

Baseline Habitat Condition Assessment (BHCA)

Survey site:

Decoy Farm, Spalding Road, Crowland, Lincolnshire PE6 0LX

Client:

Third Revolution Projects

Survey date:

16th December 2025

Project:

This report is prepared to inform a planning application with South Holland District Council. The proposal is described as:

"The construction of an access road and an internal road to supplement the existing site"

Unsubmitted

The BHCA survey is written to inform the baseline for a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) report, and is based on UKHabs habitat methodology in accordance with [PEA Methodology and Legislation - 2024](#).

The site survey was undertaken by Adam Walding-Kelly BA (Hons) Graduate Ecologist					
Date of survey	Temperature (°C)	Humidity (%)	Cloud Cover (%)	Wind (km/h)	Rain
16/12/2025	7	91	100	15	Light Rain

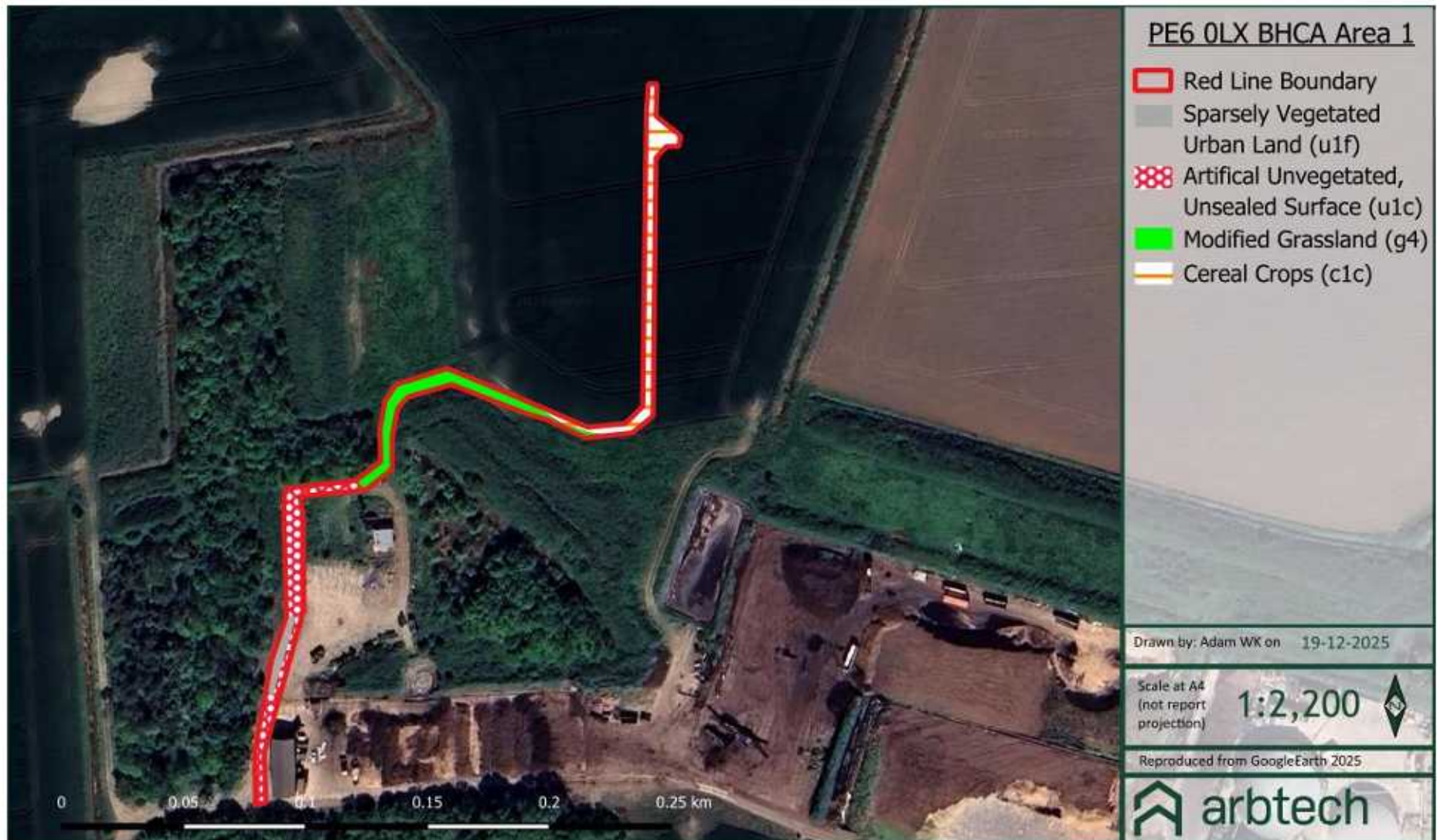
Ecological Survey Factor	Detailed using desk study and site survey (carried out under good weather conditions). Any specific limitations noted within relevant section. This table may include further work you will need to commission (if any) to obtain planning permission or comply with legislation for other consent. All clients are expected to read and understand this section, or to contact the lead surveyor for advice.
Conclusion, Impact or Recommendations	
Habitats and plants (see habitat map in appendix 1, location plan in appendix 2, proposed plans in appendix 3, photos in appendix 4 and habitat condition assessments in Appendix 5).	
Botanical species are described with reference to the DAFOR scale (D = Dominant; A = Abundant, F = Frequent, O = Occasional, R = Rare).	
Summary of Survey Findings	The survey site is centred on National Grid Reference TF 2512 8771 and has an area of approximately 0.548ha.
(UKHab codes used)	The site sits on loamy and clayey soils of coastal flats with naturally high groundwater, of moderate fertility and comprises areas of artificial unvegetated unsealed surface, sparsely vegetated urban land, modified grassland, other neutral grassland and cereal crop spread across 2 sections at the northwestern and southeastern corners of the wider site. There is a single tree within the proposed development area. The site is located within the wider commercial and agricultural site of Decoy Farm, on the outskirts of the village of Crowland, Lincolnshire. Aerial imagery shows the local landscape to have a predominantly arable character, with the busy A16 road running ~250m to the east of the site. Water bodies can be found nearby, such as the River Welland located ~1km to the west as well as a network of drainage ditches that run through the wider curtilage of the site. Such features likely enhance the area for a variety of species, including bats, amphibians and reptiles. Habitat classification and condition assessment u1c - Artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface The northern section of area 2 is comprised of a mud/gravel mixture surface that is currently in use as a vehicular entrance road. There are no signs of vegetation breaking through the surface due to the constant vehicle use and the area demonstrates poor drainage.

	The southwestern section of area 1 is comprised of an area of mud/gravel mixed surface that is used for vehicle storage and as a vehicular access road to other sections of the site. There is a strip of ruderal vegetation that has broken through on the western side, before a recently gravelled area in the far northwestern corner of this area which makes up less than 10% of the total area. The species identified within this area are as follows: Perennial ryegrass (<i>Lolium perenne</i>), Common nettle (<i>Urtica dioica</i>), Wild carrot (<i>Daucus carota</i>), Chervil (<i>Anthriscus cerefolium</i>), Common ragwort (<i>Jacobaea vulgaris</i>), Horsetweed (<i>Erigeron canadensis</i>), Bristly oxtongue (<i>Helminthotheca echioides</i>), Spear thistle (<i>Cirsium vulgare</i>). <u>u1f – Sparsely vegetated urban land</u> A small section of sparsely vegetated land lies towards the northern boundary of area 2, which comprises of a formerly gravelled area used for vehicular storage with ~20% vegetation breakthrough. <u>g4 – Modified grassland with Scattered trees 32</u> The northern area of area 2 is comprised of modified grassland with a single, small Grey Willow tree ~5m in height. There is a mixed sward length of 1cm-3m with no mowing or management plan utilised for the area. This area is condition assessed as being of poor quality. The species identified within this area are categorised as below: D – Perennial ryegrass (<i>Lolium perenne</i>) F – False oat grass (<i>Arrhenatherum elatius</i>), Springy turf moss (<i>Rhytidiadelphus squarrosus</i>), Poison hemlock (<i>Conium maculatum</i>) O – Common nettle (<i>Urtica dioica</i>), Cleavers (<i>Galium aparine</i>), Spear thistle (<i>Cirsium vulgare</i>), Common ragwort (<i>Jacobaea vulgaris</i>), Broad-leaved dock (<i>Rumex obtusifolius</i>) R – Sticky mouse-ear (<i>Cerastium glomeratum</i>), Red oyster dogwood (<i>Cornus sericea</i>), Chandelier plant (<i>Kalanchoe delagoensis</i>), Garlic mustard (<i>Alliaria petiolata</i>), Common mallow (<i>Malva sylvestris</i>) A second area of modified grassland is located within the northwestern section of area 1, which showed signs of visible damage by vehicle tracks at the southern end of the habitat area. The area has a mixed sward length of between 1cm-2m and less than 10% bare earth. This area is condition assessed as being of poor quality. The species identified within this area are categorised as below:
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	D – Perennial ryegrass (<i>Lolium perenne</i>) F – Common nettle (<i>Urtica dioica</i>), Bramble (<i>Rubus fruticosus</i>) O – Bristly oxtongue (<i>Helminthotheca echioides</i>), Common ragwort (<i>Jacobaea vulgaris</i>), Wild carrot (<i>Daucus carota</i>), False oat grass (<i>Arrhenatherum elatius</i>), Red fescue (<i>Festuca rubra</i>), Poison hemlock (<i>Conium maculatum</i>), Cow parsley (<i>Anthriscus sylvestris</i>), Spear thistle (<i>Cirsium vulgare</i>) g3c – Other neutral grassland The southern and southeastern section of area 2 is comprised of an area of other neutral grassland that borders an arable field. The area is unmanaged, with the far southwestern section used for vehicular access to the adjacent solar farm and has a mixed sward length of between 1cm-1m and less than 10% bare ground. This area is condition assessed as being of poor quality. The species identified within this area are categorised as below: A – Perennial ryegrass (<i>Lolium perenne</i>) F – False oat grass (<i>Arrhenatherum elatius</i>), Common nettle (<i>Urtica dioica</i>), Bristly oxtongue (<i>Helminthotheca echioides</i>), O – Spear moss (<i>Calliergonella cuspidata</i>), Timothy (<i>Phleum pratense</i>), Bramble (<i>Rubus fruticosus</i>), Red fescue (<i>Festuca rubra</i>), Wild carrot (<i>Daucus carota</i>), Narrow-leaved dock (<i>Rumex crispus</i>), Cleavers (<i>Galium aparine</i>), Herb-robert (<i>Geranium robertianum</i>) R – Spear thistle (<i>Cirsium vulgare</i>), Shepherd's purse (<i>Capsella bursa-pastoris</i>), Creeping buttercup (<i>Ranunculus repens</i>) c1c – Cereal crop The far northern section of area 1 is comprised of an arable field with stubble from a previous crop of oats. The stubble is an even height of around 20cm with signs of other vegetation growing through the stubble, in the form of false oat grass, common field speedwell and horseradish.
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	The proposed development will result in the loss of ~0.021ha of sparsely vegetated urban land, ~0.157 of artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface, ~0.084ha of modified grassland, ~0.077ha of cereal crop and ~0.234ha of other neutral grassland.
<i>Recommendations</i>	As more than 25m ² of habitat is being removed for the development (building demolition and dwelling construction), the proposals are not a householder application or a self-build scheme, a biodiversity net gain (BNG) will be required

	as the proposals do not fall under any of the exemption cases. The BNG metric will use this report to inform the baseline.
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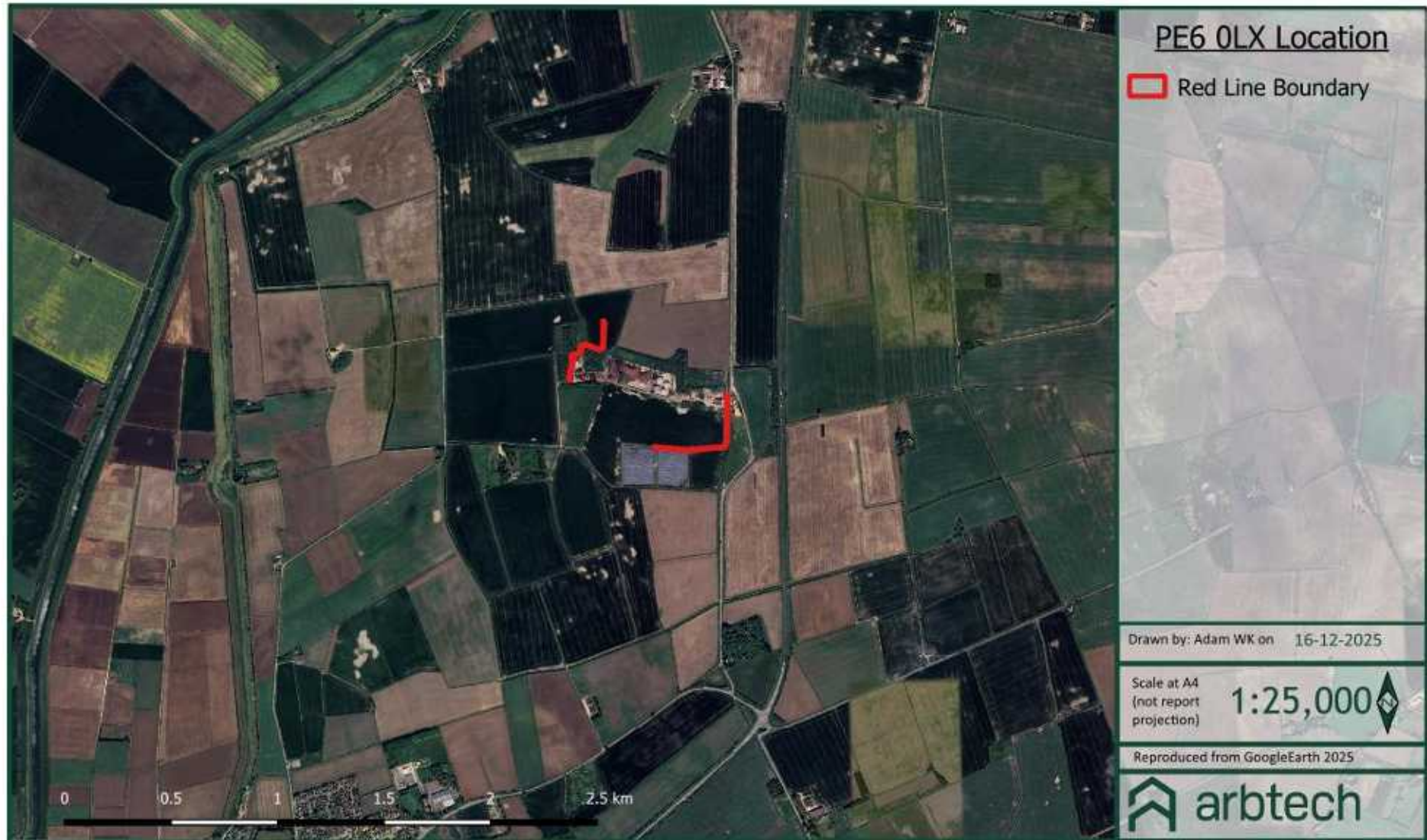
Appendix 1a: Survey/Habitat map



Appendix 1b: Survey/Habitat map



Appendix 2: Location map



Appendix 3: Proposed plan



Appendix 4: Photos

Photo		Description
		Photo 1&2: The areas of artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface
		Photo 3&4: The area of other neutral grassland within area 2

		Photo 5&6: The areas of modified grassland, including the grey willow tree
		Photo 7&8: The area of cereal crop to the northern boundary of area 1



Appendix 5: Habitat Condition Assessments

Rural Tree; assessed using 'Individual Trees' habitat type condition sheet:

Condition Assessment Criteria		Condition Achieved (Y/N)	Notes/Justification
A	The tree is a native species (or more than 70% within the block are native species).	Y	
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).	Y	The tree is an individual tree and thus automatically pass this criterion.
C	The tree is mature (or more than 50% within the block are mature).	N	
D	There is little or no evidence of an adverse impact on tree health by anthropogenic activities such as vandalism or herbicide use. There is no current regular pruning regime, so the trees retain >75% of expected canopy for their age range and height.	Y	Little to no evidence of adverse anthropogenic impacts; all trees have retained >75% of their expected canopy.
E	Natural Ecological niches for vertebrates and invertebrates are present, such as presence of deadwood, cavities, ivy or loose bark.	N	None observed.
F	More than 20% of the tree canopy area is oversailing vegetation beneath.	Y	More than 20% of the tree canopy area has vegetation underneath.
Number of criteria passed			4
Condition Assessment Result		Condition Assessment Score	Score Achieved ✓
Passes 5 or 6 of 6 criteria		Good (3)	
Passes 3 or 4 of 6 criteria		Moderate (2)	✓
Passes 0, 1 or 2 of 6 criteria		Poor (1)	

Modified Grassland; assessed using 'Grasslands Low Distinctiveness' habitat type condition sheet: Area 1

Condition Assessment Criteria:		Condition passed (Yes or No)	Notes/Justification
A	There must be 6-8 vascular plant species per m ² , including at least 2 forbs. Note – this criterion is essential for achieving moderate condition.	N	Fewer than 6 vascular plant species per 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	Varied sward height
C	Some scattered scrub (including bramble) may be present, but scrub accounts for less than 20% of total grassland area. Note - patches of shrubs with continuous (more than 90%) cover should be classified as the relevant scrub habitat type.	Y	Less than 20% coverage
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	Physical damage present in less than 5% of total grassland area.
E	Cover of bare ground is between 1% and 10%, including localised areas (for example, a concentration of rabbit warrens).	Y	Bare ground cover between 1% and 10%.
F	Cover of bracken less than 20%.	Y	No bracken observed (less than 20% coverage).
G	There is an absence of invasive non-native species (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA, 1981).	Y	Absence of invasive species.
Essential criterion achieved (Y/N)			N
Number of criteria passed			6
Condition Assessment Result	Condition Assessment Score	Score Achieved ✓	
Passes 6 or 7 of 7 criteria including passing essential criterion A	Good (3)		
Passes 4 or 5 of 7 criteria including passing essential criterion A	Moderate (2)		
Passes 0, 1, 2 or 3 of 7 criteria; OR 4, 5 or 6 of criteria but failing criterion A	Poor (1)	✓	

Modified Grassland; assessed using 'Grasslands Low Distinctiveness' habitat type condition sheet: Area 2

Condition Assessment Criteria:		Condition passed (Yes or No)	Notes/Justification
A	There must be 6-8 vascular plant species per m ² , including at least 2 forbs. Note – this criterion is essential for achieving moderate condition.	N	Fewer than 6 vascular plant species per 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	Varied sward length.
C	Some scattered scrub (including bramble) may be present, but scrub accounts for less than 20% of total grassland area. Note - patches of shrubs with continuous (more than 90%) cover should be classified as the relevant scrub habitat type.	Y	Scrub is less than 20%
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.	N	Physical damage present in more than 5% of total grassland area.
E	Cover of bare ground is between 1% and 10%, including localised areas (for example, a concentration of rabbit warrens).	Y	Bare ground cover between 1% and 10%.
F	Cover of bracken less than 20%.	Y	No bracken observed (less than 20% coverage).
G	There is an absence of invasive non-native species (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA, 1981).	N	2 invasive non-native species identified.
Essential criterion achieved (Y/N)			N
Number of criteria passed			4
Condition Assessment Result		Condition Assessment Score	Score Achieved ✓
Passes 6 or 7 of 7 criteria including passing essential criterion A		Good (3)	
Passes 4 or 5 of 7 criteria including passing essential criterion A		Moderate (2)	
Passes 0, 1, 2 or 3 of 7 criteria; OR 4, 5 or 6 of criteria but failing criterion A		Poor (1)	✓

Neutral Grassland; assessed using 'Grasslands Medium/High/Very High Distinctiveness' habitat type condition sheet:

Condition Assessment Criteria		Criterion passed (Yes or No)	Notes/Justification
A	The parcel represents a good example of its habitat type, with a consistently high proportion of characteristic indicator species present relative to the specific habitat type. Note – this criterion is essential for achieving moderate or good condition for non-acid grassland types only.	N	Species list not suitable to pass criteria
B	Sward height is varied (at least 20% of the sward is less than 7cm and at least 20% is more than 7cm) creating microclimates which provide opportunities for insects, birds and small mammals to live and breed.	Y	Varied sward height of such specifications anticipated.
C	Cover of bare ground is between 1% and 5%, including localised areas, for example, rabbit warrens.	N	Cover of bare ground anticipated to exceed 5%.
D	Cover of bracken <i>Pteridium aquilinum</i> is less than 20% and cover of scrub (including bramble <i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg.) is less than 5%.	Y	
E	Combined cover of species indicative of sub-optimal condition and physical damage (such as excessive poaching, damage from machinery use or storage, damaging levels of access, or any other damaging management activities) accounts for less than 5% of total area. If any invasive non-native plant species (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA) are present, this criterion is automatically failed.	N	Physical damage anticipated to exceed 5% of total area. No invasives anticipated.
Additional Criterion - must be assessed for all non-acid grassland types			
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 2 and 4 cannot contribute towards this count). Note – this criterion is essential for achieving good condition for non-acid grassland types only.	N	
Essential criterion for good condition achieved (for non-acid grassland) (Yes or No)		N	
Number of criteria passed		2	
Condition Assessment Result		Condition Assessment Score	Score Achieved ✓
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)	✓	

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