

LAND AT CROSS ROAD, DEAL

Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment

2021-001

DECEMBER 2022

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Land at Cross Road, Deal

Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment

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Version Control

Version	Date	Author	Changes
01	11/05/2022	HG	Issue
02	14/11/2022	HG	Amendment to the baseline woodland condition score from 'poor' to 'moderate'. Amendment to the post intervention area of other neutral grassland (slight increase).
03	14/12/2022	HG	Typo in paragraph 4.3.2

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

1.1.1 This report sets out the findings of a Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment (BNGA) in relation to Land at Cross Road, Deal (hereafter referred to as, 'the site') for the erection of up to 140 dwellings, public open space, landscaping and sustainable drainage system (SuDS) and vehicular access points from Cross Road.

1.2 Site Location and Setting

1.2.1 The site is situated in the south west of Deal, a coastal town within the administrative district of Dover. The eastern edge of the site is defined by Cross Road which connects it to the rest of Deal, and the site's northern edge is bordered by existing residential development.

1.2.2 Covering 8.71 hectares, the site comprises an arable field which is bound by woodland along its western and northern perimeters and a small poor semi-improved grassland field in the north east corner of the site.

1.3 Purpose of the Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment

1.3.1 This BNGA aims to:

- Provide baseline data to classify the type, distinctiveness, condition and strategic significance of habitats prior to and post development.
- Ensure that baseline habitat conditions are classified in a robust and consistent manner, and that classification is based on the best available data at the time of assessment.
- Clearly identify data collection methods and any limitations.
- Calculate baseline pre- and post-development habitat units for the site based on current development proposals.
- Achieve BNG on-site wherever possible; with off-site contribution measures being considered as an alternative option if required.

2 PLANNING POLICY AND LEGISLATION

2.1 Overview

- 2.1.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out that planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by, inter alia, minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity. The Natural Environment Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) (updated June 2021) provides further explanation on how this should be done. In particular, it addresses principles across a broad spectrum of topics targeting biodiversity conservation, from individual site and species protection through to the supporting of ecosystem services, and the use of local ecological networks to support the national Nature Recovery Network. The PPG promotes the delivery of measurable Biodiversity Net Gain through the creation and enhancement of habitats alongside development.
- 2.1.2 The Government has confirmed its intention to mandate Biodiversity Net Gain at a minimum of 10%. This has now been enacted into UK law through the adoption of the Environment Act 2021. Whilst the Act has now received Royal Assent, there will be a two-year transition period to allow for the making of necessary secondary legislation before the 10% Biodiversity Net Gain requirement is legally enforceable. Notwithstanding this, many Local Planning Authorities have started to include biodiversity net gain requirements into Local Plan policy.
- 2.1.3 Dover District Emerging Local Plan includes the following, “*Planning applications will be required to include the relevant information needed to demonstrate that the proposals will meet the requirements for a minimum of 10% net gain, informed by appropriate surveys and assessments carried out by suitably qualified persons. This should include a Biodiversity Net Gain Plan and supporting reports which should provide an assessment of the likely effects of the development and changes to the ecological baseline, whether they are positive or negative*”.

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Good Practice Principles

- 3.1.1 Biodiversity net gain has been defined as ‘development that leaves biodiversity in a better state than before, and an approach where developers work with local governments, wildlife groups, landowners and other stakeholders in order to support their priorities for nature conservation’ (Baker, 2016).
- 3.1.2 Good practice principles for biodiversity net gain are set out within Table 1.1 of Biodiversity Net Gain: Good practice principles for development (Baker et al., 2019). The key principles include:
 - Apply the ‘Mitigation Hierarchy’ (in line with CIEEM Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA)) (CIEEM, 2018) and be ‘additional’ by achieving outcomes that exceed existing obligations.
 - Avoid losing biodiversity which cannot be off-set elsewhere (e.g. irreplaceable habitats).
 - Address risk (e.g. difficulty of achieving habitat creation / enhancement for net gain).
 - Make a ‘measurable’ net gain contribution (e.g. calculated using an appropriate metric) and ensure that calculations are consistent and transparent (i.e. limitations and assumptions are clearly identified).
 - Ensure that net gain design achieves the best outcome for biodiversity (this may require both quantitative and qualitative assessment) and create a net gain legacy for long-term benefits.

3.2 Desk study

- 3.2.1 In order to inform an assessment of the habitat types and condition, a desk study was undertaken.
- 3.2.2 Table 1 summarises the various sources of information utilised for the desk study and the information that was obtained.

Table 1: Sources of Information

Source	Information Obtained
Ordnance Survey mapping and online aerial imagery (from Magic Maps; Google Earth)	Aerial photography published on commonly used websites will be studied to: place habitats present within the site in the wider context and to assess changes to habitats since baseline information was recorded so that an assessment of reliability can be made.
Land at Cross Road, Deal - Ecological Appraisal (FPCR, December 2021)	Ecological Appraisal submitted as part of the planning application was used to obtain recent desk study data and previous baseline habitat data.

3.3 Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey

- 3.3.1 To inform the Ecological Appraisal, an extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey was undertaken in April 2021 by a suitably qualified ecologist from FPCR. A previous survey was undertaken in November 2016. In addition, an updated detailed botanical survey and condition assessment of the on-site habitats was undertaken on 6th April 2022 by Henry Gunning BSc, MSc, ACIEEM. Any significant changes to baseline habitats were also noted. Weather conditions during the survey were heavy rain and wind.
- 3.3.2 The habitats within the survey area were mapped and are shown at an appropriate scale on the Phase 1 Habitat Plan (FPCR, 2021) within APPENDIX A.
- 3.3.3 The Biodiversity Metric 3.1 works best where habitat types are classified using UK Habitats Classification methodology (UKHab Working Group, 2020). As such, tab G-9 ‘Translation Phase 1’ of the Metric was used to translate Phase 1 habitats into UKHab codes provided within the Metric. This informed the calculation of baseline biodiversity units.

3.4 Condition Assessment

3.4.1 Habitat condition was assigned following guidance from the 'Technical Supplement' document (Natural England, 2021) which accompanies the Biodiversity Metric 3.1 Assessment criteria. Full condition assessments for baseline habitats are provided in Appendix C.

3.5 Calculation of Biodiversity Units

3.5.1 The Biodiversity Metric 3.1 (April 2022) was used to calculate the change in biodiversity units and the overall percentage of gain / loss achieved.

3.5.2 Metric calculations have been undertaken by Senior Ecologist, Henry Gunning ACIEEM.

3.5.3 Pre-development baseline habitat areas were calculated using measurements taken from measuring the baseline habitats illustrated on the Habitats Plan in Appendix A. Post-development habitats were calculated based on the Development Framework Plan shown in Appendix B.

3.5.4 Habitat condition for created habitats was assigned taking a precautionary approach and with consideration of biotic and operational phase conditions (i.e. those which may limit the extent to which 'good' condition is likely to be reached).

3.5.5 The Biodiversity Metric 3.1 calculator should be read in conjunction with this report.

3.6 Strategic Significance

3.6.1 The criteria within the Biodiversity Metric 3.1 was assessed by determining if habitat areas within the site occur within any strategic locations for biodiversity, form part of a designated site for nature conservation or are identified within local plans such as Ecological Networks (MAGIC).

3.7 Trading Summary

3.7.1 'Trading Up' is a concept which requires 'conserving through offset components of biodiversity that are of a higher conservation priority (for example, because they are more irreplaceable and vulnerable) than those affected by the development project for which the offset is envisaged' (BBOP, 2018). For example, should non-irreplaceable habitats be lost / impacted as a result of proposed development, offsets should be achieved through the creation / enhancement of habitat of the same or higher distinctiveness, where environmental conditions are appropriate and where it generates the greatest benefits for biodiversity.

3.8 Assumptions & Limitations

3.8.1 It should be noted that the accuracy of habitat area measurement is limited by the form of baseline data collection and resolution of development proposal plans. In this instance baseline habitat areas have been calculated by cross referencing the illustrative Habitats Plan (Appendix A) with aerial imagery. Post-development habitat areas have been measured from the Development Framework Plan (Appendix B).

3.8.2 The Development Framework Plan is indicative at this stage of the planning process and is subject to change. The Development Framework Plan does not illustrate, at this stage, all habitat types and condition which are represented in this report and therefore assumptions have been made on the sizes of different habitat parcels. However, this report can be used for further iterations of the Development Framework Plan as the project evolves into detailed design. This report/calculations should also be updated accordingly in line with detailed design.

4 RESULTS

4.1 Existing Habitats Condition Assessment

Cropland – Cereal Crops

Habitat Description

- 4.1.1 Most of the site comprised sown arable land with narrow poor semi-improved grassland margins. During the most recent survey, all the fields were sown with a temporary grassland ley.
- 4.1.2 This habitat was categorised as arable (Phase 1 Habitats Survey classification), which equates to 'Cropland – Temporary grass and clover leys' under UKHabs classification.

Habitat Condition

- 4.1.3 The condition of Cropland – Temporary grass and clover leys is already pre-defined in the metric which is stipulated as Condition Assessment N/A. This gives a score of 1.

Modified Grassland

Habitat Description

- 4.1.4 The site comprised a small compartment to the north of the arable field of poor semi-improved grassland, with encroachment of tall ruderal and scrub vegetation recorded throughout. There was an evident lack of species diversity, minimal broadleaved species cover and the grassland was dominated by a low number of common fast-growing grass species including Cock's-foot (*Dactylis glomerata*), Yorkshire-fog (*Holcus lanatus*), False Oat-grass (*Arrhenatherum elatius*) and Meadow grass species (*Poa* sp.). Encroaching Bramble (*Rubus fruticosus* agg.) and Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*) scrub was identified along the southern, eastern and south western edges.
- 4.1.5 A very limited number of broadleaved herb species were recorded within the grassland, which mainly consisted of undesirable species such as Ribwort Plantain (*Plantago lanceolata*), White Clover (*Trifolium repens*), Ragwort (*Jacobaea vulgaris*), Creeping Buttercup (*Ranunculus repens*) and Creeping Thistle (*Cirsium arvense*), Bristly Oxtongue (*Picris echioides*) and Teasel (*Dipsacus fullonum*).
- 4.1.6 The grassland habitat on-site was categorised as species-poor semi-improved grassland (Phase 1 Habitats Survey classification), which equates to 'modified grassland' under UKHabs classification. The grassland exhibits many of the characteristics typical of modified grassland, as detailed within the UKHab classification key, being dominated by few fast-growing grasses on neutral soils, with grass cover over 75%, being overall species poor (<9 species per m²), with Priority Habitat indicator species absent.

Habitat Condition

- 4.1.7 The appearance and composition of the vegetation does not match the characteristics of Priority Habitat grassland (i.e. lowland meadows), nor does it have a high abundance or density of wildflowers, sedges and indicator species typical of these habitats (c. 6-8 species per m²). The cover of undesirable species is greater than 5% and cover of scrub (predominately bramble) is greater than 20%, another indicator of poor condition. The modified grassland matches the characteristics of disturbed ground and fails most of the grassland condition criteria. However, due to the time of year, a precautionary 'moderate' condition has been assigned.

Ruderal/Ephemeral

- 4.1.8 Areas of tall ruderal were recorded along the eastern boundary, adjacent to Cross Road. This habitat equates to 'Sparsely vegetated land – Ruderal/Ephemeral under UKHabs classification.
- 4.1.9 Tall ruderal species included Alexander's (*Smyrniolum olusatrum*), Common Hogweed (*Heracleum sphondylium*), Cow Parsley (*Anthriscus sylvestris*) and Common Nettle (*Urtica dioica*).

Habitat Condition

- 4.1.10 The vegetation structure was evidently homogeneous throughout the site and lacked a diverse range

of flowering plants. The habitat was assessed as being in moderate condition.

Woodland

- 4.1.11 The southern and western edge of the arable field was bordered by a stand of deciduous plantation woodland, dominated by young trees. At its southern end, the woodland canopy was primarily composed of young willow *Salix* sp. trees, with a compact understorey dominated by Spindle (*Euonymus europaeus*), Dogwood (*Cornus sanguinea*) and Elder (*Sambucus nigra*).
- 4.1.12 Moving north the composition of the woodland was diverse, with young stands of Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*), English Oak (*Quercus robur*), Beech (*Fagus sylvatica*), Holly (*Ilex aquifolium*) and Hawthorn interspersed among the dense understorey of Bramble, Spindle, and Dogwood.
- 4.1.13 The main woodland habitat on site was plantation broadleaved woodland (Phase 1 Habitats Survey classification), which equates to Woodland and forest - Other woodland; broadleaved.

Habitat Condition

- 4.1.14 The woodland had a good number of native species, signs of good health and an absence of invasive species and browsing damage. However, because of the age of the woodland, there was a lack of mature stands, dead wood and good flora indicators throughout. Additionally, nutrient enrichment is likely to occur due to its proximity to the arable field. Total score on the condition 26 points and is therefore assessed as being in moderate condition.

Hedgerows

- 4.1.15 There were two hedgerows present along the eastern and northern edges of the grassland field compartment which formed boundaries with the neighbouring residential gardens immediately adjacent to site.
- 4.1.16 Species present included a mix of Holly, Privet (*Ligustrum ovalifolium*), Sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*), Aspen (*Populus tremula*) and Leyland Cypress (*Cupressus x leylandii*). Given their status as residential boundaries, H1 and H2 were both assessed as 'Hedge Ornamental Non Native'.
- 4.1.17 H3 was an old defunct hedge located along the eastern boundary of the large arable field and comprised scattered Dogwood, Hawthorn, Blackthorn and Bramble.

Habitat Condition

- 4.1.18 Due to their nature and structure, all hedgerows were assigned a poor condition.

4.2 On-site Post-intervention Habitat Creation and Enhancement

4.2.1 Post-intervention habitat creation and enhancement which will be delivered alongside development (as illustrated on the Development Framework Plan) includes the following:

- Creation of a combined 0.53km of hedgerow is proposed. This is split across six new hedgerows around the boundaries of the site and the development footprint. The majority of the proposed hedgerows have been assigned as Native Species Rich Hedgerows with trees with the addition of one 'Associated with bank or ditch', where it is adjacent to the proposed bioswale (see below). All new hedgerows have been assigned a moderate condition.
- Enhancement of all the woodland on site (c. 2ha) to good condition.
- Creation of 0.15ha of other woodland; broadleaved. This will be a small extension to the existing woodland and has been proposed in the southern extent of the site.
- Creation of 0.38ha of thicket planting (mixed scrub - native shrub and tree mix) throughout the site but concentrated within the 'habitat area' (as illustrated on the Development Framework Plan). A target condition of 'moderate' has been assigned.
- Creation of c. 0.52ha of wildflower grassland (other neutral grassland). All wildflower grassland has a target condition of moderate. This is proposed through a combination of species-rich grassland seeding and sowing a wet tolerant, species-rich grassland within the SuDs basin and swales.
- Creation of a community orchard (c. 0.10ha – Traditional Orchards) is proposed in the southern

part of the site. A target condition of moderate has been assigned.

- Creation of a sustainable drainage feature (c. 0.03ha) is proposed. The margins of the basin to be seeded with a wildflower seed mix, tolerant of wet conditions (see above).
- Creation of c. 1.3ha of Public Open Space (POS) amenity grassland. A target condition of moderate has been assigned.
- Creation of c. 2.96ha of Developed land; sealed surface
- Creation of c. 1.27ha of vegetated gardens (70:30 split with developable area as per BNG Metric 3.1 Technical Guidance).

4.2.2 All the above proposals are described in further detail within the ‘Outline Habitat Management Plan Report’ (Gladman, 2022) and should be read in conjunction with this report.

4.3 Biodiversity Unit Calculations

4.3.1 Biodiversity Metric calculations have been based on the above assumptions in terms of habitat creation and enhancement.

4.3.2 Based on the Biodiversity Metric 3.1 calculations, the proposed development alone (inclusive of on-site intervention) would result in an overall gain of 3.27 habitat units (10.00% net gain) and a gain of 4.39 hedgerow units (1663.43% net gain). A summary of changes in habitat areas / hedgerow length is provided in Table 2 below

Table 2: Quantitative Assessment of Biodiversity Impact

Factor	Habitats (ha)	Hedgerows (km)
Total on site area / length (baseline)	8.71	0.19
Total site units (baseline)	32.72	0.26
Area / length retained	0.00	0.00
Units retained	0.00	0.00
Area / length enhanced	2.01	0.00
Baseline units enhanced	16.05	0.00
Area / length lost	6.70	0.19
Units lost	16.68	0.26
Post-intervention Units On-site	36.00	4.65

Factor	Habitats (ha)	Hedgerows (km)
Net Project Units	3.27	4.39
Total project % change	10.00%	1663.43%

4.3.3 The Scheme will not result in any loss of ‘very high’, ‘high’ or ‘medium’ distinctiveness habitats; with loss of 8.71ha of ‘low’ distinctiveness habitats (cropland, modified grassland, bareground and ruderal/ephemeral).

4.4 Trading Summary

4.4.1 The losses of ‘low’ distinctiveness habitats can be offset by provision of habitats of the same or higher distinctiveness. Thus, the loss of cropland and a small area of modified grassland, ruderal/ephemeral and bareground has been offset by creating greater distinctiveness habitats including new woodland, traditional community orchards, wildflower meadow (other neutral grassland) and thicket planting (mixed scrub) in addition to habitats of the same distinctiveness such as amenity grassland. A target of moderate condition has been set for the majority of newly created habitats which is considered to be an achievable objective within the context of the new development with the exception of more conventional poor condition habitats found within development schemes such as vegetated gardens. Thus, the trading rules are satisfied.

4.5 Ecological Functionality

4.5.1 A qualitative assessment of the biodiversity impact of the scheme is provided in Table 3 below. The Biodiversity Net Gain was assessed to ensure that the scheme design delivers the best and most appropriate habitat measures which maintain and enhance ecological functionality of a site and deliver benefits for local biodiversity.

4.5.2 The proposed scheme was compiled in close liaison with the design team to retain and protect key corridors where possible and create new areas of open space, whilst maintaining viability. The scheme design has been informed by a full suite of habitat and protected species surveys (FPCR Ecological Appraisal 2021).

Table 3: Qualitative Assessment of Biodiversity Impact

Baseline Habitat	Ecological Functionality	Impact	Post-development
Grassland – Modified Grassland	Provides habitat for a range of local wildlife including bats, birds and invertebrates	Loss of 1.42ha	Areas of thicket scrub and wildflower planting will be created around the site and there is a habitat creation area in the northern section of the site. This will form a total area of 0.85ha. along with the creation of new woodland areas and traditional orchards, this new resource will maintain a sufficient biodiverse corridor and increase floral diversity, improving invertebrate diversity and

Baseline Habitat	Ecological Functionality	Impact	Post-development
			provide new opportunities for birds, bats and other mammal species.
Cropland	Sub-optimal habitat for biodiversity, although provides some roosting and nesting opportunities for ground nesting birds.	Loss of 4.89ha	Areas of thicket scrub, hedgerow and wildflower planting will be created around the site. This new resource will maintain a sufficient biodiverse corridor and increase floral diversity, improving invertebrate diversity and provide new opportunities for birds, bats and other mammal species.
Hedgerows	Provide shelter, foraging and nesting resource.	Loss of 0.19km	Creation of 0.53km of new hedgerows are proposed. This will improve connectivity, foraging and nesting resources. Creation of mixed scrub (as above) will further complement and strengthen existing boundaries.

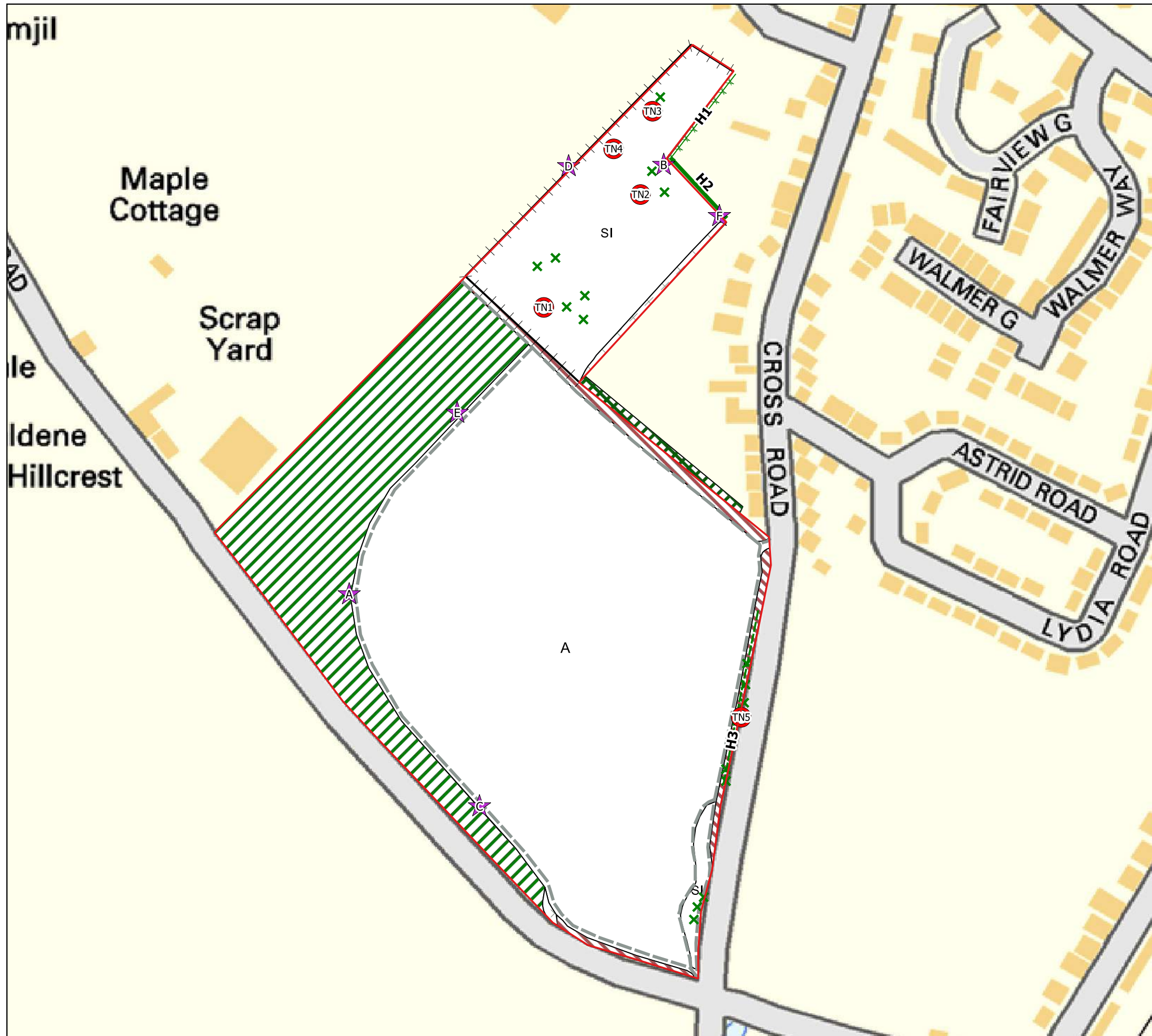
5 DISCUSSION

- 5.1.1 Biodiversity Net Gain calculations, using the Biodiversity Metric 3.1 (April 2022) have been undertaken for the proposed development at Land off Cross Road, Deal. Baseline habitat calculations have been informed by Phase 1 habitat survey work and a desk-stop study. Post-development calculations have been made based on the indicative Development Framework Plan. Assumptions and limitations to the assessment have been highlighted where relevant and identified in the Metric calculator which should be reviewed in conjunction with this report.
- 5.1.2 A unit gain of 3.27 habitat units (10.00% net gain) was identified following the completion of baseline and on-site post intervention calculations. This score was achieved through the creation of significant areas of semi-natural habitat within the scheme. Creation of new hedgerows has resulted in a gain of 4.39 hedgerow units (1663.43% net gain).
- 5.1.3 As such the scheme has the potential to exceed the 10% net increase in biodiversity mandated by the Government in line with Chapter 15, paragraph 174 of the NPPF and the Environment Act 2021.
- 5.1.4 It is recommended that these calculations are revisited at the detailed design stage of the project when further information will be available. Biodiversity net gain is often secured via a planning condition requiring the submission of a 'management plan' (e.g. Landscape and Ecology Management Plan (LEMP)) which reflects the habitats to be created and enhanced to achieve a net gain along with a 30 year maintenance programme. An outline Habitat Management Plan has been produced as part of this biodiversity net gain assessment which gives further clarity to the proposed habitats recommended in this report.
- 5.1.5

6 REFERENCES

- Baker, J., (2016). Biodiversity Net Gain: Good practice principles for development. CIEEM, CIRIA & IEMA.
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- National Planning Policy Framework (2021). Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.
- UKHAB Working Group (2020). UK Habitats Classification Habitat Definitions Version 1.1.

APPENDIX A – Habitats Plan



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Key

- Site Boundary
- Phase 1 Points
- x Scrub - scattered
- ⊙ Target note
- Phase 1 Lines
- Fence
- Path
- Intact hedgerow
- Hedge with trees
- Defunct hedgerow
- Phase 1 Habitats
- Broadleaved woodland - plantation
- Bare ground
- Scrub - scattered
- Scrub - dense/continuous
- Other tall herb and fern - ruderal
- sl Poor semi-improved grassland
- A Cultivated/disturbed land - arable
- ★ Static Detectors

Dates

- A and B) - Spring (18th - 23rd May 2021)
- C and D) - Summer (5th - 10th Aug 2021)
- E) - Autumn (28th Sep - 3rd Oct 2021)
- F) - Autumn (13th - 18th Oct 2021)

Gladman Developments Ltd.

Land at Cross Road,
Deal

PHASE 1 HABITAT PLAN



scale @ A3
1:2250

drawn
PJP

issue
2/11/2021



drawing / figure number
Figure 2

rev
7572-E-01

APPENDIX B – Development Framework Plan

















Dover District Council Reg 18 Draft Local Plan - Open Space Requirements (DM Policy 31)

Typology	Standard Required per 1000 pop. (Ha)	Required (Ha)	Onsite required?	Proposed (Ha)	
Accessible greenspace - Parks & Gardens	0.45	0.1566	-	-	
Accessible greenspace - Amenity Greenspace	1.46	0.508	Yes	4.19	✓
Provision for children & young people	0.06	0.04	Yes	0.04	✓
Allotments	0.21	0.073	-	-	

Calculations based on 2.4 persons per household based on a density of 35 DPH (giving an estimated population of



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-  Application Boundary [8.71 Ha]
- BUILT DEVELOPMENT**
-  Residential Area [4.23Ha]
(Up to 140 dwellings at 33 DPH)
- ACCESS**
-  Proposed Vehicular Access
-  Proposed Indicative Roads
-  Proposed Pedestrian Connections
-  Proposed Footpaths
- GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE [4.48 Ha]**
-  Existing Woodland and Trees to be Retained and Enhanced [2.0 ha]
-  Public Open Space [1.72 ha]
-  Proposed Woodland Planting [0.15 Ha]
-  Proposed Shrub and Tree Planting
-  Proposed Hedgerow Planting
-  Proposed Play Area (LEAP) [0.04 Ha]
-  Proposed Habitat Area - Mown Route with Information Boards and Reptile Hibernacula [0.16ha]
-  Proposed Attenuation Basin [0.16 ha]
-  Proposed Drainage Swales [0.15ha]
-  Proposed Community Orchard [0.10ha]

APPENDIX C – Habitat Condition Assessments

Grassland - Modified grassland Condition Assessment Criteria		Pass / Fail
1	There must be 6-8 species per m ² . Note - if a grassland has 9 or more species per m ² it should be classified as a moderate distinctiveness grassland habitat type. NB - this criterion is non-negotiable for achieving moderate condition.	Pass – Dominated by grasses and undesirable species. C. 6 species per m ²
2	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.	Pass – lack of management and rabbit grazed
3	Some scattered scrub (including bramble) may be present, but scrub accounts for less than 20% of total grassland area. Note - patches of shrubs with continuous (more than 90%) cover should be classified as the relevant scrub habitat type.	Pass – some scattered scrub present around the peripheries of the site but less than 20%.
4	Physical damage evident in less than 5% of total grassland area, such as excessive poaching, damage from machinery use or storage, damaging levels of access, or any other damaging management activities.	Fail – No recent damage evident. However, the grassland area is adjacent to a crop field to the south and is likely susceptible to mowing and fertiliser/herbicides/pesticides.
5	Cover of bare ground between 1% and 5%, including localised areas, for example, rabbit warrens.	Fail – no cover of bare ground
6	Cover of bracken less than 20%.	Pass – No bracken cover
7	There is an absence of invasive non-native species (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA, 1981) and undesirable species ¹ make up less than 5% of ground cover.	Pass – Undesirable species are present. However, species do not make up more than 5% of ground cover.
Condition Assessment Result	Condition Assessment Score	
Passes 6 or 7 of 7 criteria including non-negotiable criterion 7	Good (3)	
Passes 4 or 5 of 7 criteria; OR Passes 6 of 7 criteria excluding non-negotiable criterion 7	Moderate (2)	
Passes 0, 1, 2 or 3 of 7 criteria	Poor (1)	
	Condition score – Moderate	

Sparsely vegetated land – Ruderal/ephemeral		Pass / Fail
Condition Assessment Criteria		
1	Vegetation structure is varied, providing opportunities for insects, birds and bats to live and breed. A single ecotone (i.e. scrub, grassland, herbs) should not account for more than 80% of the total habitat area.	Pass – some grassland and scattered scrub is present amongst the tall ruderal vegetation.
2	There is a diverse range of flowering plant species, providing nectar sources for insects. These species may be either native, or non-native but beneficial to wildlife. NB - To achieve GOOD condition, criterion 2 must be satisfied by native species only (rather than non-natives beneficial to wildlife).	Fail – lack of floristic diversity which comprised some undesirable species such as to Rosebay Willowherb, Common Nettle, Wild Teasel, Greater Burdock, Creeping Thistle, Horsetail and Mugwort.
3	Invasive non-native species (Schedule 9 of WCA) cover less than 5% of total vegetated area. NB - To achieve GOOD condition, criterion 3 must be satisfied by a complete absence of invasive non-native species (rather than <5% cover).	Pass – No invasive non-native (schedule 9) species were recorded
Condition Assessment Result	Condition Assessment Score	
If 3 criteria assessed:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Passes 3 of 3 core criteria; AND • Meets the requirements for good condition within criteria 2 and 3 	Good (3)	Condition score – Moderate
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Passes 2 of 3 core criteria; OR • Passes 3 of 3 core criteria but does not meet the requirements for good condition within criteria 2 and 3 	Moderate (2)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Passes 0 or 1 of 3 core criteria 	Poor (1)	

Woodland and forest - Other woodland; broadleaved					
Condition Assessment Criteria					
Indicator		Good (3 points)	Moderate (2 points)	Poor (1 point)	Score per indicator
1	Age distribution of trees ¹	Three age classes present	Two age classes present	One age class present	2
2	Wild, domestic and feral herbivore damage	No significant browsing damage evident in woodland ²	Evidence of significant browsing pressure is present in 40% or less of whole woodland	Evidence of significant browsing pressure is present in 40% or more of whole woodland	3
3	Invasive plant species ³	No invasive species present in woodland	Rhododendron or laurel not present, other invasive species < 10% cover	Rhododendron or laurel present, or other invasive species > 10% cover	3
4	Number of native tree species	Five or more native tree or shrub species found across woodland parcel	Three to four native tree or shrub species found across woodland parcel	None to two native tree or shrub species across woodland parcel	3
5	Cover of native tree and shrub species	> 80% of canopy trees and >80% of understory shrubs are native	50-80% of canopy trees and 50-80% of understory shrubs are native	< 50% of canopy trees and <50% of understory shrubs are native	3
6	Open space within woodland ⁴	10 – 20% of woodland has areas of temporary open space, unless woodland is <10ha in which case lower threshold of 10% does not apply	21- 40% of woodland has areas of temporary open space	More than 40% of woodland has areas of temporary open space	1
7	Woodland regeneration ⁵	All three classes present in woodland; trees 4-7cm dbh, saplings and seedlings or advanced coppice regrowth	One or two classes only present in woodland	No classes or coppice regrowth present in woodland	2
8	Tree health	Tree mortality less than 10%, no pests or diseases and no crown dieback	11% to 25% mortality and/or crown dieback or low risk pest or disease present ⁶	Greater than 25% tree mortality and any high risk pest or disease present	3
9	Vegetation and ground flora	Ancient woodland flora indicators present	Recognisable NVC plant community present	No recognisable NVC community	1
10	Woodland vertical structure	Three or more storeys across all survey plots or a complex woodland	Two storeys across all survey plots	One or less storey across all survey plots	1
11	Veteran trees	Two or more veteran trees per hectare	One veteran tree per hectare	No veteran trees present in woodland	1

12	Amount of deadwood	50% of all survey plots within the woodland parcel have standing deadwood, large dead branches/ stems and stumps, or a high abundance of smaller cavities	Between 25% and 50% of all survey plots within the woodland parcel have standing deadwood, large dead branches/ stems and stumps, or a high abundance of smaller cavities	Less than 25% of all survey plots within the woodland parcel have standing deadwood, large dead branches/ stems and stumps, or a high abundance of smaller cavities	1
13	Woodland disturbance⁹	No nutrient enrichment or damaged ground evident	Less than 1 hectare in total of nutrient enrichment across woodland area and/or less than 20% of woodland area has damaged ground	More than 1 hectare of nutrient enrichment and/or more than 20% of woodland area has damaged ground	2
Total score (out of a possible 39)					26
Total score >32 (33 to 39)				Good (3)	
Total score 26 to 32				Moderate (2)	
Total score <26 (13 to 25)				Poor (1)	
Condition score – Moderate					