

Habitat and Maintenance Monitoring Plan

Project: Manchester Communications Academy – 3G STP FA Framework

Location: Lathbury Road, Manchester

Grid Reference: SD 86010 00896

Planning Application Ref: 138956/FO/2024

Report Date: 08 May 2025

Prepared by: McArdle Sport Tec Ltd

Ecological / BNG Consultant: Rachel Hacking Ecology (RHE.4224, 2024)

Plan Duration: 30 Years (2025–2055)

1. Site Description

The site comprises an area surrounding the existing MUGA at Manchester Communications Academy, including poor semi-improved modified grassland, juvenile trees, and newly created habitats including mixed scrub, tall forbs, and wildflower grassland. The development achieves a biodiversity net gain (BNG) of 11.7%.

2. Management Objectives

- To enhance and maintain biodiversity across the site in line with BNG requirements.
- To ensure successful establishment and long-term viability of new habitats.
- To comply with legal and planning obligations for ecological mitigation and enhancement.

3. Habitats Covered

Habitat Type	Area (ha)	Target Condition
Mixed scrub	0.036	Moderate
Tall forbs	0.0219	Good
Modified grassland (EM5)	0.04	Good
Urban trees (native)	0.0775	Moderate

4. Prescriptions and Maintenance Activities

4.1 Mixed Scrub

Year 1–5:

- - Water during establishment (dry periods).
- - Remove competing vegetation and litter.
- - Inspect and replace failed plants.

Year 6–30:

- - Rotate 1/3 cutting every 5 years to maintain structural diversity.
- - Monitor for invasive species annually.

4.2 Tall Forbs (EM5 mix)

Year 1–5:

- - Minimal intervention; allow for tall sward development.
- - Cut back once in late winter (Feb–Mar), remove arisings.

Year 6–30:

- - Continue annual late-winter cut.
- - Monitor plant diversity and structure every 5 years.

4.3 Modified Grassland (Wildflower/EM5)

Year 1–5:

- - Cut twice annually (late summer and early autumn).
- - Remove cuttings to reduce soil nutrients.

Year 6–30:

- - Cut annually in late summer.
- - Reseed or overseed if species diversity declines.

4.4 Urban Trees (Native)

Year 1–5:

- - Annual inspection for health and stability.
- - Water during dry spells.
- - Replace failed specimens.

Year 6–30:

- - Inspect every 2 years.
- - Allow natural deadwood unless a hazard.
- - Avoid pruning unless essential.

5. Monitoring Schedule

Feature	Frequency	Responsible Party	Method/Notes
Tree health	Annually	Site Manager/Ecologist	Visual inspection, check supports
Grassland quality	Every 5 years	Ecologist	Species richness survey
Tall forbs cover	Every 5 years	Ecologist	Habitat structure & composition
Scrub composition	Every 5 years	Ecologist	Structural diversity assessment

6. Adaptive Management

Adjustments to maintenance will be made based on monitoring results. Declines in habitat condition, tree failure, or invasive species incursions will trigger remedial actions such as reseeded, replanting, or targeted control.

7. Responsibilities

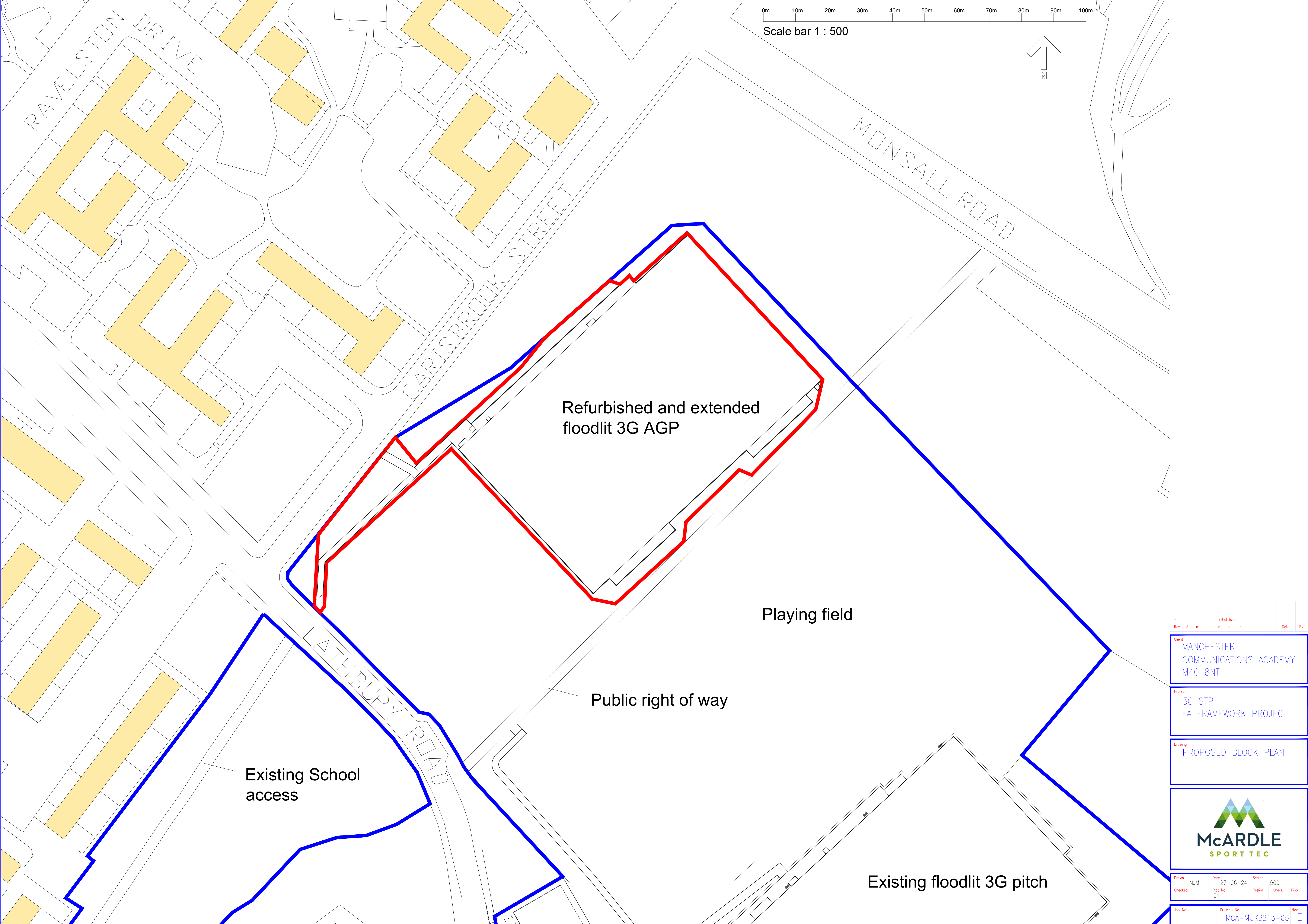
- McArdle Sport Tec: Responsible for initial implementation.
- Academy Management: Responsible for implementation and maintenance.
- Appointed Ecologist: Monitoring and advisory role.
- Maintenance Contractor: Maintenance tasks as specified.

8. Reporting

A habitat monitoring report will be submitted every 5 years to the local planning authority, summarizing findings and recommending any remedial action.

10. Appendices

- Appendix A: Site Boundary Plan (MCA-MUK3213-05 Rev E)
- Appendix B: Ecological Appraisal (RHE.4224, 2024)
- Appendix C: Landscaping Plan and Planting Schedule (MCA-MUK3213-12)



Initial Issue											
Rev	A	m	e	n	d	m	e	n	t	Date	By
Client MANCHESTER COMMUNICATIONS ACADEMY M40 8NT											
Project 3G STP FA FRAMEWORK PROJECT											
Drawing PROPOSED BLOCK PLAN											
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Checked	01			Plot No	01			Prelim	Check	Final	
Job No				Drawing No	MCA-MUK3213-05			Rev	E		

Manchester Communications Academy,
Lathbury Road Site, Manchester

Ecological Appraisal and Biodiversity
Net Gain Assessment

2025



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Client McArdle Sport Tec

Project Title MCA, Lathbury Road Site

Project Reference RHE.4224

Project Leader Ben Crossthwaite

Contact Details ben@rachelhackingecology.co.uk

	Name	Position	Date
Author	Ben Crossthwaite	Senior Ecologist	03/09/2024
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RACHEL
HACKING
ECOLOGY

The Stables, Paradise Wharf, Ducie Street, Manchester, M1 2JN

0161 465 8971

www.rachelhackingecology.co.uk

mail@rachelhackingecology.co.uk



RACHEL
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Executive Summary

Development Details

The client is proposing the expansion of a MUGA pitch at Manchester Communications Academy, Lathbury Road, Manchester, hereafter referred to as the 'application site'.

This report describes the ecological features of the site and its surroundings and assesses the potential impacts of the development on the ecological interest. Recommendations are provided so that the development is compliant with biodiversity policy and legislation.

Ecological Interest

The site has a low level of ecological interest. Much of the land consists modified grassland. The individual trees offer the most ecological value, providing foraging and nesting habitat for birds.

Outcomes

No further survey work is required because features with potential to support protected species will not be adversely affected by the proposed development.

Install bat roosting and bird nesting boxes on trees across the development site and wider school campus.

The site results in a net gain of 0.08 habitat units (11.7%) which complies with legislation and local planning policy. The retained and created habitats will be the subject of a 30-year Habitat Monitoring and Management Plan.



1. Introduction

1.1 Project Brief

- 1.1.1 Rachel Hacking Ecology Limited was commissioned in 2024 by McArdle Sport Tec to carry out an ecological appraisal of land on site. The site is located at O.S. grid reference: SD 86010 00896 (see Figure 1).

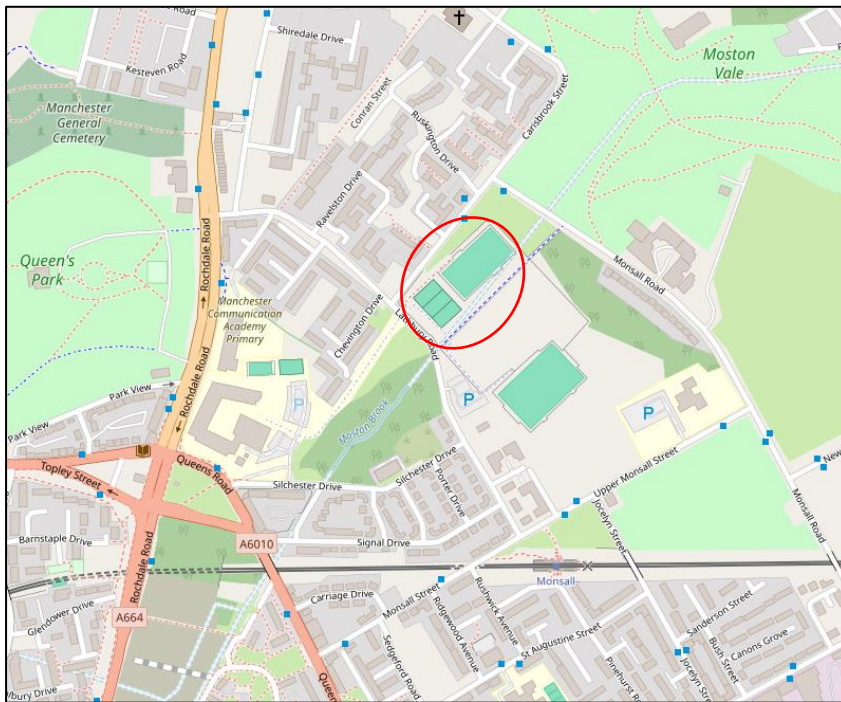


Figure 1. Location Map courtesy of Open Street Map

- 1.1.2 The proposed development site largely comprises poor, semi-improved grassland, sealed surfaces and scattered trees. Residential development is located in the wider landscape, with amenity parklands located in the vicinity of the site.

Description of Development

- 1.1.3 The site will be the subject of a planning application for the expansion of an existing MUGA pitch.

1.2 Scope of Work

- 1.2.1 The Client commissioned Rachel Hacking Ecology to carry out the following works:
- Desk-based study to obtain details of designated sites, protected and notable species within a specified search area.
 - Record the extent, type, and condition of habitats within and next to the site.
 - Calculate the baseline and post-development biodiversity units.
 - Search for signs of protected species and assessment of the potential of habitats and features to support protected and notable species.

1.3 Site Visit Information

Surveyor Details

- 1.3.1 Ben Crossthwaite (Senior Ecologist) visited the site on 6th June 2024. Ben has more than 9 years' of professional experience and has carried out Extended Phase 1 Habitat Surveys and biodiversity net gain assessments at numerous sites throughout England.

Weather

- 1.3.2 The weather at the time of the survey was overcast, and mild with short showers.



2. Methods

2.1 Desk Study

- 2.1.1 The Magic website (Multi-Agency Geographical Information for the Countryside) was interrogated for the presence of Statutory Designated Sites (and European Protected Species licences) within a 2km radius of the site.
- 2.1.2 The site was checked to determine if it is located within an Impact Risk Zones for any Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and if so, whether the Local Planning Authority will need to consult Natural England.

2.2 Field Survey

Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey

- 2.2.1 In accordance with JNCC guidelines¹ the site was walked over and the habitats and features of ecological interest were mapped and described. Habitats and features of particular interest were target noted.
- 2.2.2 During the walkover habitat and features were assessed for their suitability to support protected and notable species in accordance with CIEEM guidelines². Field signs of protected, notable, and invasive non-native species, if encountered, were mapped, and described.

Bats

- 2.2.3 Any trees on or adjacent to the site that could be affected by the proposals were given a ground-level assessment, searching for Potential Roosting Features (PRF's), such as flaking bark, woodpecker holes, knot holes and limb splits.

¹ JNCC (2010). *Handbook for Phase 1 Habitat Survey: A Technique for Environmental Audit*. Joint Nature Conservation Committee, Peterborough

² CIEEM (2017). *Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal*. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester.

2.3 Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

- 2.3.1 During the site walkover the ecological condition of each habitat was assessed in accordance with the Defra (2023) guidelines³. Habitat types recorded and mapped during the field survey were converted from the JNCC system to the UK Habitat Classification system⁴.
- 2.3.2 Habitat data including type, area (or length), condition and strategic location were uploaded to the Defra Statutory Biodiversity Metric Calculator spreadsheet to determine the baseline value of the site. The extent of any habitats to be retained or enhanced was also entered into baseline worksheets.
- 2.3.3 The post-development masterplan was interrogated to determine areas of hard standing, buildings, and associated infrastructure. New, retained and enhanced habitats were classified and allocated a target condition, based on habitat type, location and management input. This information was uploaded to the metric spreadsheet to obtain a post-development value.
- 2.3.4 The pre- and post-development values were compared to determine whether the yield of biodiversity units achieved a deficit or gain.

2.4 Mitigation Hierarchy

- 2.4.1 Mitigation measures should be embedded within the masterplan design and planning application process. Measures during the construction phases should be included in a Construction Environmental Management Plan: Biodiversity (CEMP). This process from proposal to implementation needs to consider the 'mitigation hierarchy' of avoid, reduce, compensate, and enhance:
- Aim to avoid negative effects through the design process.
 - Mitigate if negative effects cannot be avoided.
 - Use compensation measures to offset residual impacts.
 - Identify and implement opportunities to enhance biodiversity.

³ Defra (2023) The Statutory Biodiversity Metric: User Guide (draft). November 2023.

⁴ Butcher, B., Carey, P., et al. (2020). UK Habitat Classification – Habitat Definitions V1.1. at <http://UKhab.org>



3. Results

3.1 Survey Constraints

- 3.1.1 Field survey results are valid for a limited duration and no investigation can provide a complete description and characterisation of a site. The composition of habitats and species can change depending on environmental variables and the mobility of species, so the results of a study become less reliable over time. In some cases, surveys that are 3 years old may be acceptable for a project assuming that habitats have not significantly changed in the intervening period, but for protected species it is likely that survey data will need to be no more than 18 months old.

3.2 Designated Sites

- 3.2.1 The desk study provided information on the designated sites listed below in Table 1.

Table 1. Designated Sites		
Name	Status	Location/distance
Boggart Hole Clough	Local Nature Reserve (LNR)	1.4km
Reservoirs at Harpurhey	Site of Biological Importance (SBI)	0.75km
Rochdale Canal, Stott's Lane – Ducie Street Basin	SBI	1.25km

- 3.2.2 The desk study identified that the site is located within the Impact Risk Zone of Rochdale Canal Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and SSSI. The proposed development will not require the Local Planning Authority to consult with Natural England.

3.3 Habitats

- 3.3.1 Target Notes and photographs are contained in Appendix 2 and the habitats survey plan is contained in Appendix 3. Condition assessments for grassland and individual trees are found in Appendix 4. The site plan is located in Appendix 5. Full botanical species lists can be provided on request.

Bare Ground

- 3.3.2 This habitat comprises heavy disturbed bare earth, likely caused by car parking. This habitat is in poor condition and provides 0.08 habitat units.

Hardstanding – Sealed Surfaces

- 3.3.3 A hardstanding footpath and existing MUGA pitch are located on site. These are both classified as sealed surface under the UK Habitat Classification system. The sealed surfaces do not require a condition assessment, measure 0.528ha and provides zero habitat units.

Modified Grassland

- 3.3.4 Areas of species-poor, regularly managed modified grassland are located around the peripheries of the site. Abundant species present are Perennial Rye-grass *Lolium perenne*, Dandelion *Taraxacum officinale* agg., Daisy *Bellis perennis* and Ribwort Plantain *Plantago lanceolata*. The grassland is in 'poor' ecological condition as it fails Condition A, the essential criteria of the condition assessment. The modified grassland measures 0.16ha and provides 0.32 habitat units.

Tall Forbs

- 3.3.5 A linear area of tall forbs is located along the northern site boundary. This area lacks any formal management and has resulted in a successional habitat. Abundant species present are Perennial Rye-grass *Lolium perenne*, Dandelion *Taraxacum officinale* agg., Yorkshire Fog *Holcus lanatus*, Red Clover *Trifolium pratense*, Common Vetch *Vicia sativa*, Cock's-foot *Dactylis glomerata*, Cleavers *Galium aparine*, Creeping Buttercup *Ranunculus repens* and Bramble *Rubus fruticosus*. The tall forbs are in poor ecological condition, passing just one of the criteria of the condition assessment. This habitat measures 0.023ha and provides 0.09 habitat units.

Individual Tree; Urban Trees

- 3.3.6 Fourteen individual trees are located around the site's peripheries of the application site. These are all juvenile/early mature trees and comprise Scarlet Oak *Quercus coccinea*, Grey Willow *Salix cinerea*, White Willow *Salix alba* and Silver Birch *Betula pendula*. All the trees on site are of moderate condition. The individual trees provide 0.18 habitat units.

3.4 Biodiversity Net Gain

- 3.4.1 The habitat unit baseline for the site is 0.68 units.



3.5 Species

Bats

- 3.5.1 The trees on site were found not to support potential roost features.
- 3.5.2 The trees also provide potential foraging and dispersal routes for bats.

Badger

- 3.5.3 No evidence of Badger was found on site. The sites location is considered sub-optimal for Badger and it is unlikely Badger utilise the sites habitats. Badger is not considered further in this report.

Great Crested Newt and Other Amphibians

- 3.5.4 No ponds exist on site. A review of maps and aerial images shows that no ponds are located within 250 metres of the site boundary.
- 3.5.5 Given the lack of breeding habitat in the locality, particularly for Great Crested Newt *Triturus cristatus*, amphibians are not considered further in this report.

Hedgehog

- 3.5.6 The sites habitats and surrounding lands provide suitable foraging habitat for Hedgehog *Erinaceus europaeus*.

Birds

- 3.5.7 The trees on site provide foraging and nesting habitat for passerine bird species.

3.6 Invasive Species

- 3.6.1 No non-native, invasive species listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act, 1981, are located on site.



4. Assessment

4.1 Development Context

- 4.1.1 The following assessment assumes that the grassland and trees on site will be lost to the development layout as shown in Appendix 5 below.

4.2 Impacts on Designated Sites

- 4.2.1 This section evaluates and describes potential impacts and assesses ecological effects on designated sites that are within the study area.
- 4.2.2 One statutory designated site lies within 2km of the site boundaries. One non-statutory designated sites lie within 1km of the site boundaries. The development site is geographically separated from designated sites, and there is no requirement for the Local Authority to consult with regards to potential impacts SSSI as a consequence of the proposed development. Any adverse impacts are not anticipated.

4.3 Impacts on Habitats

- 4.3.1 This section evaluates and describes potential impacts and assesses ecological effects on habitats that are within the study area.

Grassland

- 4.3.2 There will be a loss of modified grassland, however the impact will be at site level only due to the small scale and distinctiveness of the grassland.

Individual Tree

- 4.3.3 The loss of trees on site will have a negative impact at site level only. It is proposed tree planting of a variety of native species is included with mitigation plans.
- 4.3.4 In the absence of mitigation, retained trees could be damaged through soil compaction leading to root damage.

4.4 Biodiversity Net Gain

- 4.4.1 Within the redline development the baseline habitat unit score is 0.68 units.



- 4.4.2 The habitat unit score post-development is 0.76 units (12.74%). The proposed habitats and their associated unit score is shown in Table 2 below.

Table 2. Summary of Post-development Biodiversity Net Gain Values for Habitat Units			
Habitat	Area (ha)	Condition	Value
Developed land; sealed surface - hardstanding	0.6538	Not Applicable	Zero
Mixed Scrub	0.036	Moderate	0.24
Tall Forbs	0.0219	Good	0.11
Urban Trees	0.0775	Poor	0.22
Modified grassland – wildflower grassland	0.04	Good	0.19
Total	0.75 (excluding trees)		0.76

- 4.4.3 The site proposals and associated mitigation meet the statutory 10% net gain in habitat units, therefore comply with current policy.

4.5 Impacts on Species

Bats

- 4.5.1 The adjacent tree lines to the site offers potential foraging and commuting habitat for bats. It is recommended this is protected as a 'dark zone' for bats and other fauna species through a sensitive lighting scheme.

Birds

- 4.5.2 If the felling of trees is to be conducted during the nesting bird season, an adverse impact on nesting birds could occur. Although further mitigation measures will not be required, the development provides an opportunity for enhancement through the provision of nest boxes attached to mature trees across the site and the wider school campus.

Hedgehog

- 4.5.3 The sites tall forbs habitat provides suitable habitat for Hedgehog. Therefore, the site clearance works should be undertaken using Reasonable Avoidance Measures (RAM).



5. Recommendations

5.1 Further Surveys

- 5.1.1 There is no requirement for further survey work at this time. The initial site visit and desk study have proved to be sufficient to fully determine the impacts of the proposed development.

5.2 Mitigation and Enhancement Measures

- 5.2.1 Protection of ecological features (habitats and species) during the construction and operational phases will be described in a Biodiversity Management Plan (BMP). The Management Plan will contain Operational Objectives, Rationale for management, Prescriptions and schedules detailing the timing and responsibility for delivering the prescriptions. It is anticipated that the BMP will be provided as a planning condition in advance of the commencement of the proposed development.

Habitats

- 5.2.2 Retained trees will be protected during construction phase through a root protection plan. These habitats should also be protected with a sensitive lighting scheme, which can be detailed within the CEMP. The protection of the ditch on site is to also be secured via a CEMP.

Biodiversity Net Gain

- 5.2.3 The proposals for the site result in 10% in habitat units. The retained and created habitats will be the subject to a 30-year Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan.

Bats

- 5.2.4 Bat boxes could be installed on suitable retained trees to enhance roosting opportunities.

Nesting Birds

- 5.2.5 Impacts on nesting birds should be avoided by carrying out site clearance and similar operations outside of the bird breeding season (March- August). Construction activities that might directly impact upon breeding birds should hence be limited to the September-February period. If vegetation has to be cleared during the bird breeding season checks immediately before clearance by a suitably qualified ecologist will be required. If nesting activity is detected work in that area will need to stop until the ecologist considers that nesting activity is finished.
- 5.2.6 Nest boxes could be installed on suitable retained trees to enhance nesting opportunities for birds of conservation concern.



Hedgehog

- 5.2.7 Site clearance works are to be undertaken via a Hedgehog RAM. This can be imposed via a suitably worded condition.



Appendix 1: Planning Policy & Legislation

National Policy

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2023) describes the Government's planning policy for England and how it should be applied. Within this framework, the requirements in relation to biodiversity are included within several policies. The two most relevant to individual planning decisions are Paragraphs 180 and 186, shown below:

- 180. Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:
 - a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan);
 - b) recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland;
 - c) maintaining the character of the undeveloped coast, while improving public access to it where appropriate;
 - d) minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures;
 - e) preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability. Development should, wherever possible, help to improve local environmental conditions such as air and water quality, taking into account relevant information such as river basin management plans; and
 - f) remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate.
- 186. When determining planning applications, local planning authorities should apply the following principles:
 - a) if significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused;
 - b) development on land within or outside a Site of Special Scientific Interest, and which is likely to have an adverse effect on it (either individually or in combination with other developments),



should not normally be permitted. The only exception is where the benefits of the development in the location proposed clearly outweigh both its likely impact on the features of the site that make it of special scientific interest, and any broader impacts on the national network of Sites of Special Scientific Interest;

- c) development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists; and
- d) development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while 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.

Legislation

The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended by the CRoW Act 2000) includes the notification and confirmation of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs). SSSIs can be notified for their floral, faunal, geological, or physiographical features. Protection against damaging operations and management of SSSIs is also included within the Act. Impact Risk Zones (IRZs) are zones around an SSSI account for the particular sensitivities of the features for which it is notified and identify development proposal which could have adverse impacts.

The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended by the CRoW Act 2000) protects native animals, plants and habitats. Under the Act it is an offence to intentionally kill, injure or take any wild animal listed on Schedule 5 and it is an offence to interfere with places used for shelter or protection, or intentionally disturb animals occupying such places. The Act prohibits picking, uprooting or destroy any wild plant (or any attached seed or spore) listed in Schedule 8.

European Protected Species (EPS) such as bats, Hazel Dormouse, Otter, Natterjack Toad, Smooth Snake, Sand Lizard and Great Crested Newt are protected by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended by the CRoW Act 2000) and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. The Acts make it an offence to:

- a) Deliberately capture, injure or kill an EPS;
- b) Deliberately impair an EPS's ability to survive, breed, reproduce, rear or nurture young; to hibernate or migrate; or significantly affect the local distribution or abundance of the EPS.
- c) Possess or control live or dead EPS or any part of, or anything derived from a EPS;
- d) Damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place of an EPS;



- e) Intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to any place that is used for shelter or protection by an EPS;
- f) Intentionally or recklessly disturb a structure or place that it uses for shelter or protection that is occupied by an EPS.

All common herptiles are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended by the CROW Act 2000). Grass Snake, Slow Worm, Common Lizard, Adder are protected against intentional killing or injury. Common Frog, Common Toad, Smooth Newt and Palmate Newt is protected against sale. In addition, all British reptiles, Common toad and Great Crested Newt are listed as Species of Principal Importance.

All nesting birds are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). It is an offence to intentionally kill, injure or take any wild bird or take, damage, or destroy its nest whilst in use or being built, or take or destroy its eggs. It is an offence to intentionally or recklessly disturb a species listed on Schedule 1 of the Act while they are nest building or at or near a nest with eggs or young, or to disturb the dependent young.

The Protection of Badgers Act 1992 makes it an offence to wilfully, or to attempt to kill, injure, take, possess or cruelly ill-treat a Badger, or intentionally or recklessly interfere with a sett. Interference of a sett includes disturbing badgers during occupation of a sett, or damaging or destroying a sett, or obstructing access to the sett.

Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 places a duty on every public authority to have regard to conserving biodiversity. Section 41 of the same Act requires the Secretary of State to publish a list of the living organisms and types of habitats that are of 'Principal Importance' for the purpose of conserving biodiversity. The Secretary of State must take steps, as appear reasonably practicable, to further the conservation of those living organisms and habitats in any list published under this section. The list of species and habitats of principal importance currently includes 943 species and 56 habitats. These are the species and habitats found in England which are regarded as conservation priorities under the UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework

The Hedgerows Regulations 1997 protect 'important' hedgerows from destruction or damage. A hedgerow is 'important' if it (a) has existed for 30 years or more; and (b) satisfies at least one of the criteria listed in Part II of Schedule 1 of the Regulations. Under the Regulations, it is against the law to remove or destroy 'important' hedgerows unless permitted by the local planning authority.



The Environment Bill 2021 makes it mandatory for housing and development, subject to some narrow exemptions, to achieve at least a 10% net gain in value for biodiversity – a requirement that habitats for wildlife must be left in a measurably better state than before the development. Developers must submit a 'biodiversity gain plan' alongside usual planning application documents. The local authority must assess whether the 10% net gain requirement is met in order to approve the biodiversity gain plan.

The Environment Bill 2021 strengthens the duty on public authorities (NERC Act, 2006) to have regard to the conservation of biodiversity.

The Environment Bill 2021 amends the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 to introduce an additional purpose for granting a protected species licence in relation to development, 'for reasons of overriding public interest', and two additional tests for the granting of such licences: that there is 'no other satisfactory solution' and that granting the licence is 'not detrimental to the survival of any the population of the species concerned'. These changes will reduce the scope for unlicensed activities to provide clear safeguards before licences can be granted, providing legal certainty and clarity to developers about their environmental obligations.



Appendix 2: Target Notes

Habitat/Reference	Photograph
Improved Grassland	
Urban Trees	
Sealed Surfaces	

Habitat/Reference	Photograph
Tall Forbs	
Bare Ground	

Appendix 3: Habitat Survey Plans



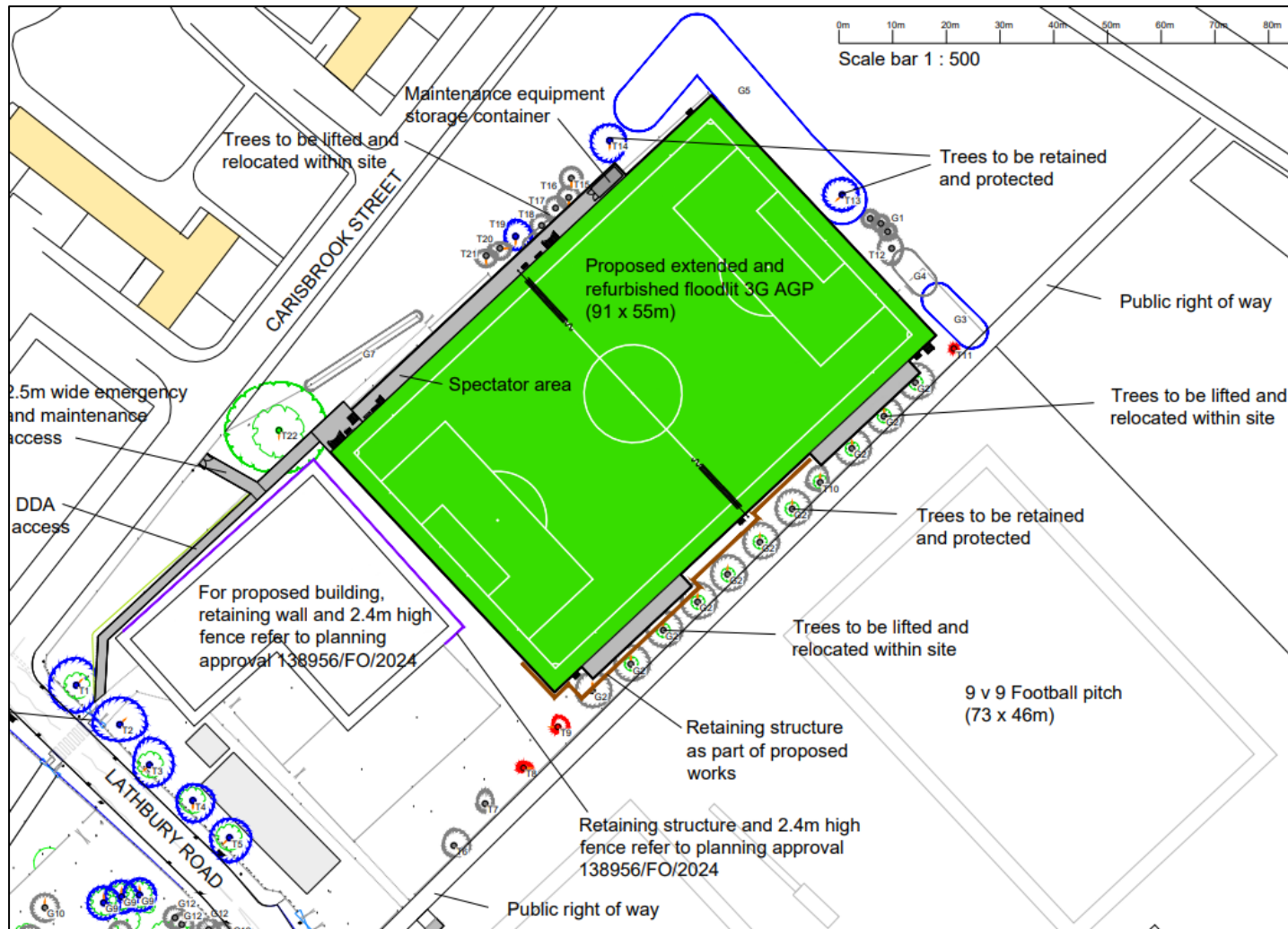


Appendix 4: Condition Assessments

GRASSLAND LOW DISTINCTIVENESS – MODIFIED GRASSLAND		
Criteria		Criterion passed (Yes or No)
A	There are 6-8 vascular plant species per m ² present, including at least 2 forbs (these may include those listed in Footnote 1). Note - this criterion is essential for achieving Moderate or Good condition.	No
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.	
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).	
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.	
E	Cover of bare ground is between 1% and 10%, including localised areas (for example, a concentration of rabbit warrens) ² .	
F	Cover of bracken <i>Pteridium aquilinum</i> is less than 20%.	
G	There is an absence of invasive non-native plant species ³ (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA ⁴).	

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

Appendix 5: Site Layout



Grasses		
%	Latin name	Common name
8	Agrostis capillaris	Common Bent
2	Anthoxanthum odoratum	Sweet Vernal-grass (w)
3	Briza media	Quaking Grass (w)
24	Cynosurus cristatus	Crested Dogtail
18	Festuca ovina	Sheep's Fescue
24	Festuca rubra	Red Fescue
1	Trisetum flavescens	Yellow Oat-grass (w)
80		

Sowing Rates			
kg/ha	kg/acre	g/m ²	Order Mixture
40	16	4	Order this mixture

Growing guide

Ground preparation

Endeavour to [select ground](#) that is not highly fertile and does not have a problem with perennial weeds. Good preparation is essential to success so aim to control weeds and produce a good quality seed bed before sowing.

To prepare a seed bed first remove weeds using repeated cultivation. Then plough or dig to bury the surface vegetation, harrow or rake to produce a medium tilth, and roll, or tread, to produce a firm surface. Loamy soils are easily worked and can usually be prepared for seeding in either the autumn or spring.

Seed is best sown in the autumn or spring but can be sown at other times of the year if there is sufficient warmth and moisture. The seed must be surface sown and can be applied by machine or broadcast by hand. To get an even distribution and avoid running out divide the seed into two or more parts and sow in overlapping sections. Do not incorporate or cover the seed, but firm in with a roll, or by treading, to give good soil/seed contact. [\(more on sowing\)](#)

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Aftercare

First year management

Most sown meadow wild flower and grass species are perennial; they will be slow to germinate and grow and will not usually flower in their first growing season. There will often be a flush of annual weeds from the soil in the first growing season which may grow up and obscure the meadow seedlings beneath. This annual weed growth is easily controlled by topping or mowing.

Mow newly sown meadows regularly throughout the first year of establishment to a height of 40-60mm, removing cuttings if dense. This will control annual weeds and help maintain balance between faster growing grasses and slower developing wild flowers.

Avoid cutting in the spring and early summer if the mixture has been sown with a [nurse cover of cornfield annuals](#), or is autumn sown and contains Yellow Rattle. These sown annuals should be allowed to flower, then in mid-summer cut back and the cut vegetation removed. It is important to cut back cornfield annuals before they die back, set seed or collapse; this cut will reveal the developing meadow mixture and give it the space it needs to develop.

Dig out any residual perennial weeds such as docks.

Management once established

In the second and subsequent years EM5 sowings can be managed in a number of ways which, in association with soil fertility, will determine the character of the grassland. The best results are usually obtained by traditional meadow management based around a main summer hay cut in combination with autumn and possibly spring mowing or grazing.

Meadow grassland is not cut or grazed from spring through to late July/August to give the sown species an opportunity to flower. After flowering in July or August take a 'hay cut': cut back with a scythe, petrol trimmer or tractor mower to c 50mm. Leave the 'hay' to dry and shed seed for 1-7 days then remove from site.

Mow or graze the re-growth through to late autumn/winter to c 50mm and again in spring if needed.

Loamy soils tend to be more fertile, encouraging the growth of grasses. Increasing the frequency of mowing or grazing to remove surplus grass can help to maintain a balanced sward structure with a good flower content

[\(more on grassland management\)](#)

EM5 is a complete mix composed of 20% native wild flowers and 80% slow growing grasses (by weight). The flower and grass components are also available to order separately as [EM5F](#) for the flower component and [EG5](#) for the grass component.

EM5 – MEADOW MIXTURE FOR LOAMY SOILS

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IMAGES

Composition

EM5 contains a good range of the wild flowers and grasses once common in unimproved flower-rich lowland meadows. Loamy soils are medium textured soils: a mixture of clay, silt and sand with none predominating. They are usually found in low lying areas developed from alluvium and other material, frequently over chalky or limestone bedrocks and so are often neutral to alkaline.

Wild Flowers

%	Latin name	Common name
0.3	Achillea millefolium	Yarrow
0.5	Agrimonia eupatoria	Agrimony
0.2	Belonica officinalis - (Stachys officinalis)	Betony
4	Centaurea nigra	Common Knapweed
0.5	Centaurea scabiosa	Greater Knapweed
1.5	Daucus carota	Wild Carrot
1	Knautia arvensis	Field Scabious
3	Leucanthemum vulgare	Oxeye Daisy - (Moon Daisy)
1	Medicago lupulina	Black Medick
2.5	Potentilla sanguisorba - (Sanguisorba minor)	Salad Burnet
4	Prunella vulgaris	Selfheal
1	Ranunculus acris	Meadow Buttercup
0.5	Rumex acetosa	Common Sorrel
20		

Refer to Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) for tree survey details, recommendations and tree protection details

Refer to Ecological Appraisal reference RHE.4224 for site specific ecology and biodiversity details

Schedule of replacement trees				
Key	Species	Common Name	Type	Quantity
	Sorbus aucuparia	Rowan	Standard (min. 1.8m)	4
	Betula pendula	Silver Birch	Standard (min. 1.8m)	3
	Prunus avium	Wild Cherry	Standard (min. 1.8m)	2
	Alnus glutinosa	Alder	Standard (min. 1.8m)	1
	Crataegus monogyna	Hawthorn	Standard (min. 1.8m)	5
	Acer campestre	Field Maple	Standard (min. 1.8m)	2
			Total no. of new trees	17

Mixed scrub consisting of blackthorn, hazel, hawthorn, guelder rose and common dogwood
Total area 330 m2

Modified grassland (Total area 247 m2)

Porous asphalt

Gravel

Existing trees to be lifted and relocated within wider site

3G synthetic turf playing area

New native tree

Tall forbs consisting of EM5 mix with minimal cutting to create a tall sward height and structure.
Total area 228 m2.

