



Crossland
Ecology

Draft Biodiversity Gain Plan

Site: Hatchpen Farm, The Joint, Royston

Client: Mr. R. Rand

Date: May 2025



Crossland Ecology Ltd. Office 5945, 321 High Road, Chadwell Heath, Essex, RM6 6AX

www.crosslandecology.co.uk | info@crosslandecology.co.uk | 01245 806 360

Quality Assurance

Revision	Status	Date	Comments	Author(s)	Review and approval by
A	Issue	07/04/2025	First issue	TH	VC
B	Issue	01/05/2025	Updated following amended red line boundary	TH	VC
C	Issue	03/06/2025	Amended post-development habitats	TH	VC

Disclaimer

Crossland Ecology has prepared this report for the exclusive use of the client for the intended purpose as stated in the terms and conditions under which the scope of work has been agreed and completed.

No part of this report may be copied or duplicated without the express permission of Crossland Ecology and the client. The copyright of this document lies with Crossland Ecology, with all rights reserved.

The report may not be relied upon by any other party without explicit agreement from Crossland Ecology and the client. No other warranty, expressed or implied, is made as to the professional advice included in this report.

Site assessments / surveys (where required) have been restricted to a level of detail required to achieve the stated objectives of the work.

Due to the temporal nature of ecology, the findings of this report should not be relied upon if a significant amount of time has passed, as defined by the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) guidelines.

Contents

1.0	Summary.....	1
2.0	Introduction.....	2
3.0	Methods	5
4.0	BNG Good Practice Principles for Development	9
5.0	Baseline Conditions	11
6.0	Proposed Design.....	12
7.0	On-site Habitat Creation and Enhancement	13
8.0	Implementation, Management and Monitoring Plans.....	15
9.0	Conclusions.....	16
10.0	References.....	17
	Appendix 1: Proposed Site Plan	18
	Appendix 2: Relevant local planning policies.....	19
	Appendix 3: Baseline Habitat Plan	20
	Appendix 4: Post-development Habitat Plan.....	21
	Appendix 5: Condition Assessment Sheets.....	22
	Appendix 6: UKHab Survey Plant Species	24
	Appendix 7: Site Photographs.....	25
	Appendix 8: Statutory DEFRA Metric (appended separately).....	27

1.0 Summary

- 1.1** This Draft Biodiversity Gain Plan incorporates the findings and recommendations of a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) assessment at Hatchpen Farm, Royston ('the Site'). The assessment was undertaken to support a planning application based on the proposed designs provided (Appendix 1).
- 1.2** The Site is subject to a planning application for the development of two 79.248m x 30m x 10m straw storage buildings ('the Proposed Development') within an area of existing aggregate.
- 1.3** The Site was approximately 4.5ha in extent and comprised an area of existing aggregate, bordered by modified grassland, and associated access track. There were agricultural buildings to the east of the Site, and two ponds within 250m. The wider area was dominated by agricultural fields.
- 1.4** The baseline habitat has been taken as the habitat before the arable field was cleared in c.2022 for the existing aggregate and adjacent building development (Appendix 3).
- 1.5** Based on the current calculations, with the inclusion of the on-site habitat measures set out in section 7.0, the statutory metric has demonstrated that the on-site proposals result in a net gain of 11.02% (0.72) habitat units.
- 1.6** The Site can therefore deliver a BNG gain and adhere to both local and national current planning policy and the Environment Act (2021).
- 1.7** Table 1 provides a summary of answers for the National Planning Portal BNG question set:

Table 1: National Planning Portal BNG

Question	Answer
Biodiversity gain condition applies?	Yes
Pre-development biodiversity value date	Approximately August 2022
Pre-development biodiversity value	6.5 total units
Is date earlier than planning submission date?	Yes – backdated to pre-degradation
Publication date of metric used	23rd July 2024
Loss/degradation of on-site habitats prior to biodiversity value calculation date?	Yes
Irreplaceable habitats present?	No

2.0 Introduction

Purpose of this Report

- 2.1** Crossland Ecology Ltd. was commissioned by Mr. R. Rand to undertake a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) assessment for Hatchpen Farm, Royston ('the Site'). The assessment was undertaken to support a planning application based on the proposed designs provided (Appendix 1).
- 2.2** A habitat condition assessment (Appendix 5) was undertaken with findings used to feed into the BNG calculations for the site to determine the baseline value of habitat features.
- 2.3** Calculations of the proposed development were based on the proposed scheme shown in Appendix 1. These calculations have been used to guide the proposal's design and determine the level of potential BNG change as a result of the development and to identify any necessary mitigation measures.

Aims and Objectives

- 2.4** The aims of this report are to:
- Calculate the baseline conditions as biodiversity units;
 - Inform the proposed development design;
 - Calculate changes to biodiversity units as a result of the proposed development; and
 - Calculate proposed mitigation measures (as far as possible) and enhancement opportunities, where appropriate, to demonstrate a net gain for biodiversity.

Site Description

- 2.5** The Site was approximately 4.5ha in extent and comprised a section of a grassland field (previously cropland). A large area of aggregate contained an uncovered straw stack in the location of the two proposed straw stores. The field was bordered by off-site hedgerows, with roads to the north and west and agricultural buildings to the east of the Site. The wider area was dominated by open farmland, with pockets of woodland, hedgerows, and ponds.

Condition Assessment Limitations

- 2.6** The condition assessment was undertaken in February which is considered outside the optimal time of year for botanical surveys. However, due to the size and types of habitats present, this was not considered a significant limitation to the survey.

Proposed Project Description

- 2.7** The Site is subject to a planning application for the development of two 79.248m x 30m x 10m straw storage buildings ('the Proposed Development') within an area of existing aggregate.

Planning Policy and Legislation

2.9 This BNG assessment has been compiled with reference to the following relevant nature conservation legislation, planning policy and the UK Biodiversity Framework from which the protection of sites, habitats and species is derived in England including:

- The Environment Act (2021);
- UK Government's 25 Year Environmental Plan (DEFRA, 2018);
- Biodiversity 2020: A Strategy for England's Wildlife and Ecosystem Services (DEFRA, 2011);
- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government [MHCLG], 2024);
- The Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act (HMSO, 2006); and;
- North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031 (North Hertfordshire Council, 2022).

2.10 Relevant local policies are outlined in Appendix 2. Of note, no specific percentage net gain in ecological units is outlined. Therefore, based on the current local planning policy, the BNG target will be the mandatory 10% as required under the Environment Act.

3.0 Methods

General

- 3.1** BNG is an approach to development that leaves biodiversity in a better state than before, whereby the development attempts to achieve a positive net outcome for biodiversity on the site, post development. This assessment identifies opportunities for ecological enhancement at the site, aiming to provide a net gain for biodiversity, based upon enhancing the current ecological resource, and creating new habitat where habitat losses have occurred.

Data sources

- 3.2** Several data sources informed the BNG assessment:
- A site visit was undertaken in February by Assistant Ecologist Tiffany Heaver BSc (Hons);
 - Publicly available Open-Source Natural England datasets for Habitats of Principal Importance (HoPI), ancient woodland (classed as irreplaceable habitat), and statutory designated sites for nature conservation;
 - The proposed scheme (Appendix 1) and digitised into GIS for use in BNG calculations.

BNG Assessment

- 3.3** Data for habitats were entered into the Statutory Biodiversity Metric calculation tool (an Excel workbook) (DEFRA, 2024) to calculate the ecological baseline for the site. This information creates the numerical parameters by which the number of Biodiversity Units are calculated. A brief explanation of these factors is provided below.

Area / length

- 3.4** The metric assesses linear habitats, such as watercourses or hedgerows separately from other habitat parcels. Linear habitats are measured in kilometers (km), non-linear habitats are measured in hectares (ha). Areas and lengths were all calculated using measurement tools within QGIS.

Distinctiveness

- 3.5** Each habitat in the UK Habitat Classification (UKHab Ltd., 2023) is automatically assigned a score for distinctiveness within the metric. Distinctiveness recognises the different characteristics of habitats in relation to their capacity for supporting species richness, their tendency to support species found rarely in other habitats, and the rarity of the habitat itself.
- 3.6** It should be noted that irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland) are not adequately measured by the metric and will require separate consideration which must comply with existing national and local policy and legislation. Data relating to these can be entered into the metric, so as to give an indicative picture of the

biodiversity value of the habitats present on a site, but this should be supported by bespoke advice.

Condition

- 3.7** The condition of each habitat is assessed separately using the methods set out in the Statutory Biodiversity Metric User Guide (DEFRA, 2024). This approach details condition criteria for each habitat type and then applies thresholds for how many of these criteria are met to establish the condition score of the habitat. This requires detailed assessment of the habitat prior to completing the metric. Habitats at the bottom end of distinctiveness do not have a specific approach to condition assessment and are instead given a standard condition score. Scores assigned to condition are given as Good = 3; Moderate = 2; Poor = 1; Not Applicable = 0.

Strategic significance

- 3.8** This element is to assess the habitats on-site in relation to the geographical location in which they are found. Information to determine the significance of a habitat within a specific landscape can be found in a variety of sources that include local plans, local biodiversity records, and National Character Areas. The strategic significance is based on three categories which equate to a different score, which are as follows: High = 1.15; Medium = 1.1 and Low = 1.

Risk factors

- 3.9** The metric includes two risk factor multipliers that reflect the difficulties in creating certain habitat types in a way that achieves significant biodiversity benefits. These are “Time to target condition” and “Difficulty of creation”. These recognise that different habitats attain degrees of maturity at different rates and that the successful creation of some habitats is not certain, due to various environmental and human factors.
- 3.10** Thus, the planned creation of a habitat that will take a substantial amount of time to reach target condition, such as woodland, or that is considered difficult to achieve, such as lowland fen, would equate to fewer Habitat Units than an existing area of the same habitat. The metric contains standard multipliers for each habitat class.

Application of the metric

- 3.11** The Proposed Site Plan which illustrates the footprint of proposed development parcels, amenities, and infrastructure provision, has been used to assess and quantify the loss of habitat, and calculate the areas of habitat to be retained. These were entered into the metric to provide a value for the habitat, hedgerow, and watercourse units to be lost as a result of the development.
- 3.12** The Proposed Site Plan was then used to calculate the extent of each habitat type that is to be created, and this information was entered into the Site Habitat Creation section of the tool, along with values for the equivalent parameters as described above, to give a post-intervention value. Where detailed plantings schemes have not

been provided, an informed assumption on habitat to be created has been made, suitable for the location and use of the land.

- 3.13** A comparison of the baseline and the post-intervention unit figures then provides the percentage net change in Biodiversity Units, positive or negative.

Assumptions and Limitations

- 3.14** It should be noted that the metric does not use species explicitly. Instead, it uses broad habitat categories as a proxy for the biodiversity 'value' of the species communities that make up different habitats. The metric does not affect the legal obligations associated with protected species and this is beyond the scope of metric.
- 3.15** The Statutory DEFRA Biodiversity Metric has been used in this report to demonstrate BNG. It is a useful tool to help inform plans and decisions to benefit biodiversity. However, it is important to be aware of its limitations. For BNG to be used appropriately and to be successfully implemented (i.e. achieving a BNG), the Good Practice Principles for Development established by Baker *et al.* (2019) must be adhered to. These principles have been developed by the Construction Industry Research and Information Association (CIRIA), the Chartered Institute for Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA).
- 3.16** The metric does not override existing planning policy or legislation, including the mitigation hierarchy, which should always be considered as the metric is applied. The mitigation hierarchy states that action must first be taken to avoid any adverse impact to biodiversity, to mitigate (on-site) any impacts that cannot be avoided and, only as a last resort, to compensate (off-site) for any remaining impacts.
- 3.17** The outputs of the metric are not absolute values but, instead, they provide proxy for the relative biodiversity worth of the Site before and after intervention. The quality and reliability of outputs will depend on the quality of the inputs. Like for like habitat or better should be the aim and one habitat should not be replaced with another where possible.
- 3.18** It is important to emphasise that, while the metric provides a useful tool to demonstrate BNG, it does not remove the need for professional judgement by a suitably competent ecologist. Ecological functionality is important to underpin the assessment and the Site's design should be based upon the Good Practice Principles. The metric should also not be a reason to miss opportunities to benefit key species through biodiversity net gain where they are not directly accounted for within the metric.
- 3.19** The existing area of aggregate (shown in Appendix 4) was historically an arable field. Aerial maps show this degradation to have occurred in c.2022. Therefore, in line with MHCLG and Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) (2024) the baseline habitat has been taken as the habitat before this degradation took place (Appendix 3). The pre-development biodiversity value of the on-site habitat is taken to be the highest biodiversity value of the habitat and applied to the calculation of

pre-development biodiversity value in the metric tool. The grassland habitat, although previously arable, is not considered to have been degraded, therefore the baseline is taken to be the habitat on the date of the site visit.

- 3.20** This report assumes that vegetation adjacent to the access track is outside of the application boundary, and that all proposed works are confined to the existing area of aggregate (surrounding grassland is retained).

4.0 BNG Good Practice Principles for Development

4.1 The metric is a tool that can be used to help inform plans and decisions. It is important, however, to be aware of its limitations and to conduct assessments in accordance with the following principles and rules. The key principles and rules (as set out below) have therefore been considered as part of this assessment with justification provided as to how each BNG principle has been applied.

4.2 Table 2 outlines the BNG principles and provides a statement of how these were each considered during the assessment.

Table 2: BNG Good Principles for Development (Baker et al., 2019)

Principle No.	Description	Statement of consideration
1	Apply the mitigation hierarchy.	Loss of arable habitat cannot be avoided in order to deliver the scheme. The enhancement of retained modified grassland within the Site will ensure there is an overall net gain in biodiversity units.
2	Avoid losing biodiversity that cannot be offset elsewhere.	The Site is comprised of habitats of low ecological value. The development will only involve the loss of the cropland habitat. On-site enhancement of a retained area of modified grassland will provide compensation for losses.
3	Be inclusive and equitable.	Every effort has been made to record accurately and map to a scale that is appropriate for the site. A precautionary approach has been considered to the value of the habitats to ensure the most accurate number of biodiversity units are afforded to each habitat type recorded on-site. This is further supported by undertaking habitat condition assessments to detail the decision-making process. Based on this approach it is considered that although the values are only relative, the best outcome for each habitat on-site has been calculated.
4	Address risk	Available information has been recorded on-site to determine the associated 'typical' habitats on-site.
5	Make a measurable net gain contribution	A net gain will be achievable through on-site enhancement to make a measurable net gain contribution.

Principle No.	Description	Statement of consideration
6	Achieve the best outcomes for biodiversity	Documents such as Habitat Management Plans may be required where appropriate, and will detail long-term management objectives, management prescriptions, timetable and monitoring.
7	Be additional.	On-site compensation will be delivered specifically for BNG.
8	Create a net gain legacy	With the on-site habitat enhancements the proposed development will lead to an overall net gain in biodiversity despite areas of habitat loss, creating a net gain legacy.
9	Optimise sustainability	The scheme will compensate for cropland with on-site habitat enhancements.
10	Be transparent	The commitment to BNG delivery is stated within this report. Through the operational lifetime of the site, monitoring/auditing reports will be made available to the Local Planning Authority to evidence delivery in accordance with the approved scheme.

5.0 Baseline Conditions

- 5.1** The baseline habitats used to calculate the pre-development biodiversity value in the metric tool are shown in Appendix 3.
- 5.2** In total, three broad habitat types were identified and measured by area (hectares). These were classified and recorded in accordance with the UKHab classification (UKHab Ltd., 2023) and mapped using GIS and subject to a condition assessment (Appendix 5). A condition assessment is not required for developed land (access track) or arable field.
- 5.3** The UKHab classification was utilised as this is deemed compatible with the Biodiversity Metric. Each of the additional factors have also been assessed and included within the Statutory Biodiversity Metric workbook.
- 5.4** Detailed calculations are displayed within the Statutory Biodiversity Metric workbook (Hatchpen Farm, Royston, 17/04/25 V3). The baseline results are summarised in Table 5 below.

6.0 Proposed Design

Impact Assessment

- 6.1** The Proposed Site Plan used to assess the impact of the development and calculate the elements of habitat creation is shown in Appendix 1.
- 6.2** Based on the information provided in the Proposed Site Plan the following assumed habitats (classified using DEFRA, 2024) have been made and redrawn (Appendix 4). This information was used to input into the calculator to assess the post development BNG calculations.

Table 3: Translation table between Proposed Site Plan and BNG Habitats

Proposed Site Plan	BNG Habitats
Grassland	Modified grassland
Aggregate	Artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface
Straw storage buildings	Developed land; sealed surface
Access track	Developed land; sealed surface

7.0 On-site Habitat Creation and Enhancement

7.1 The proposed habitats have been mapped as per Table 3, as per best practice requirements (DEFRA, 2024).

Modified Grassland

7.2 An area of 1.5ha existing modified grassland will be enhanced through the provision of an increased native species composition (at least 6-8 species per m²) and managed to a ‘good’ condition targeting the below criteria (with 6 or 7 criteria to be passed including the first criterion):

- 6-8 vascular plant species per m² including at least two forbs (this is essential for achieving at least moderate condition);
- Varied sward height with at least 20% of the sward less than 7cm and at least 20% more than 7cm;
- Cover of scrub is less than 20%;
- Physical damage is evident in less than 5% of the total grassland area;
- Cover of bare ground is between 1% and 10%;
- Cover of bracken *Pteridium aquilinum* is less than 20%; and
- There is an absence of invasive non-native plant species (as listed on Schedule 9 of the WCA [1981, as amended]).

7.3 Table 4 provides a summary of the post biodiversity values for the site.

Table 4: On-site change by broad habitat type

	Baseline		Post-development on-site		On-site change	
Habitat group	On-site existing area (ha)	On-site existing value	On-site proposed area (ha)	On-site proposed value	On-site area change (ha)	On-site unit change
Grassland	1.85	3.70	1.85	7.22	0.00	3.52
Urban	1.25	0.00	2.65	0.00	1.40	0.00
Cropland	1.40	2.80	0.00	0.00	-1.40	-2.80

7.4 With the inclusion of the measures set out above, the on-site proposals result in a net gain of 11.02% (0.72) habitat units. As such the development overall produces a minimum 10% net gain (summarised in Table 5).

Table 5: Summary of the BNG results

Hatchpen Farm

Return to results menu

Headline Results

Scroll down for final results ⚠

On-site baseline	Habitat units	6.50	
	Hedgerow units	0.00	
	Watercourse units	0.00	
On-site post-intervention (including habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	Habitat units	7.22	
	Hedgerow units	0.00	
	Watercourse units	0.00	
On-site net change (units & percentage)	Habitat units	0.72	11.02%
	Hedgerow units	0.00	0.00%
	Watercourse units	0.00	0.00%
Off-site baseline	Habitat units	0.00	
	Hedgerow units	0.00	
	Watercourse units	0.00	
Off-site post-intervention (including habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	Habitat units	0.00	
	Hedgerow units	0.00	
	Watercourse units	0.00	
Off-site net change (units & percentage)	Habitat units	0.00	0.00%
	Hedgerow units	0.00	0.00%
	Watercourse units	0.00	0.00%
Combined net unit change (including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	Habitat units	0.72	
	Hedgerow units	0.00	
	Watercourse units	0.00	
Spatial risk multiplier (SRM) deductions	Habitat units	0.00	
	Hedgerow units	0.00	
	Watercourse units	0.00	

FINAL RESULTS

Total net unit change (including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	Habitat units	0.72
	Hedgerow units	0.00
	Watercourse units	0.00
Total net % change (including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	Habitat units	11.02%
	Hedgerow units	0.00%
	Watercourse units	0.00%
Trading rules satisfied?	Yes ✓	

Unit Type	Target	Baseline Units	Units Required	Unit Deficit
Habitat units	10.00%	6.50	7.15	0.00
Hedgerow units	10.00%	0.00	0.00	0.00
Watercourse units	10.00%	0.00	0.00	0.00

No additional area habitat units required to meet target ✓
No additional hedgerow units required to meet target ✓
No additional watercourse units required to meet target ✓

8.0 Implementation, Management and Monitoring Plans

- 8.1** Any habitats within the Site deemed to be ‘significant’ by the Local Planning Authority (LPA) will require an HMMP.
- 8.2** If required, the HMMP should be prepared over a 30-year period with more detail provided for the 1-3 year implementation and 3-5 year maintenance period. The HMMP should also contain proposals for monitoring visits and frequency of visits and scope for remedial works / changes to management prescriptions. All drawings and maps will be produced using QGIS to allow accurate monitoring.
- 8.3** Following planning approval, this Draft Biodiversity Gain Plan will be finalised and submitted to the LPA to show how the BNG will be achieved.
- 8.4** The audit report should include information in the “as built” metric compared to the original baseline plans and the “as built” habitat plan. Where the “as built” habitat plan differs from the original designs, more detailed information may be required, to ensure transparency about what has been delivered. Where differences occur, a copy of the same metric version, e.g. a completed workbook including the full calculations that lead to the final biodiversity unit scores, should be submitted. Summary results of metric calculations would not be sufficient. Where appropriate, detailed justifications for the choice of habitat types, distinctiveness and condition should be added to the comments column or provided separately in a report.
- 8.5** The audit report should also demonstrate compliance with the BNG good practice principles (Baker *et al*, 2019).

9.0 Conclusions

- 9.1** The Site at Hatchpen Farm, Royston, covered approximately 4.5ha and comprised an area of existing aggregate, bordered by modified grassland, with associated access track. There were agricultural buildings to the east of the Site, and two ponds within 250m. The wider area was dominated by agricultural fields.
- 9.2** Proposals are for the development of two straw storage buildings within an area of aggregate. However, degradation rules apply, therefore the baseline for the degraded area (existing aggregate) is taken to be the habitat just prior to degradation which is assumed to be approximately August 2022 based on historic aerial imagery, which was cereal crops.
- 9.3** Based on the current calculations, with the inclusion of the on-site habitat enhancement measures set out in section 7.0, the statutory metric has demonstrated that the on-site proposals result in a net gain of 11.02% (0.72) habitat units. As such, the development overall produces a minimum 10% net gain.
- 9.4** It is considered that with the implementation of the on-site enhancement measures, the Site can deliver a BNG gain and adhere to both local and national current planning policy and the Environment Act (2021).

10.0 References

Baker, J., Hoskin, R. and Butterworth, T. (2019). *Biodiversity net gain. Good practice principles for development A practical guide*. CIRIA. London

DEFRA (2011). *Biodiversity 2020: A strategy for England's wildlife and ecosystem services* [Online]. Available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/biodiversity-2020-a-strategy-for-england-s-wildlife-and-ecosystem-services>

DEFRA (2018). *25 Year Environment Plan*, HM Government.

DEFRA (2024). *The Statutory Biodiversity Metric User Guide*, HM Government.

Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government (2024) *National Planning Policy Framework* [Online]. Available at: <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/675abd214cbda57cacd3476e/NPPF-December-2024.pdf>

Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government and Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (2024) *Biodiversity net gain. Planning practice guidance*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/biodiversity-net-gain>

North Hertfordshire Council (2022) *North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.north-herts.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2022-12/North%20Hertfordshire%20Local%20Plan%202011-2031.pdf>

The Environment Act (2020), [Online]. Available at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2021/30/contents/enacted>

UKHab Ltd (2023). *UK Habitat Classification Version 2.0* [Online]. Available at: <https://ukhab.org/>



Appendix 2: Relevant local planning policies

This document has not been prepared by a legal or planning professional and should be read as an interpretation of relevant statutes and planning policy guidance only. The information presented within this document has been reported in good faith and are the genuine opinion of Crossland Ecology Ltd. on such matters. Crossland Ecology Ltd. does not accept any liability resulting from outcomes relating to the use of this information or its interpretation within this document.

North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031 policies include Policy SP12 shown below.

Policy SP12: Green infrastructure, landscape and biodiversity

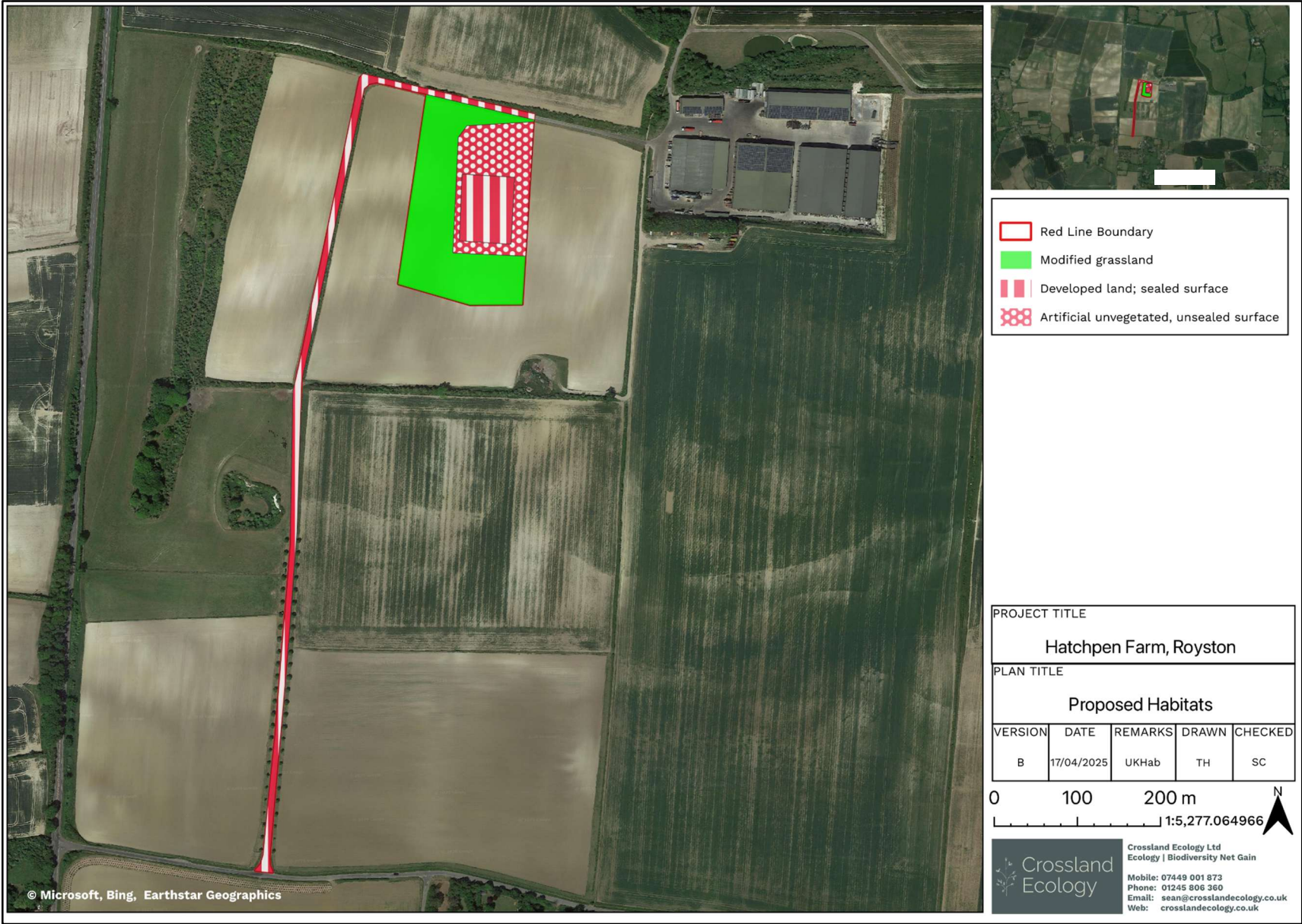
We will accommodate significant growth during the plan period whilst ensuring the natural environment is protected and enhanced. We will:

- a) Protect, identify, manage and where possible enhance a strategic multi-functional network of green infrastructure;
- b) Consider and respect landscape character, scenic beauty and locally sensitive features, particularly in relation to the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty;
- c) Protect, enhance and manage designated sites in accordance with the following hierarchy of designations and features:
 - Internationally designated sites
 - Nationally designated sites
 - Locally designated sites;
 - Non-designated sites that include important habitats and species
- d) Protect, enhance and manage biodiversity networks including wildlife corridors, ancient woodlands and hedgerows, wetland and riverine habitats, Local Geological Sites, protected species, priority species and habitats, and non-designated sites of ecological value and ensure measurable net gains for biodiversity; and
- e) Protect other open spaces and support provision of new and improved open space.

Appendix 3: Baseline Habitat Plan



Appendix 4: Post-development Habitat Plan



Appendix 5: Condition Assessment Sheets

Key: **P** = Poor, **M** = Moderate, **G** = Good.

Modified Grassland

UKHab Classification	Modified Grassland	Distinctiveness	Low		
		Strategic Significance	Area/compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy		
Condition Sheet	Grassland Habitat Type (low distinctiveness)	Area (ha)	1.85 ha		
Limitations	Assessment carried out in February	Reference	52.017878, -0.017538 52°01'04.4"N 0°01'03.1"W		
Habitat Description	Grassland field (previously arable)				
Criterion	Condition Assessment Criteria	Criterion Passed	Photos	Notes	
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.	N		Average of 5 species m ⁻²	
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.	Y		Assumed to pass as precautionary approach due to some habitat degradation prior to site visit.	
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		None present	
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		No damage	

E	Cover of bare ground is between 1% and 10%, including localised areas (for example, a concentration of rabbit warrens).	Y		Very little bare ground
F	Cover of bracken <i>Pteridium aquilinum</i> is less than 20%.	Y		None present
G	There is an absence of invasive non-native plant species (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA4).	Y		None present
Are any criteria essential? (Y/N)		Yes	Total	6
If Yes, are they passed?		No	Condition	Poor

Appendix 6: UKHab Survey Plant Species

		Modified Grassland	Artificial unvegetated unsealed surface
Common name	Latin name		
Bedstraw	<i>Galium</i> sp.	R	-
Borage	<i>Borago</i> sp.	O	-
Cleavers	<i>Galium aparine</i>	R	-
Clover	<i>Trifolium</i> sp.	F	-
Cocksfoot	<i>Dactylis glomerata</i> .	R	-
Common nettle	<i>Urtica dioica</i>	R	-
Dock species	<i>Rumex</i> spp.	O	R
Fescue	<i>Festuca</i> sp.	F	-
Hawk's beard	<i>Crepis</i> sp.	O	R
Knapweed	<i>Centaurea</i> sp.	R	-
Perennial ryegrass	<i>Lolium perenne</i>	D	R
Perforate St John's wort	<i>Hypericum perforatum</i>	R	-
Plantain	<i>Plantago</i> sp.	O	R
Spear thistle	<i>Cirsium vulgare</i>	F	R
Wild carrot	<i>Daucus carota</i>	R	-
Yarrow	<i>Achillea millefolium</i>	R	-

Appendix 7: Site Photographs

Photo 1: Area proposed for the two straw storage buildings (viewed from south).



Photo 4: View from the north



Photo 2: View from north-west corner.



Photo 5: Area for proposed buildings.

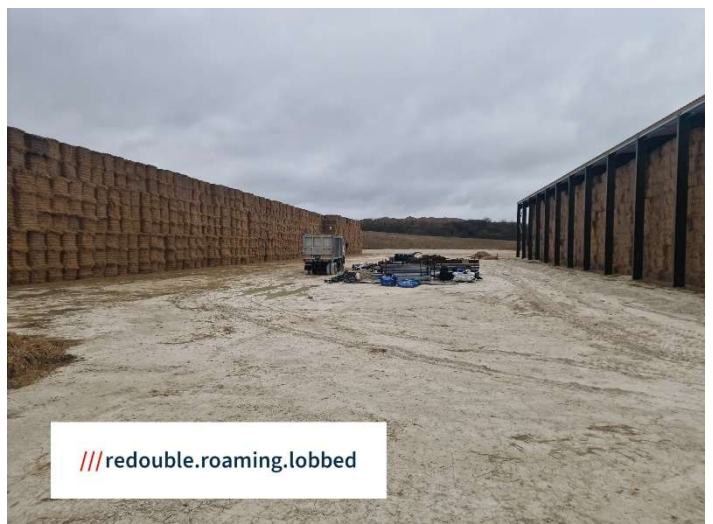


Photo 3: Aggregate

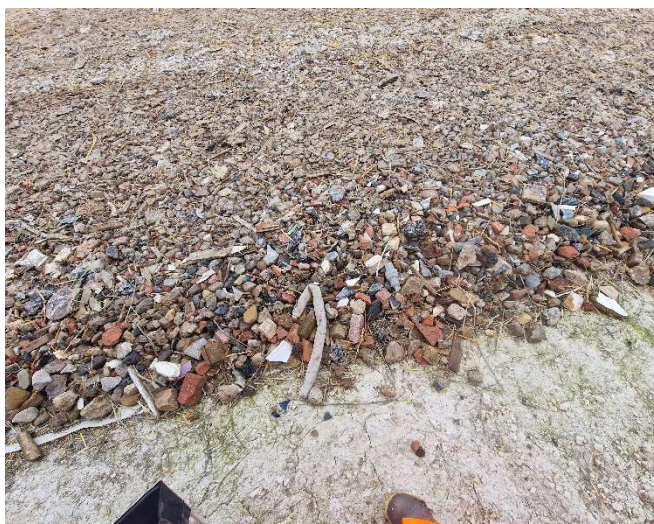


Photo 6: view from north-west



Photo 7: Existing off-site storage buildings.



Appendix 8: Statutory DEFRA Metric (appended separately)