BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN REPORT

ST MARY'S HOSPITAL,
ST MARY'S, ISLES OF SCILLY

Client: Situ8 Planning Consultancy

Our reference: 24-1-1

Planning reference: Report produced in advance of submission

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Table of Contents

Introduction

1.1. Overview

The Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) assessment was commissioned by Situ8 Planning Consultancy with regards to the Extension to St Mary's Hospital in the Isles of Scilly.

The purpose of this report is to identify the impact of the project on biodiversity taking into account the baseline habitats present on site, and the habitats post-development.

The proposed works considered in this assessment were identified by the client and illustrated in the following plans:

- Bluesky Architects Drawing No. 23010 - BSA - ZZ - XX - DR - A – 300
- Mei Loci Landscape Architects Drawing No. M0652_MLOC_DR_L_1001

This report should be read alongside the Preliminary Ecological Assessment (PEA) which accompanies this application.

1.2. Site Description

The site is approximately 0.45 hectares (ha) in size. The existing hospital building and associated hardstanding dominates the existing site to the north-east, with an established ornamental garden and shrubs forming the landscaping. Pasture grassland dominates the field to the south-west of the site with associated evergreen hedges.

1.3. Proposals

The proposals include an extension to the existing hospital building on the south-western aspect. This will result in the loss of a portion of the garden area including herbaceous, shrub and amenity grassland areas; areas of evergreen windbreak hedges; and areas of the semi-improved grassland.

The scheme aims to retain established landscaping where present within the existing hospital grounds, whilst introducing ecological management to the remaining pasture field grassland and planting a range of trees and shrubs.

1.4. Aims and Objectives

The purpose of this assessment is to present the results of the BNG calculations in accordance with the Best Practice Guidance.

1.5.   Scope of Study

The project under assessment is able to achieve a positive BNG score within the project redline. This report and the calculations therein relate to the development site only and do not include offsite receptors.

No impacts to offsite habitats beyond the redline boundary are identified.

A full assessment and justification for the Zone of Influence (ZOI) are provided in the PEA which accompanies this application.

1.6.   Relevant Policy & Legislation

A full description of relevant Local and National Planning Policy & Legislation are provided in the PEA which accompanies this application and are not repeated here in full for brevity.

Of note however is Isles of Scilly Local Plan Policy OE2(5) which states that:

"Development should avoid adverse impacts on existing biodiversity and geodiversity interests as a first principle, and enable measurable net gains by designing-in biodiversity features and enhancements and opportunities for geological conservation alongside new development, in accordance with Policies SS1 and SS2"

In the current application, it is understood that the statutory requirement for BNG will not yet apply; however it is understood that the BNG metric should nonetheless be used to demonstrate measurable net gains in accordance with the policy OE2.

2. Methods

2.1. Desk Study & Field Survey Methods

The methodology for the onsite assessment is described in full in the PEA which accompanies this report and is not repeated here for brevity.

2.2. Approach to BNG

The assessment has been undertaken in accordance with the BNG principles outlined in The Statutory Biodiversity Metric User Guide (November 2023)[1].

The metric used in the assessment is BNG 4.0[2].

The UK Habitat Classification Version 2[3] was used to aid in the classification of habitats within the site.

2.3. Technical Competence and Experience

The PEA and PRA surveys which support this assessment, as well as the BNG assessment itself, were undertaken by James Faulconbridge MRes MCIEEM trading as IOS Ecology.

James is a full member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM); he is a Licensed Bat Worker (Class Licence Level 2) and has over 14 years' experience undertaking a range of ecological surveys and assessing the factors that affect ecology in relation to construction and the built environment.

2.4. Limitations

The PEA survey was undertaken in January 2024 with a deadline for submission of the Planning Application at the end of the same month.

This results in restrictions on the scope to fully characterise the botanical diversity of the grassland habitats; however sufficient information was gathered to determine the character and condition of the sward with a reasonable degree of confidence.

The majority of habitats within the redline are non-native introduced shrub or amenity grassland which can be characterised with a high degree of confidence but do not require condition assessments within the metric calculations.

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[1] https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65673fee750074000d1dee31/The_Statutory_Biodiversity_Metric_-_Draft_User_Guide.pdf

[2] https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6579a28e095987001295dfc5/Statutory_Biodiversity_Metric_Calculation_Tool__Macro_enabled__131223.xlsm

[3] UKHab Ltd (2023). UK Habitat Classification Version 2.0

3.   Baseline

3.1.   Important Ecological Features

A Data Search was conducted and the potential for the development to impact on Important Ecological Features was considered and addressed fully in the PEA which accompanies this application.

The PEA concluded that no Important Ecological Features would be directly or indirectly impacted as a result of the proposed development.

3.2.   Overview: Onsite Baseline

The baseline habitats within the development are outlined in Table 01 below.

Table 01 – Showing the baseline habitats present on the development site.

Habitat	Area (ha)	Distinctiveness	Condition
Modified grassland	0.0261	Low	Poor
Other neutral grassland	0.0895	Medium	Poor
Ornamental lake or pond	0.0002	Low	Poor
Developed land; sealed surface	0.1786	V.Low	N/A - Other
Introduced shrub	0.1141	Low	Condition Assessment N/A
Unvegetated garden	0.0234	V.Low	N/A - Other
Vegetated garden	0.0028	Low	Condition Assessment N/A
Other woodland; broadleaved	0.0112	Medium	Poor
Urban tree	0.0163	Medium	Fairly Poor
Urban tree	0.0041	Medium	Moderate

3.3.   Developed Land; Sealed Surface

This habitat comprises the hardstanding and buildings present on the existing hospital site. The characterisation and condition do not require further information.

3.4.   Introduced Shrub

This habitat classification was applied to the following areas of habitat identified in the PEA assessment:

- Evergreen windbreak hedges typical of Scillonian landscape, primarily karo, escallonia and Japanese spindle – these are managed in places and outgrown in others. Linear features were mapped and classified under this area category as they are frequently 3m+ in width and merge into surrounding, undermanaged shrub areas. The delineation of these habitats would be difficult to undertake in a consistent manner and it is considered that the habitats can be fully and accurately accounted for by mapping as area. For this reason, no linear habitats are mapped for this project;

- Areas of outgrown and undermanaged evergreen shrubs, primarily karo, escallonia and Japanese spindle;

- The herbaceous and shrub components of the ornamental hospital garden – distinguishing between these two categories was not practical from a mapping perspective and the overwhelming character of the garden is best attributed to introduced shrubs;

- Areas of formal landscaping beds at front of the hospital.

The distinctiveness of these habitats is automatically calculated and there is no reason to deviate from this assessment. There is no requirement for a Condition Assessment for this habitat type.

3.5. Ornamental lake or pond

This is a tiny, highly-eutrophic lined pond which is used by ducks within the enclosure on the site.

The pond is of little or no ecological value and, whilst the 'Low' distinctiveness indicated by the metric is retained, the condition is poor (see Appendix 4).

3.6. Other neutral grassland

The pasture field is characterised as 'Other Neutral Grassland' with reference to the species composition, management and condition.

There is little evidence of improvement, and the *Trifoilium/Lolium* composition is low which precludes characterisation as a Modified Grassland.

The underlying geology of the Isles of Scilly mean that many habitats on the island have an underlying acid bedrock – in some situations this gives rise to acid grassland but in this instance, the number of acid indicators is low and does not rise to the level required to characterise the grassland as 'Lowland Dry Acid Grassland'.

The site is lowland; the sward does not have sufficient indicators to suggest acid or calcareous grassland; nor does it have the herbaceous indicators to classify the sward as lowland meadow; it is not within a floodplain and it is grass- rather than herbaceous dominated. For these reasons, the classification of Other Neutral Grassland is determined.

The condition of Poor is determined by the Condition Assessment which is found in Appendix 1.

3.7. Other woodland; broadleaved

This is an area of recently felled elm trees in the north-eastern corner of the site; in accordance with the BNG principles, the 2020 baseline is used for this habitat

description and condition assessment, as characterised in a previous Ecological Assessment of the site completed in 2021.

The habitat is within the redline boundary but is not required for the development; nor was the felling undertaken by the applicant. It is not therefore considered that this action was pre-emptive or enabling of works.

The definition of the woodland is characterised by its lowland location; and the single-species broadleaf character which is typical of naturally generating elm-dominated copses on the islands.

The condition of Poor is determined by the Condition Assessment which is found in Appendix 3.

3.8.   Unvegetated garden

This classification applies to the poultry pens which are present within the pasture field. The dense stocking means that the habitat is largely bare ground which is best characterised by Unvegetated Garden.

This habitat classification does not required a Condition Assessment.

3.9.   Urban tree

The trees within the existing site are assessed as point features. All trees which were identified by the Tree Survey, undertaken by a third party and submitted as part of the application, are mapped and classified by size. The only exception is the Norway spruce trees within the pasture field which have been excluded from the BNG assessment – these are small and essentially a crop for Christmas trees and are routinely removed on an annual basis.

The distinction between Urban and Rural tree is difficult to characterise on a site such as this; however a consistent classification of Urban has been applied to all trees both lost and created either within the existing hospital grounds or within the pasture field and landscaping to ensure consistency in approach between assessment of pre- and post-development habitats.

A classification of Fairly Poor has been applied to these trees. They typically meet 2-3 of the criteria within the Condition Assessment for individual trees but in many situations, for example the Cornish palms, the condition assessment relating to canopy spread etc. is not meaningful. Fairly Poor therefore reflects a compromise between the two classifications.

Only for one tree – the cherry on the eastern boundary – is a condition of moderate given as it meaningfully meets the condition criteria.

The Condition Assessments are found in Appendix 2.

3.10. Vegetated garden

Vegetated garden describes a small area of herbaceous planting within the existing hospital garden where there are no shrubs present and the habitat can be reasonably described most accurately as vegetated garden rather than introduced shrub.

The distinctiveness ascribed by the BNG Metric is retained, and this habitat type does not required a condition assessment.
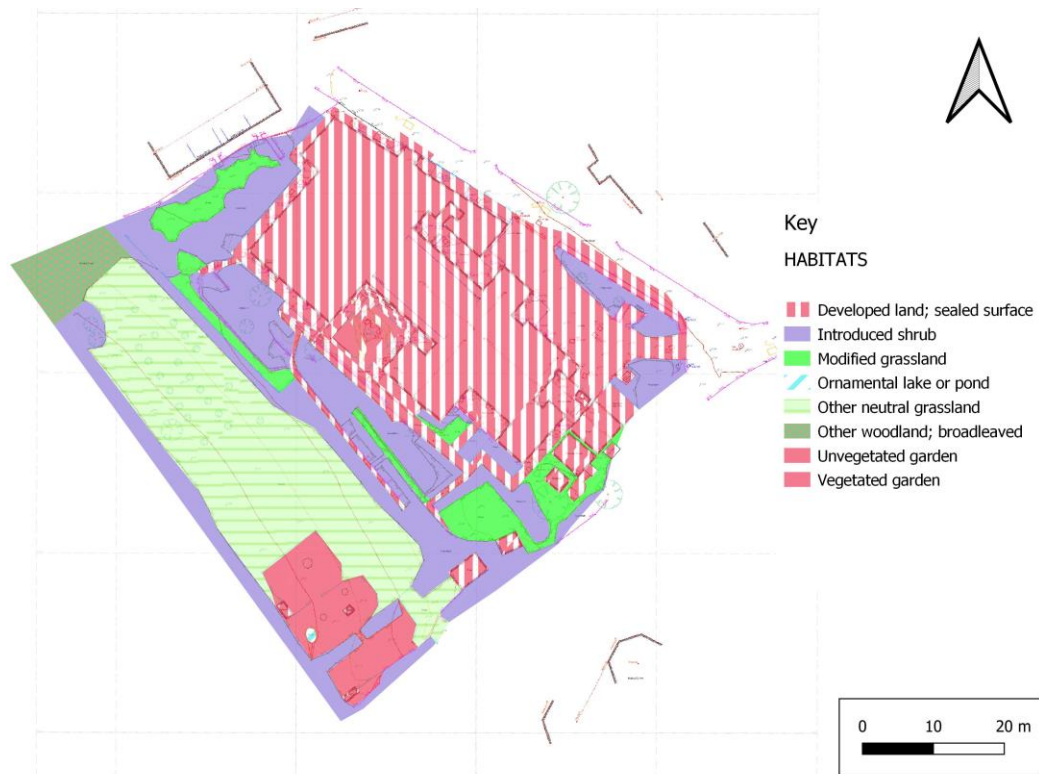
Map 01 – Baseline habitats mapped according to BNG baseline habitat classifications within the DEFRA QGIS Mapping Template. Please note that lack of clarity between individual colour classifications is a result of the mapping protocols – please refer to the habitat descriptions or Phase 1 map within the PEA where any ambiguity occurs.

4. BNG Good Practice Principles

The following section considers each of the 10 BNG Good Practice Principles and identifies the ways in which these have been addressed or achieved within the project.

4.1. Apply the Mitigation Hierarchy

The mitigation hierarchy has been followed throughout the development of the project design. This is detailed in the PEA which accompanies this application.

4.2. Avoid losing biodiversity that cannot be offset by gains elsewhere

The biodiversity loss is the minimum which can be achieved within the development. The nature of the development, extending an existing hospital, makes use of the only land available to achieve this aim which is critical to the islands.

The habitats lost are those required to achieve the necessary extension whilst all other habitats are retained where practicable. The majority is non-native including ornamental gardens and introduced shrubs; only a small portion of the medium distinctiveness pasture grassland is lost.

The losses entailed by the development can be offset within the site boundary, as detailed in this document.

4.3. Be inclusive and equitable

The scale of development is small; the consultation process with further stakeholders will be undertaken as part of the planning process.

4.4. Address risks

The proposed BNG is considered to be low risk. The gains will be achieved through a range of planting and the targeted conditions and sizes are conservative where necessary.

All of the habitat enhancements and creations detailed within the BNG metric are identified as 'Low Risk' and there are no site-specific reasons to adjust this assessment.

4.5. Make a measurable net gain

The BNG metric outlined in this report identifies that a measurable net gain can be achieved on site.

Gains anticipated from habitat creation, enhancement and positive management are quantified relative to the predicted condition in the absence of BNG activities.

4.6. Achieve the best outcomes for biodiversity

At present, the Nature Recovery Strategy for Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly is still in development[4]; therefore the BNG results for the site cannot be assessed against this.

The scheme aims to enhance existing habitats where possible – improving the condition of the grassland – ensuring that the proposals are creating or enhancing native habitats. This includes the avoidance of generic seed mixes in the development of the new grassland areas, focusing instead on established adjacent grasslands to provide a seed source.

Planting of native shrubs and trees, or those already known to be on the island and selected for existing Wildlife Trust land such as the Lower Moors Extension, will ensure alignment with existing nature enhancement works on the islands.

4.7. Be additional

The proposed habitat creation and enhancement works are only proposed as part of the re-modelling of the site – there is no suggestion that these enhancements would have taken place in the absence of the proposed development.

4.8. Create a net gain legacy

There is no suggestion that the habitat creation and enhancement work are under threat of any future development. The incorporation of the landscaping into the hospital grounds for use by patients, staff and visitors will ensure a diverse use which will help to ensure that the habitats are appreciated and acknowledged by users of the site.

4.9. Optimise sustainability

The habitats will form part of, or the periphery to, areas of outdoor green space used by patients, visitors and staff to the hospital. This will ensure that there is a community and wellbeing benefit to the proposed habitat creation and enhancement works.

The enhancements are therefore guided by position, with areas of lower ecological value but higher cultural and aesthetic value in closest proximity to the hospital, for example the sensory garden in an enclosed courtyard. The more wild and biodiverse habitats such as wildflower grassland and shrub planting are further from the main hospital, therefore reducing likely levels of human presence and disturbance whilst ensuring access for those who wish to find a quieter space and providing a green backdrop for those who wish to remain within the more ornamental areas.

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[4] https://www.scilly.gov.uk/environment-transport/local-nature-recovery-strategy

4.10. Be transparent

The commitment to BNG is identified by the applicant in the submission of planning documentation such as this, which are publicly available on the Isles of Scilly Planning Portal[5].

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[5] https://www.scilly.gov.uk/planning-development/planning-applications

5. Proposed Design

5.1. Proposed Habitats

The post-development habitats are illustrated in Map 02 below, and detailed in the remainder of this section.

Map 02 – Proposed habitats mapped according to BNG baseline habitat classifications within the DEFRA QGIS Mapping Template. Yellow-wash indicates no change. Please note that lack of clarity between individual colour classifications is a result of the mapping protocols – please refer to the Landscaping Plan submitted alongside this application.

5.2. Baseline Habitat Retention

The impact on each habitat classification within the baseline is identified in Table 02 below.

Losses occur across all habitats, except for the broadleaf woodland which is present in the south-eastern corner of the site and would not be impacted by proposals.

Impacts to existing habitats are minimised but the site-specific constraints associated with extending the existing hospital building do not permit all of the more favorable habitats to be retained in their entirety.

Table 02 – Showing the impact on baseline habitats as a result of the proposed development. The full impact assessment, including BNG credits lost and gained is outlined in the BNG Calculator which accompanies this application.

Habitat	Baseline Area (ha)	Area Retained (Ha)	Area Enhanced (Ha)	Area Lost (Ha)
Modified grassland	0.0261	0.0146	0	0.0115
Other neutral grassland	0.0895	0.0004	0.0266	0.0625
Ornamental lake or pond	0.0002	0	0	0.0002
Developed land; sealed surface	0.1786	0.1746	0	0.004
Introduced shrub	0.1141	0.0682	0	0.0459
Unvegetated garden	0.0234	0	0	0.0234
Vegetated garden	0.0028	0.0009	0	0.0019
Other woodland; broadleaved	0.0112	0.0112	0	0
Urban tree	0.0163	0	0	0.0163
Urban tree	0.0041	0	0	0.0041

5.3. Habitat Enhancement

Retained habitats will be enhanced where possible. This includes the retained Other Neutral Grassland – the pasture sward – to the south-west of the site which will be managed as wildflower grassland with concomitant enhancement in condition over time.

The current Poor condition will be elevated to Moderate over time, and the value of the habitat further enhanced by habitat creation including native shrub planting to create an ecotone which will support a wider range of biodiversity.

5.4. Habitat Creation

The habitats to be created within the new development fall into two categories. Habitats of Ecological Value are identified in Table 03; whilst habitats whose primary function is the hospital extension, including buildings, hardstanding and ornamental planting, are identified in Table 04.

A full overview of the habitat creation can be found in the Landscaping Plan which accompanies this application and is not repeated here for brevity. In summary:

- The grassland creation will be contiguous with the retained pasture sward and will use green hay from the existing habitat to allow natural generation of a native and locally distinct sward.

- Native shrub planting will include a range of ecologically valuable species which are either native or already present on the Isles of Scilly.

- The individual trees will be a range of small native trees throughout the landscaping.

Table 03 – Showing the proposed habitat creation which is of ecological value. The full impact assessment, including BNG credits gained is outlined in the BNG Calculator which accompanies this application.

Habitat	Area Created (ha)	Target Distinctiveness	Target Condition
Grassland - Other neutral grassland	0.0021	Medium	Moderate
Heathland and shrub - Mixed scrub	0.0205	Medium	Moderate
Individual trees - Urban tree	0.1547	Medium	Moderate

Alongside the habitat creation will be a range of habitat boxes to provide additional habitat for a range of species. These include:

- 10x bird nesting boxes to suit a range of common bird species found in the locality;
- 6x bat boxes to suit common pipistrelle bats;
- 3x solitary bee boxes within the landscaping;
- 1x hedgehog box within the landscaping.

Full details of these additional enhancements can be found in the PEA which accompanies this application.

Table 04 – Showing the proposed habitat creation where ecological value is either absent (in the case of buildings and hardstanding) or minimal (in the case of ornamental planting within the hospital garden). The full impact assessment, including BNG credits gained is outlined in the BNG Calculator which accompanies this application.

Habitat	Area Created (ha)	Target Distinctiveness	Target Condition
Lakes - Ornamental lake or pond	0.0003	Low	Poor
Urban - Built linear features	0.001	V.Low	N/A - Other
Urban - Developed land; sealed surface	0.121	V.Low	N/A - Other
Urban - Introduced shrub	0.0015	Low	Condition Assessment N/A
Urban - Vegetated garden	0.003	Low	Condition Assessment N/A

6. BNG Metric

The BNG metric is submitted as a separate spreadsheet, but the headline results are outlined below in Table 05.

Table 05 – Showing the Headline Results page from the BNG Metric 4.0 which is submitted in full alongside this report.

Headline Results	Return to results menu			
Scroll down for final results ⚠				
On-site baseline		*Habitat units*	0.82	
		Hedgerow units	0.00	
		Watercourse units	0.00	
On-site post-intervention (Including habitat retention, creation & enhancement)		*Habitat units*	1.06	
		Hedgerow units	0.00	
		Watercourse units	0.00	
On-site net change (units & percentage)		*Habitat units*	0.24	29.17%
		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*	0.24	
		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*	0.24	
		Hedgerow units	0.00	
		Watercourse units	0.00	
Total net % change (Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)		*Habitat units*	29.17%	
		Hedgerow units	0.00%	
		Watercourse units	0.00%	
Trading rules satisfied?		No - Check Trading Summaries ▲		

Unit Type	Target	Baseline Units	Units Required	Unit Deficit	
Habitat units	10.00%	0.82	0.90	0.00	No additional area hab
Hedgerow units	10.00%	0.00	0.00	0.00	No additional hedger
Watercourse units	10.00%	0.00	0.00	0.00	No additional watercou

Input errors/rule breaks present in metric ▲

It is highlighted in the Table 05 that the Trading Rules have not been satisfied. This is due to the loss of the Medium Distinctiveness habitat: Other Neutral Grassland and there is not scope within the constraints of the site to create new habitat of equivalent distinctiveness to meet the Trading rules.

In this instance, the significant increase in BNG (+29.17%) is considered to represent a significant over-delivery in biodiversity enhancement which would compensate for the minor infringement of the Trading Rules.

It is also noted that the Trading Rules are a specific requirement of the BNG system and whilst they should be met as part of a statutory BNG requirement, they are not necessarily required to demonstrate a measurable net gain in compliance with Local Plan policy OE2.

7. Project Implementation and Construction Plan

This document is in preparation.

8. Biodiversity Net Gain and Monitoring Plan

This document will be prepared with reference to the Project Implementation and Construction Plan referenced in Section 7.

Appendix 1 – Individual Trees Condition Assessment

Condition Sheet: INDIVIDUAL TREES Habitat Type											
Habitat Types											
Individual trees – Urban trees											
Individual trees – Rural trees											
Complete a condition sheet for each tree or block of trees.											
Please see separate Line of trees condition sheet for a line of Rural trees.											

Habitat Description
Individual trees present within the landscaping or within the pasture field
Individual trees (description applied to the urban or rural environment): Young trees over 7.5 cm in diameter at breast height whose canopies are not touching. **Urban Perimeter / Linear Blocks and Groups (description applied to the urban environment only):** Groups or stands of trees (size requirement as defined above) within and around the perimeter of urban land. This includes those along urban streets, highways, railways and canals, and also former field boundary trees incorporated into developments. Canopies must overlap continuously. Groups of urban trees that don't match the descriptions for woodland may be assessed within this category.

On-site or off-site, site name and location	Onsite	**Survey date and Surveyor name**	JF
		Survey reference (if relating to a wider survey)	St Mary's Hospital PEA

Limitations (if applicable)	N/A	**Habitat parcel reference**									
		All trees except	Cherry tree								
		Grid reference									
		N/A									

Condition Assessment Criteria		**Criterion passed (Yes or No)**									**Notes (such as justification)**
A	The tree is a native species (or at least 70% within the block are native species).	No	No								
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	Yes								
C	The tree is mature (or more than 50% within the block are mature)[1].	No	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	Yes								
E	Natural ecological niches for vertebrates and invertebrates are present, such as presence of deadwood, cavities, ivy or loose bark.	No	Yes								
F	More than 20% of the tree canopy area is oversailing vegetation beneath.	Yes	Yes								
	Number of criteria passed	3	4								

Condition Assessment Result (out of 6 criteria)	**Condition Assessment Score**	**Score Achieved ×/✓**									
Passes 5 or 6 criteria	Good (3)										
Passes 3 or 4 criteria	Moderate (2)										
Passes 2 or fewer criteria	Poor (1)										
Note that 'Fairly Good and Fairly Poor' condition categories are not available for this broad habitat type.											

Suggested enhancement interventions to improve condition score[2]

Appendix 2 – Other Neutral Grassland Condition Assessment

Condition Sheet: GRASSLAND Habitat Type (medium, high and very high distinctiveness)

UK Habitat Classification (UKHab) Habitat Types

Grassland - Lowland calcareous grassland
Grassland - Lowland dry acid grassland
Grassland - Lowland meadows
Grassland - Other lowland acid grassland
Grassland - Other neutral grassland
Grassland - Tall herb communities (H6430) [Not to be confused with the Tall forbs secondary code – see UKHab guidance for details.]
Grassland - Upland acid grassland
Grassland - Upland calcareous grassland
Grassland - Upland hay meadows
Sparsely vegetated land - Calaminarian grassland

On-site or off-site, site name and location	Onsite - pasture Field (Other Neutral Grassland)	Survey date and Surveyor name	JF
Limitations (if applicable)	The PEA survey was undertake in January 2024 - this results in restrictions on the scope to fully characterise the botanical diversity of the grassland habitats; however sufficient information was gathered to determine the character and condition of the sward with a reasonable degree of confidence.	Survey reference (if relating to a wider survey)	ONS within Hospital PEA
Grid reference	N/A	Habitat parcel reference	N/A

Habitat Description

See PEA

ukhab – UK Habitat Classification

	Condition Assessment Criteria	Criterion passed (Yes or No)	Notes (such as justification)
A	The parcel represents a good example of its habitat type, with a consistently high proportion of characteristic indicator species present relevant to the specific habitat type (and relative to Footnote 3 suboptimal species which may be listed in the UKHab description).[1] **Note - this criterion is essential for achieving Moderate or Good condition for non-acid grassland types only.**	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 insects, birds and small mammals to live and breed.	Yes	
C	Cover of bare ground is between 1% and 5%, including localised areas, for example, rabbit warrens[2].	Yes	
D	Cover of bracken *Pteridium aquilinum* is less than 20% and cover of scrub (including bramble *Rubus fruticosus* agg.) is less than 5%.	Yes	
E	Combined cover of species indicative of suboptimal condition[3] and physical damage (such as excessive poaching, damage from machinery use or storage, damaging levels of access, or any other damaging management activities) accounts for less than 5% of total area. If any invasive non-native plant species[4] (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA[5]) are present, this criterion is automatically failed.	No	Three cornered leek present within the sward.

Additional Criterion - must be assessed for all non-acid grassland types

		Criterion passed	Notes
F	There are 10 or more vascular plant species per m[2] present, including forbs that are characteristic of the habitat type (species referenced in Footnote 3 and 5 cannot contribute towards this count). **Note - this criterion is essential for achieving Good condition for non-acid grassland types only.**	No	Whilst this is true in small patches, the majority of the grassland falls below this level
	Essential criterion for Good condition achieved (for non-acid grassland) (Yes or No)	No	
	Number of criteria passed	3	

Condition Assessment Result	Condition Assessment Score	Score Achieved ×/√	
Acid grassland types (Result out of 5 criteria)			
Passes 5 criteria	Good (3)		
Passes 3 or 4 criteria	Moderate (2)		
Passes 2 or fewer criteria	Poor (1)		
Non-acid grassland types (Result out of 6 criteria)			
Passes 5 or 6 criteria, including essential criterion A and additional criterion F.	Good (3)		
Passes 3 - 5 criteria, including essential criterion A.	Moderate (2)		
Passes 2 or fewer criteria; OR Passes 3 or 4 criteria excluding criterion A and F.	Poor (1)	Yes	

Suggested enhancement interventions to improve condition score

Appendix 3 – Broadleaf Woodland Condition Assessment

Condition Sheet: WOODLAND Habitat Type

UK Habitat Classification (UKHab) Habitat Types

Woodland and forest - Lowland beech and yew woodland
Woodland and forest - Lowland mixed deciduous woodland
Woodland and forest - Native pine woodlands
Woodland and forest - Other coniferous woodland
Woodland and forest - Other Scot's pine woodland
Woodland and forest - Other woodland; broadleaved
Woodland and forest - Other woodland; mixed
Woodland and forest - Upland birchwoods
Woodland and forest - Upland mixed ashwoods
Woodland and forest - Upland oakwood
Woodland and forest - Wet woodland

Habitat Description

See PEA

ukhab – UK Habitat Classification
This condition sheet is based on the England Woodland Biodiversity Group (EWBG) Woodland Condition Survey Method, available here:
Woodland Wildlife Toolkit (sylva.org.uk)

IMPORTANT: This biodiversity metric woodland condition assessment must be used to assess woodland being input into the biodiversity metric. The outputs of this condition assessment are not equivalent to, nor are they comparable with the scores from the EWBG condition assessment, because the EWBG assessment has been adapted for the biodiversity metric, including the removal of EWBG Indicator 7 (Proportion of favourable land cover around woodland) and Indicator 14 (Size of woodland), and minor changes to other indicators.

On-site or off-site, site name and location	Onsite	Survey date and Surveyor name	JF	
Limitations (if applicable)	The woodland has been felled in the last 12 months - evidence on site and an Ecology Survey from 2021 are relied upon for the assessment taking the 2020 baseline	Survey reference (if relating to a wider survey)	Other Broadleaf Woodland	
Grid reference	N/A	Habitat parcel reference	N/A	

Condition Assessment Criteria

	Indicator	Good (3 points)	Moderate (2 points)	Poor (1 point)	Score per indicator	Notes (such as justification)
A	Age distribution of trees	Three age-classes[1] present.	Two age-classes[1] present.	One age-class[1] present.	1	
B	Wild, domestic and feral herbivore damage	No significant browsing damage evident in woodland[2].	Evidence of significant browsing pressure is present in less than 40% of whole woodland[2].	Evidence of significant browsing pressure is present in 40% or more of whole woodland[2].	3	
C	Invasive plant species	No invasive species[3] present in woodland.	Rhododendron Rhododendron ponticum or cherry laurel Prunus laurocerasus not present, and other invasive species[3] <10% cover.	Rhododendron or cherry laurel present, or other invasive species[3] ≥10% cover.	3	
D	Number of native tree species	Five or more native tree or shrub species[4] found across woodland parcel.	Three to four native tree or shrub species[4] found across woodland parcel.	Two or less native tree or shrub species[4] across woodland parcel.	1	
E	Cover of native tree and shrub species	>80% of canopy trees and >80% of understory shrubs are native[5].	50 - 80% of canopy trees and 50 - 80% of understory shrubs are native[5].	<50% of canopy trees and <50% of understory shrubs are native[5].	3	
F	Open space within woodland	10 - 20% of woodland has areas of temporary open space[6]. Unless woodland is <10ha, in which case 0 - 20% temporary open space is permitted[7].	21 - 40% of woodland has areas of temporary open space[6].	<10% or >40% of woodland has areas of temporary open space[6]. But if woodland <10ha has <10% temporary open space, please see Good category[7].	1	
G	Woodland regeneration	All three classes present in woodland[8]; trees 4 - 7 cm Diameter at Breast Height (DBH), saplings and seedlings or advanced coppice regrowth.	One or two classes only present in woodland[8].	No classes or coppice regrowth present in woodland[8].	1	
H	Tree health	Tree mortality 10% or less, no pests or diseases and no crown dieback[9].	11% to 25% tree mortality and or crown dieback or low-risk pest or disease present[9].	Greater than 25% tree mortality and or any high risk pest or disease present[9].	3	
I	Vegetation and ground flora	Recognisable NVC plant community[10] at ground layer present, strongly characterised by ancient woodland flora specialists.	Recognisable woodland NVC plant community[10] at ground layer present.	No recognisable woodland NVC plant community[10] at ground layer present.	1	
J	Woodland vertical structure	Three or more storeys across all survey plots, or a complex woodland[11].	Two storeys across all survey plots[11].	One or less storey across all survey plots[11].	1	
K	Veteran trees	Two or more veteran trees[12] per hectare.	One veteran tree[12] per hectare.	No veteran trees[12] present in woodland.	1	
L	Amount of deadwood	50% of all survey plots within the woodland parcel have deadwood, such as standing and fallen deadwood, large dead branches and or stems, branch stubs and stumps, or an abundance of small cavities[13].	Between 25% and 50% of all survey plots within the woodland parcel have deadwood, such as standing and fallen deadwood, large dead branches and or stems, stubs and stumps, or an abundance of small cavities[13].	Less than 25% of all survey plots within the woodland parcel have deadwood, such as standing and fallen deadwood, large dead branches and or stems, stubs and stumps, or an abundance of small cavities[13].	2	
M	Woodland disturbance	No nutrient enrichment or damaged ground evident[14].	Less than 1 hectare in total of nutrient enrichment across woodland area, and or less than 20% of woodland area has damaged ground[14].	1 hectare or more of nutrient enrichment, and or 20% or more of woodland area has damaged ground[14].	3	

Total Score (out of a possible 39)	24

Condition Assessment Result		Condition Assessment Score	Result Achieved
Total score >32 (33 to 39)		Good (3)	Poor
Total score 26 to 32		Moderate (2)	
Total score <26 (13 to 25)		Poor (1)	

Appendix 4 – Ornamental Pond Condition Assessment

Condition Sheet: POND Habitat Type			
Habitat Type			
Lakes - Ponds (priority habitat) Lakes - Ponds (non-priority habitat) **Lakes - Temporary lakes ponds and pools (H3170)** [Use this condition sheet for Temporary ponds and pools, use Lake condition sheet for Temporary lakes] **Lakes - Ornamental lake or pond** [Use this condition sheet for Ornamental ponds, use Lake condition sheet for Ornamental lakes]			
Habitat Description			
ukhab – UK Habitat Classification For ponds (non-priority) – see the Statutory Biodiversity Metric Technical Annex 2.			
On-site or off-site, site name and location	Onsite	**Survey date and Surveyor name**	JF
Limitations (if applicable)	N/A	**Survey reference (if relating to a wider survey)**	Duck Pond
Grid reference	N/A	**Habitat parcel reference**	N/A
Condition Assessment Criteria		**Criterion passed (Yes or No)**	**Notes (such as justification)**
Core Criteria - applicable to all ponds (woodland[1] and non-woodland):			
A	The pond is of good water quality, with clear water (low turbidity) indicating no obvious signs of pollution. Turbidity is acceptable if the pond is grazed by livestock.	No	
B	There is semi-natural habitat (moderate distinctiveness or above) completely surrounding the pond, for at least 10 m from the pond edge for its entire perimeter.	Yes	
C	Less than 10% of the water surface is covered with duckweed *Lemna* spp. or filamentous algae.	Yes	
D	The pond is not artificially connected to other waterbodies, such as agricultural ditches or artificial pipework.	Yes	
E	Pond water levels can fluctuate naturally throughout the year. No obvious artificial dams[2], pumps or pipework.	Yes	
F	There is an absence of listed non-native plant and animal species[3].	Yes	
G	The pond is not artificially stocked with fish. If the pond naturally contains fish, it is a native fish assemblage at low densities.	No	
Additional Criteria - must be assessed for all non-woodland ponds:			
H	Emergent, submerged or floating plants (excluding duckweed)[4] cover at least 50% of the pond area which is less than 3 m deep.	No	
I	The pond surface is no more than 50% shaded by adjacent trees and scrub.	No	
	Number of criteria passed		

Condition Assessment Result	Condition Assessment Score	Score Achieved x/✓	
Results for woodland ponds which require assessment of 7 core criteria			
Passes 7 criteria	Good (3)		
Passes 5 or 6 criteria	Moderate (2)		
Passes 4 or fewer criteria	Poor (1)		
Results for non-woodland ponds which require assessment of 9 criteria			
Passes 9 criteria	Good (3)		
Passes 6 to 8 criteria	Moderate (2)		
Passes 5 or fewer criteria	Poor (1)	Yes	
Suggested enhancement interventions to improve condition score			