches where not exceeding 10% cover</p>
<p>F. Cover of Bracken less than 20%.</p>
<p>G. There is an absence of invasive non-native species as listed on Schedule 9 of <i>Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981</i> (as amended).</p> <p>This is assessed for each distinct habitat parcel. If the distribution of invasive non-native species varies across the habitat, split into parcels accordingly, applying a buffer zone around the invasive non-native species with a size relative to its risk of spread into adjacent habitat, using professional judgement</p>

Table 7.3: Condition Assessments for Habitat 2: Mixed Scrub

Habitat Reference	A	B	C	D	E	Total No. of Criterion Passed	Condition Assessment Result
Habitat 2: Mixed scrub	No	No	no	Yes	No	1	Poor
							Good: passes 5 criteria
							Moderate: passes 3 or 4 criteria
							Poor: passes 2 or fewer criteria

Condition Assessment Criteria

A. The scrub is a good representation of the habitat type – the appearance and composition of the vegetation closely matches its UKHab description (where in its natural range). Professional judgement should be used alongside the UKHab description.

At least 80% of scrub is native, and there are at least three native woody species, with no single species comprising more than 75% of the cover, except Hazel (*Corylus avellana*), Common Juniper (*Juniperus communis*), Sea Buckthorn (*Hippophae rhamnoides*) or Box (*Buxus sempervirens*), which can be up to 100% cover.

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

B. Seedlings, saplings, young shrubs and mature (or ancient or veteran) shrubs are all present.

See gov.uk standing advice on ancient and veteran species. Available from *Keepers of time: ancient and native woodland and trees policy in England* (publishing.service.gov.uk) and *Ancient woodland, ancient trees and veteran trees: advice for making planning decisions* (www.gov.uk).

C. There is an absence of invasive non-native plant species⁴ (as listed on Schedule 9 of *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981* (as amended)) and species indicative of sub-optimal condition⁶ make up less than 5% of ground cover.

This is assessed for each distinct habitat parcel. If the distribution of invasive non-native species varies across the habitat, the habitat is split into parcels accordingly, applying a buffer zone around the invasive non-native species with a size relative to its risk of spread into adjacent habitat, using professional judgement.

D. The scrub has a well-developed edge with scattered scrub and tall grassland and or forbs present between the scrub and adjacent habitat.

E. There are clearings, glades or rides present within the scrub, providing sheltered edges.

Table 7.4: Condition Assessments for Habitat 3: Tall Forbs, Habitat 5: Bare Ground Beneath Trees and Habitat 6: Sparse Ruderal Vegetation

Habitat Reference	A	B	C	Total No. of Criterion Passed	Condition Assessment Result
Habitat 3: Tall forbs	No	Yes	No	1	Poor
Habitat 5: Bare Ground Beneath Trees	No	No	Yes	1	Poor
Habitat 6: Sparse Ruderal Vegetation	No	No	Yes	1	Poor
If only 3 core Criteria Assessed					
Good: Passes all 3 core criteria; AND Meets the requirements for Good condition within criterion C.					
Moderate: Passes 2 core criteria; OR Passes 3 core criteria but does not meet the requirements for Good condition within criterion C.					
Poor: Passes 1 or fewer of core criteria					

Condition Assessment Criteria
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.
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.
C. Invasive non-native plant species listed on Schedule 9 of <i>Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981</i> (as amended) and others which are to the detriment of native wildlife (using professional judgement) ² cover less than 5% of the total vegetated area. This is assessed for each distinct habitat parcel. If the distribution of invasive non-native species varies across the habitat, split into parcels accordingly, applying a buffer zone around the invasive non-native species with a size relative to its risk of spread into adjacent habitat, using professional judgement <i>Note - to achieve Good condition, this criterion must be satisfied by a complete absence of invasive non-native species (rather than <5% cover).</i> Sources of information about detrimental non-native species can be found on the GB Non-native Species Secretariat (GBNNS) website: Home » NNS (nonnativespecies.org) and Natural England Access to Evidence page should also be checked for up-to-date information: Horizon-scanning for invasive non-native plants in Great Britain - NECR053 (naturalengland.org.uk). <i>For green roof habitat types only – Buddleia (Buddleja davidii) should be assessed alongside Schedule 9 species. This species impairs the health of the local ecosystem and reduces the biodiversity potential of the roof. It is also a sign that a roof has not been planted and seeded correctly in subsequent years.</i>

Table 7.5: Condition Assessments for Habitat 4: Other Neutral Grassland

Habitat Reference	A	B	C	D	E	F	Total No. of Criterion Passed	Condition Assessment Result
Habitat 4: Other neutral grassland	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	No	2	Poor
Acid Grassland Types				Non-acid Grassland Types				
Good: passes 5 criteria				Good: passes 5 or 6 criteria, including essential criteria A and additional criterion F				
Moderate: passes 3 or 4 criteria				Moderate: passes 3 to 5 criteria, including essential criterion A				
Poor: passes 2 or fewer criteria				Poor: passes 2 or fewer criteria; or passes 3 or 4 criteria excluding criterion A and F				

Condition Assessment Criteria

A. The grassland is a good representation of the 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). Professional judgement should be used alongside the UKHab description.

Note - this criterion is essential for achieving Moderate or Good condition for non-acid grassland types only.

B. Sward height is varied (at least 20% of the sward is less than 7 cm and at least 20 per cent is more than 7 cm) creating microclimates which provide opportunities for insects, birds and small mammals to live and breed.

C. Cover of bare ground between 1% and 5%, including localised areas, for example, rabbit warrens. For example, this could include small, scattered areas of bare ground allowing for plant colonisation, or localised patches not exceeding 5% cover.

D. Cover of Bracken less than 20% and cover of scrub (including Bramble) less than 5%.

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 (species are listed below).

If any invasive non-native plant species as listed on Schedule 9 of *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981* (as amended) are present, this criterion is automatically failed. This is assessed for each distinct habitat parcel. If the distribution of invasive non-native species varies across the habitat, split into parcels accordingly, applying a buffer zone around the invasive non-native species with a size relative to its risk of spread into adjacent habitat, by applying professional judgement.

Species indicative of sub-optimal condition for this habitat type include: Creeping Thistle, Spear Thistle, Curled Dock, Broad-leaved Dock, Common Nettle, Creeping Buttercup, Greater Plantain, White Clover, Cow Parsley. There may be additional relevant species local to the region and / or site.

Additional Group – non-acid grassland types only

F. There are 10 or more vascular plant species per m² present, including forbs that are characteristic of the habitat type (species referenced at Criterion ‘E’ cannot contribute towards this count).

Note - this criterion is essential for achieving Good condition for non-acid grassland types only.

Table 7.6: Condition Assessments for Habitat 9: Orchard

Condition Assessment Criteria	Habitat 9: Orchard
<p>A. Presence of ancient and / or veteran trees¹. <i>NB - this criterion is essential for achieving good condition.</i></p>	No
<p>B. Presence of deadwood in or on trees, or on the ground: at least 20% of mature trees have deadwood associated with them. Some examples of deadwood are: standing, attached and fallen trees or limbs; dead stems; branches and branch stubs greater than 10 cm diameter; and internal cavities. The types and distribution of deadwood provide a range of habitats suitable to support a wide assemblage of saproxylic invertebrates. <i>Note - this criterion is essential for achieving Good condition.</i></p>	No
<p>C. Less than 5% of fruit trees are smothered by scrub. Small patches of dense scrub and or scattered scrub growing between trees can be beneficial to biodiversity, however these occupy less than 10% of ground cover.</p>	Yes
<p>D. There is evidence of formative and or restorative pruning to maintain longevity of trees.</p>	Yes
<p>E. At least 95% of the trees are free from damage caused by humans or animals, for example browsing, bark stripping or rubbing on non-adjusted ties.</p>	Yes
<p>F. Grassland is not overgrazed, poaching is not evident around the trees, with no more than 10% of trees poached under the canopy.</p>	Yes
<p>G. Species richness of the grassland is equivalent to a medium, high, or very high distinctiveness grassland.</p>	No
<p>H. There is an absence of invasive non-native plant species² (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA) and species indicative of sub-optimal condition⁴ make up less than 10% of ground cover.</p>	Yes
<p style="text-align: right;">Good: Passes 6 to 8 criteria, including essential criterion A and B</p>	No
<p style="text-align: right;">Moderate: Passes 4 or 5 criteria; OR Passes 6 or 7 criteria, but fails an essential criterion</p>	Yes
<p style="text-align: right;">Poor: Passes 3 or fewer criteria</p>	No
<p>Additional Information:</p> <p>Footnote 1 - See gov.uk standing advice on ancient and veteran trees. Available from <i>Keepers of time: ancient and native woodland and trees policy in England</i> (publishing.service.gov.uk) and <i>Ancient woodland, ancient trees and veteran trees: advice for making planning decisions</i> (www.gov.uk)</p> <p>Footnote 2 – Assess this for each distinct habitat parcel. If the distribution of invasive non-native species varies across the habitat, split into parcels accordingly, applying a buffer zone around the invasive non-native species with a size relative to its risk of spread into adjacent habitat, by applying professional judgement.</p> <p>Footnote 3 – <i>Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981</i> (as amended)</p> <p>Footnote 4 - Species considered undesirable for this habitat type include: Creeping Thistle (<i>Cirsium arvense</i>), Spear Thistle (<i>Cirsium vulgare</i>), Curled Dock (<i>Rumex crispus</i>), Broad-leaved Dock (<i>Rumex obtusifolius</i>), Common Nettle (<i>Urtica dioica</i>).</p>	

Table 7.7: Condition Assessments for Habitats 10 to 19: Trees T01 to T11

Tree Reference	Species	A	B	C	D	E	F	Size Category	Total No. of Criterion Passed	Condition Assessment Result
Habitat 10: T01	Horse-chestnut (<i>Aesculus hippocastanum</i>)	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	V.large	5	Good
Habitat 11: T02	Horse-chestnut	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Large	5	Good
Habitat 12: T03	Horse-chestnut	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Large	5	Good
Habitat 13: T04	Horse-chestnut	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Large	5	Good
Habitat 14: T05	Horse-chestnut	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	V.large	5	Good
Habitat 15: T06	Horse-chestnut	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Medium	5	Good
Habitat 16: T07	Horse-chestnut	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Large	5	Good
Habitat 17: T08	Horse-chestnut	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	V.large	5	Good
Habitat 18: T09	Horse-chestnut	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Medium	5	Good
Habitat 19: T10	Horse-chestnut	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Small	5	Good
Habitat 20: T11	Silver Birch (<i>Betula pendula</i>)	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	Small	4	Moderate
Good: Passes 5 or 6 criteria										
Moderate: Passes 3 or 4 criteria										
Poor: Passes 2 or fewer criteria										

Condition Assessment Criteria

A. The tree is a native species (or more than 70% within the block are native species)

B. Tree canopy is predominantly continuous with gaps in canopy cover making up less than 10% of total area and no individual gap being more than 10% of total area. Gaps in canopy cover are not automatically pass this criterion.

C. The tree is mature (or more than 50% within the block are mature). See gov.uk standing advice on ancient and veteran trees, available from: *Keepers of time: ancient and native woodland and trees policy in England* (publishing.service.gov.uk) and *Ancient woodland, ancient trees and veteran trees* (www.gov.uk).

Enhancement of this habitat type is only possible by improving the habitat so that it meets Criteria B, D and F. It is not possible or appropriate to meet just one of those Criteria, nor by meeting Criteria A, C or E.

D. There is little or no evidence of an adverse impact on tree health by human activities (such as vandalism, herbicide or detrimental agricultural practices, or pruning regime, so the trees retain >75% of expected canopy for their age range and height).

E. Natural ecological niches for vertebrates and invertebrates are present, such as presence of deadwood, cavities, ivy or loose bark.

F. More than 20% of the tree canopy area is overhanging vegetation beneath

Table 7.8: Condition Assessments for Habitats 4 and 5: Other Neutral Grassland

Habitat Reference	A	B	C	D	E	F	Total Criteria
Habitat 4: Other neutral grassland 1	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	
Habitat 5: Other neutral grassland 2	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	
Acid Grassland Types							
Good: passes 5 criteria				including essential cr			
Moderate: passes 3 or 4 criteria				Moderate: passes 3 to 5 criteria			
Poor: passes 2 or fewer criteria				Poor: passes 2 or fewer criteria; or passes 3			

Condition Assessment Criteria

A. The grassland is a good representation of the habitat type, with a consistently high proportion of characteristic indicator species present relevant to Footnote 3 suboptimal species which may be listed in the UKHab description). Professional judgement should be used alongside the UKHab description. *Note - this criterion is essential for achieving Moderate or Good condition for non-acid grassland types only.*

B. Sward height is varied (at least 20% of the sward is less than 7 cm and at least 20 per cent is more than 7 cm) creating microclimates which provide suitable conditions for insects and small mammals to live and breed.

C. Cover of bare ground between 1% and 5%, including localised areas, for example, rabbit warrens. For example, this could include small, scattered plant colonisation, or localised patches not exceeding 5% cover.

D. Cover of Bracken less than 20% and cover of scrub (including Bramble) less than 5%.

E. Combined cover of species indicative of sub-optimal condition and physical damage (such as excessive poaching, damage from machinery use or any other damaging management activities) accounts for less than 5% of total area (species are listed below).

If any invasive non-native plant species as listed on Schedule 9 of *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981* (as amended) are present, this criterion is automatically failed for each distinct habitat parcel. If the distribution of invasive non-native species varies across the habitat, split into parcels accordingly, applying a binary assessment to each native species with a size relative to its risk of spread into adjacent habitat, by applying professional judgement.

Species indicative of sub-optimal condition for this habitat type include: Creeping Thistle, Spear Thistle, Curled Dock, Broad-leaved Dock, Common Plantain, White Clover, Cow Parsley. There may be additional relevant species local to the region and / or site.

Additional Group – non-acid grassland types only

F. There are 10 or more vascular plant species per m² present, including forbs that are characteristic of the habitat type (species referenced at Criteria A-F in this count).

Note - this criterion is essential for achieving Good condition for non-acid grassland types only.

7.3 Condition Assessments of Post-intervention Habitats

Note: Condition assessments are not required for Habitat B: Path, and Habitat D: Hardstanding

Table 7.9: Condition Assessments for Habitat A: Teepee and Habitat C: Sparse Ruderal Vegetation at Car Park

Habitat Reference	A	B	C	Total No. of Criterion Passed	Condition Assessment Result
Habitat A: Bare ground at teepee	No	No	Yes	1	Poor
Habitat C: Sparse ruderal vegetation at car park	No	No	Yes	1	Poor
If only 3 core Criteria Assessed					
Good: Passes all 3 core criteria; AND Meets the requirements for Good condition within criterion C.					
Moderate: Passes 2 core criteria; OR Passes 3 core criteria but does not meet the requirements for Good condition within criterion C.					
Poor: Passes 1 or fewer of core criteria					

Condition Assessment Criteria
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.
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.
C. Invasive non-native plant species listed on Schedule 9 of <i>Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981</i> (as amended) and others which are to the detriment of native wildlife (using professional judgement) ² cover less than 5% of the total vegetated area. This is assessed for each distinct habitat parcel. If the distribution of invasive non-native species varies across the habitat, split into parcels accordingly, applying a buffer zone around the invasive non-native species with a size relative to its risk of spread into adjacent habitat, using professional judgement
<i>Note - to achieve Good condition, this criterion must be satisfied by a complete absence of invasive non-native species (rather than <5% cover).</i>
Sources of information about detrimental non-native species can be found on the GB Non-native Species Secretariat (GBNNSS) website: Home » NNSS (nonnativespecies.org) and Natural England Access to Evidence page should also be checked for up-to-date information: Horizon-scanning for invasive non-native plants in Great Britain - NECR053 (naturalengland.org.uk).
<i>For green roof habitat types only – Buddleia (<i>Buddleja davidii</i>) should be assessed alongside Schedule 9 species. This species impairs the health of the local ecosystem and reduces the biodiversity potential of the roof. It is also a sign that a roof has not been planted and seeded correctly in subsequent years.</i>

Table 7.10: Condition Assessments for Habitats E and F: Other Neutral Grassland / Wildflower Grassland

Habitat Reference	A	B	C	D	E	F	Total No. of Criterion Passed	Condition Assessment Result
Habitat E: Other neutral grassland	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	4	Moderate
Habitat F: Other neutral grassland	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	4	Moderate
Acid Grassland Types				Non-acid Grassland Types				
Good: passes 5 criteria				Good: passes 5 or 6 criteria, including essential criteria A and additional criterion F				
Moderate: passes 3 or 4 criteria				Moderate: passes 3 to 5 criteria, including essential criterion A				
Poor: passes 2 or fewer criteria				Poor: passes 2 or fewer criteria; or passes 3 or 4 criteria excluding criterion A and F				

Condition Assessment Criteria

A. The grassland is a good representation of the 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). Professional judgement should be used alongside the UKHab description.

Note - this criterion is essential for achieving Moderate or Good condition for non-acid grassland types only.

B. Sward height is varied (at least 20% of the sward is less than 7 cm and at least 20 per cent is more than 7 cm) creating microclimates which provide opportunities for insects, birds and small mammals to live and breed.

C. Cover of bare ground between 1% and 5%, including localised areas, for example, rabbit warrens. For example, this could include small, scattered areas of bare ground allowing for plant colonisation, or localised patches not exceeding 5% cover.

D. Cover of Bracken less than 20% and cover of scrub (including Bramble) less than 5%.

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 (species are listed below).

If any invasive non-native plant species as listed on Schedule 9 of *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981* (as amended) are present, this criterion is automatically failed. This is assessed for each distinct habitat parcel. If the distribution of invasive non-native species varies across the habitat, split into parcels accordingly, applying a buffer zone around the invasive non-native species with a size relative to its risk of spread into adjacent habitat, by applying professional judgement.

Species indicative of sub-optimal condition for this habitat type include: Creeping Thistle, Spear Thistle, Curled Dock, Broad-leaved Dock, Common Nettle, Creeping Buttercup, Greater Plantain, White Clover, Cow Parsley. There may be additional relevant species local to the region and / or site.

Additional Group – non-acid grassland types only

F. There are 10 or more vascular plant species per m² present, including forbs that are characteristic of the habitat type (species referenced at Criterion ‘E’ cannot contribute towards this count).

Note - this criterion is essential for achieving Good condition for non-acid grassland types only.

7.4 Figures

Figure 1: Aerial Image of the Site



Figure 2: Baseline Habitats

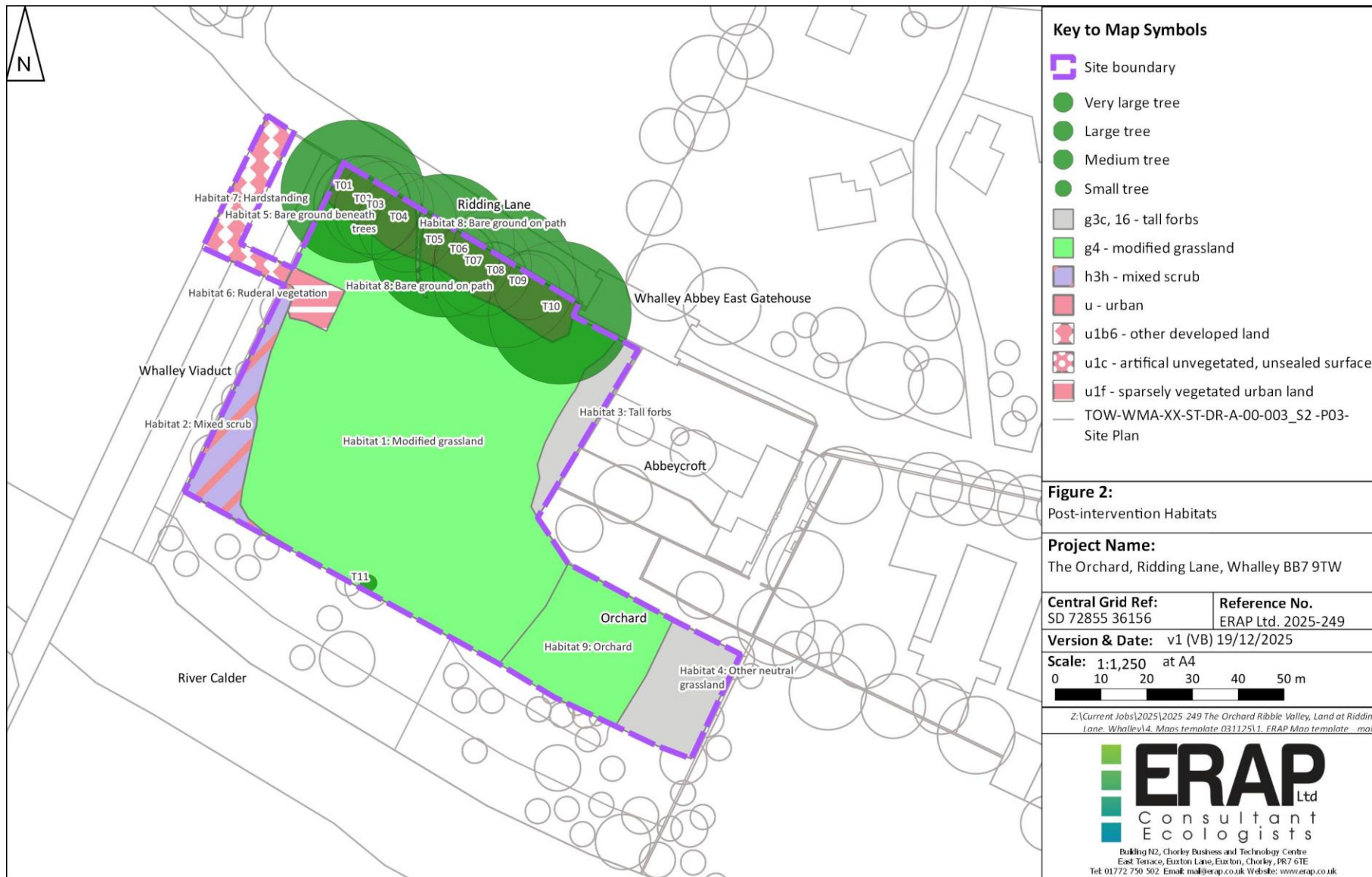


Figure 3: Post-intervention Habitats

