



BIODIVERSE
CONSULTING

HUB BUILDING LECONFIELD

BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN ASSESSMENT

FOR: AVISON YOUNG

REF: BIOC22-004 | V2.1



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DOCUMENT CONTROL

VERSION	DATE	CHANGES	CONFIDENTIALITY	PREP	REV	AUTH
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Biodiverse Consulting Ltd was commissioned in June 2022 to undertake a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Assessment of land near Leconfield Industrial Estate, Cleator Moor, Cumbria, CA25 5QB, henceforth referred to as the “site”. The site is proposed for light industrial-led mixed-use development with associated landscaping and infrastructure, based on current plans at the date of the production of this report.

This document reports the results of the Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Assessment of the proposed development with local and national legal and policy context. The below presents a summary of the survey and assessment findings.

BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN ASSESSMENT FOR HUB BUILDING LECONFIELD PROPOSAL	
Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment	The baseline habitats on site provide a total of 6.99 BU. The habitats on site post-development provide a total of 8.52 BU. This leads to a net change of 1.53 equating to 21.93% net gain in Habitat Units.



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1 INTRODUCTION

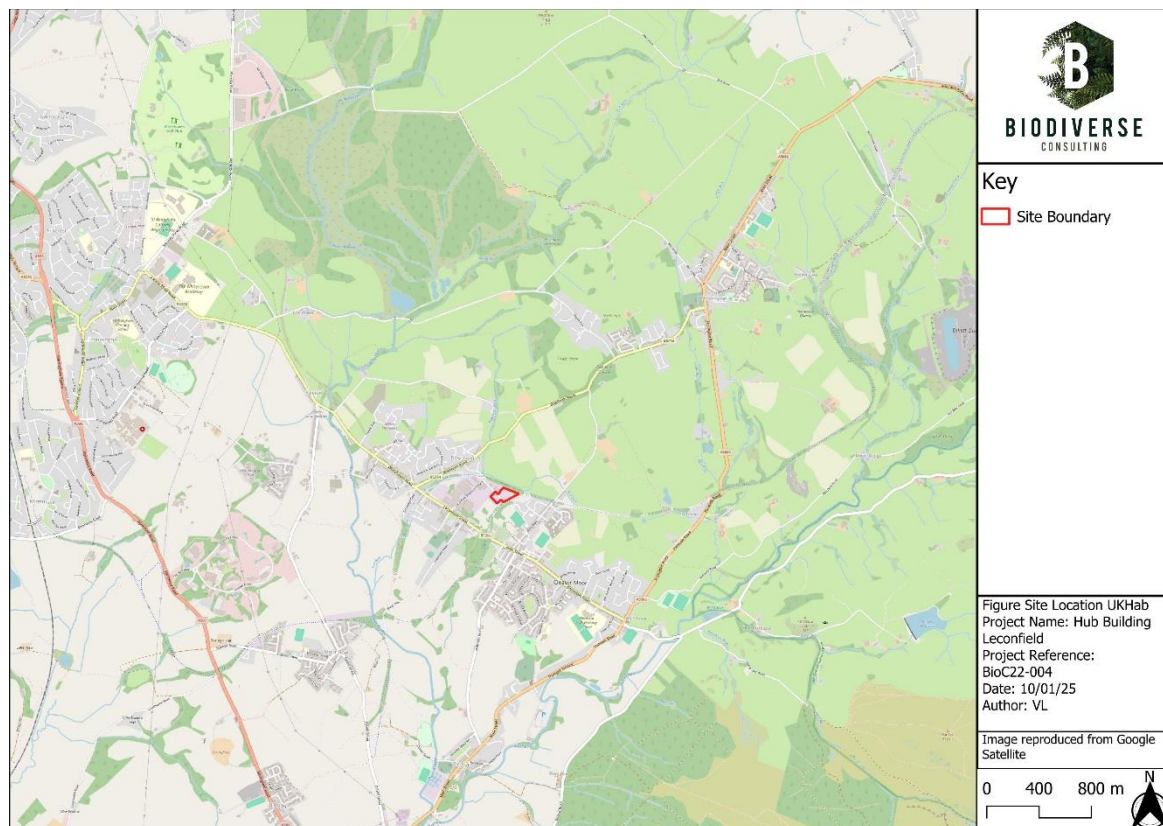
1.1 CONTEXT

This report forms the biodiversity net gain assessment which builds upon previous findings from the Ecological Appraisal¹. This report should not be referenced for detailed protected/priority species and habitat survey assessment. This report does not replace the recommendations made in earlier reports with regard to biodiversity enhancements and protected species avoidance and mitigation but seeks to complement its findings.

1.2 SITE LOCATION & DESCRIPTION

The site is located within Leconfield Industrial Estate, Cleator Moor, Cumbria, CA25 5QB at an approximate central grid reference of NY 01801 15514 as illustrated in Figure 1. The approximately 1.27ha site currently consists of grassland, scrub and woodland habitats alongside areas of tarmac hardstanding.

FIGURE 1: SITE LOCATION



¹ Tetra Tech Group LTD (2021) CMIQ Ecological Appraisal Rev 2



1.3 DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

It is proposed to develop the Site for light industrial-led mixed-use development with associated landscaping and infrastructure including a car park based on current plans at the date of the production of this report. Current site landscaping proposals are provided within CMIQ-ONE-ZZ-XX-DR-L-0201 Rev P06 (Appendix C).

1.4 REPORT OBJECTIVES

- To identify and assess the condition of habitats on site and their strategic importance.
- To quantify habitats into their corresponding biodiversity units and assess the impact of current development plans on biodiversity.
- To assess on- and off-site habitat creation or enhancement opportunities, if required.
- To describe monitoring and management methods, if required.
- Make recommendations for further gains for biodiversity within the context of the proposed development.

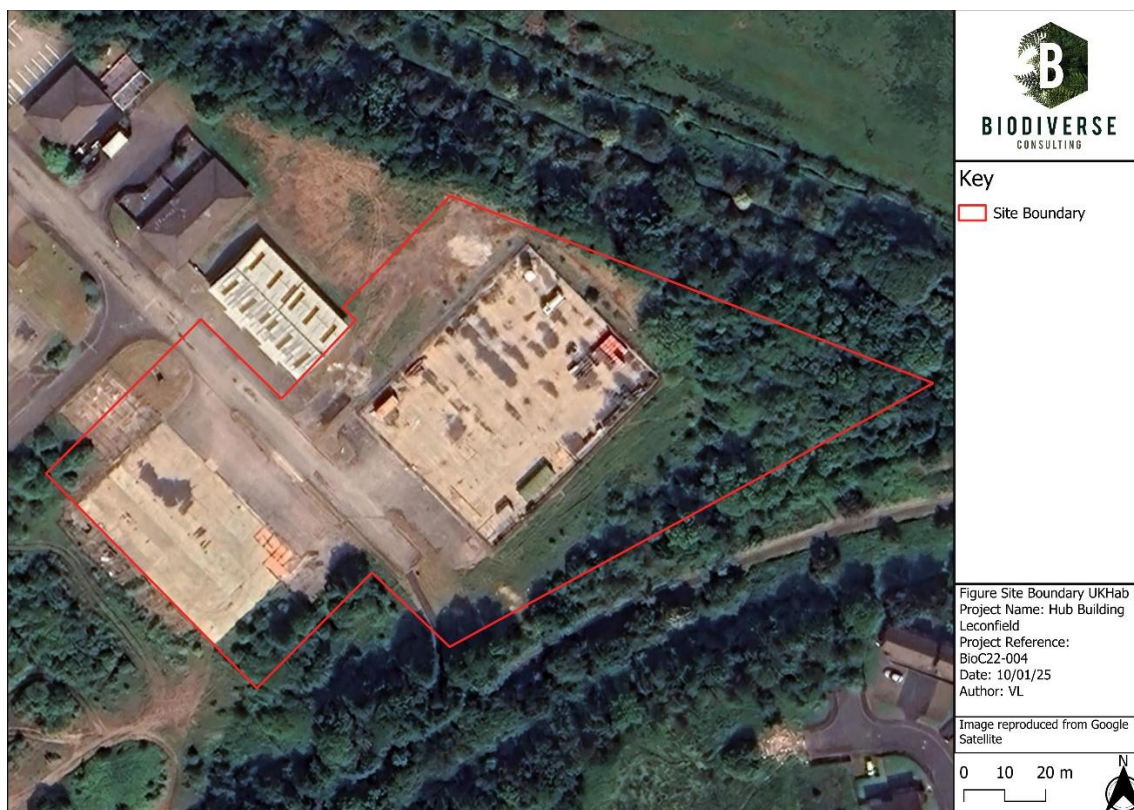


2 METHODOLOGY

2.1 STUDY SCOPE

The survey area comprised the “site” (Figure 2) and, where access was available an appropriate buffer.

FIGURE 2: SURVEY AREA



2.2 DESK STUDY

A desk study was undertaken to assess the nature of the site and surrounding habitats which included:

- Assessment of aerial imagery and Ordnance Survey mapping.
- A search of the MAGIC² website for priority habitats.
- Data search submitted to the Local Record Centre (LRC).
- Research of strategic plans in the local area.

² Multi Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (www.magic.gov.uk)



2.3 FIELD SURVEY

The site was subject to a walk over, during which habitats were identified using the UK Habitat Classification survey methodology³ (UKHab). Table 1 provides a summary of the field surveys undertaken.

TABLE 1: SURVEY SUMMARY

DATE	TEMPERATURE	CLOUD	PRECIPITATION	WIND ⁴	SURVEYOR
04/07/2022	12.5°C	90%	Light Showers	2-3BF	LHF/PD

2.4 BIODIVERSITY ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

The Defra Biodiversity Metric 4.0⁵ was used to calculate Biodiversity Units for this site and is a standard approach based on the information in the accompanying User Guide and Technical Guidance⁶. The application of this tool prescribes a biodiversity value for pre-development baseline conditions alongside the proposed post-development conditions. The metric requires calculations of the distinctiveness, condition and area of habitats to be affected. These calculations identify the net gain/loss in Biodiversity Units (BU).

Post development habitats are assigned a condition considered achievable within a 30-year period through a dynamic management plan and takes into consideration feasibility issues. The Defra Metric deals with habitat creation difficulty, time and spatial risks using a multiplier to account for the predicted level of uncertainty when calculating values. Habitat condition assessments and functionality of habitats are justified within the Defra Biodiversity Metric spreadsheet.

³ Butcher, B., Carey, P., Edmonds, R., Norton, L. and Treweek, J. (2020) The UK Habitats Classification User Manual Version 1.1 at <http://www.ukhab.org/>

⁴ Beaufort wind force scale: <https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/weather/guides/coast-and-sea/beaufort-scale>

⁵ Natural England Joint Publication JP039 (2022) The Biodiversity Metric 4.0 Calculation Tool

⁶ Natural England Joint Publication JP039 (2022) The Biodiversity Metric 4.0 – User Guide



3 RESULTS

Detailed habitat survey results are contained within the Ecological Appraisal⁷.

3.1 DESK STUDY

3.1.1 Priority Habitats

A search of the MAGIC website and the Local Record Centre (LRC) identified are records of priority habitats within 2 km of the site including: good quality semi-improved grassland, purple moor grass and rush pasture, lowland fen, deciduous woodland and open mosaic habitat. The following priority habitats have been recorded within the site: deciduous woodland.

3.1.2 Relevant Strategic Plans

Table 2 summarises strategic plans that are relevant to this Assessment.

TABLE 2: LOCAL AND NATIONAL BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN POLICIES

SCOPE	POLICY	PARAGRAPH	POLICY AIMS AND OBJECTIVES
National	National Planning Policy Framework 2024 See Appendix E.	187 - 201	The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2024 sets out the Government’s requirement for the planning system in England and in doing so establishes the framework within which local planning authorities can develop their own planning policies. The NPPF explicitly addresses the conservation and enhancement of the natural environment, including biodiversity.
Local	Cumbria Priority Habitat Statements	All	Cumbria Biodiversity Action Centre list habitat statements for all priority habitats found within Cumbria. The statements provide information on; Description, Distribution, Conservation Issues, Planning Considerations, Enhancement Opportunities, Key Species, Further Information and Contacts.
Local	Cumbria Local Nature	All	The purpose of the LNRS is to restore and link up habitats so that species can thrive and agree the best locations to help nature

⁷ Tetra Tech Group LTD (2021) CMIQ Ecological Appraisal Rev 2



SCOPE	POLICY	PARAGRAPH	POLICY AIMS AND OBJECTIVES
	Recovery Strategy Pilot		recover, plant trees and woodland, restore peatland, mitigate flood and fire risk, and create green spaces for local people to enjoy. With an agreed LNRS in place, the nature recovery work of everyone in Cumbria - from the designated landscapes and large conservation partnerships, to farmers, local businesses and community groups- can help to deliver a bigger, better and more joined-up nature recovery network across the whole of the county.

3.1.3 Habitat Network Areas

A review of Cumbria Local Nature Recovery Strategy Pilot maps indicates that the site lies within a Network Enhancement Zone 1 for Woodland habitats (see LNRN Habitat: Woodland Map Appendix D). This is an area where actions (habitat restoration and creation) to help join up habitats and create a network should be targeted.

3.2 FIELD SURVEY

3.2.1 Habitats

The site is approximately 1.27ha in extent and comprises tarmac and concrete hardstanding alongside areas of Other Neutral Grassland, Dense Scrub and Broadleaved Woodland. A map of these habitats is provided in Appendix A. Full species lists for the habitats are provided in Appendix F and photos in Appendix G.

3.2.1.1 g3c – Other Neutral Grassland

Areas of other neutral grassland to an area of 0.37ha are located throughout the site. Grassland contained a varied sward height of 5-100cm including mown areas and patches of bare ground. An average grass/forb ratio of 70:30 was present with species such as false oat *Arrhenatherum elatius* and rough meadow *Poa pratensis* dominant within sward. Forb species include yarrow *Achillea millefolium*, common twayblade *Neottia ovata* and common knapweed *Centaurea nigra*.

The other neutral grassland habitat is considered to be in good condition in regard to BNG V3.1 condition assessment criteria. The habitat passes all condition criteria with the appearance and composition of the vegetation closely matching habitat type, a varied sward height, cover of bare ground present, adequate cover of scrub and bracken, absence of invasive species and damage. There were greater than 9 species recorded per square meter within randomly sampled quadrats.



3.2.1.2 h3 – Dense Scrub

Two areas of dense scrub (mixed scrub) in ‘moderate’ condition are located within the site to a combined area of 0.05ha. One area was dominated by goat willow *Salix caprea* with a ground flora of similar composition to the previously described other neutral grassland. The other contained a higher diversity of scrub species including hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna* and elder *Sambucus nigra* alongside scattered mature trees and a ground flora containing multiple common twayblade.

The scrub habitats are considered to be in moderate condition in regard to BNG V3.1 condition assessment criteria. Both areas pass conditions 2, and 4 with good age range and sheltered edges present. The area dominated by goat willow fails criteria 1 and 3 as it is dominated by one woody species and ground flora contained over 5% cover of undesirable species such as common nettle *Urtica dioica*, criteria 5 was passed. The other area of scrub passes criteria 1 and 3 but failed criteria 5 due to lack of clearings within the scrub.

3.2.1.3 w1g – Other Woodland Broadleaved

Other broadleaved woodland in moderate condition is located within the north eastern boundary of the site to an area of 0.17ha. The woodland contains a mixed canopy of beech *Fagus sylvatica*, ash *Fraxinus excelsior* and aspen *Populus tremula* with an understory dominated by goat willow and hawthorn. The ground flora indicates nutrient enrichment with the presence of common nettle and bramble *Rubus sp.*

The woodland is considered to be of ‘moderate’ condition as it scores 31 out of 39 within the condition assessment criteria (see Table 3 below for details).

TABLE 3: CONDITION ASSESSMENT OF WOODLAND

CONDITION ASSESSMENT INDICATOR		SCORE	JUSTIFICATION FOR SCORE
1	Age distribution of trees	2	High canopy of beech and ash with understory of goat willow and hawthorn
2	Wild, domestic and feral herbivore damage	3	None
3	Invasive plant species	3	None
4	Number of native tree species	3	Over five native species present
5	Cover of native tree and shrub species	2	Over 20% of canopy cover is non-native species (aspen).



CONDITION ASSESSMENT INDICATOR		SCORE	JUSTIFICATION FOR SCORE
6	Open space within woodland	3	20% of woodland has areas of temporary open space.
7	Woodland regeneration	3	Three age classes of tree regeneration present including; young trees, saplings and seedlings.
8	Tree health	3	Tree mortality less than 10%.
9	Vegetation and ground flora	2	Ground flora has recognisable NVC.
10	Woodland vertical structure	2	Two stories present within woodland.
11	Veteran trees	1	No veterans present
12	Amount of deadwood	2	Between 25 and 50% of woodland contained dead wood.
13	Woodland disturbance	2	Less than 1ha of nutrient enrichment present within woodland.

3.2.1.4 u1b – Developed Land; Sealed Surface

Hardstanding areas of tarmac and concrete including access road and industrial areas to a combined area of 0.67ha.



4 SITE ASSESSMENT

4.1 BASELINE HABITATS SUMMARY

Table 4 presents a summary of the baseline conditions of the site with habitats mapped within Appendix A.

TABLE 4: SUMMARY OF BASELINE HABITATS WITH CALCULATED BIODIVERSITY UNITS (BU)

HABITAT	CONDITION	STRATEGIC SIGNIFICANCE	AREA (ha)	BU
Other neutral grassland	Good	Area not in local strategy	0.3744	4.49
Mixed scrub	Moderate	Area not in local strategy	0.0477	0.38
Other woodland; broadleaved	Moderate	Formally identified in local strategy	0.1749	1.61
Developed land; sealed surface	N/A - Other	Area not in local strategy	0.6736	0.00
Rural Tree	Good	Formally identified in local strategy	0.0366	0.51
Total BU within baseline:				6.99

Overall based on the nature of the site and the assessment to date, the site is considered to have a value of 6.99 BU.

4.2 POST-DEVELOPMENT HABITAT SUMMARY

The calculations presented here are based on landscaping plans drawing number CMIQ-ONE-ZZ-XX-DR-L-0201 Rev P06 (See Appendix C). Post development habitats are mapped in Appendix B.

TABLE 5: SUMMARY OF POST-DEVELOPMENT HABITATS WITH CALCULATED BU

HABITAT	CONDITION	STRATEGIC SIGNIFICANCE	AREA (ha)	BU
HABITAT RETAINED				



HABITAT	CONDITION	STRATEGIC SIGNIFICANCE	AREA (ha)	BU
Other woodland; broadleaved	Moderate	Formally identified in local strategy	0.1313	
HABITAT CREATED				
Other neutral grassland	Moderate	Area not in local strategy	0.318	2.13
Introduced shrub	Condition Assessment N/A	Area not in local strategy	0.1321	0.25
Developed land; sealed surface	N/A - Other	Area not in local strategy	0.5191	0.00
Developed land; sealed surface	N/A - Other	Area not in local strategy	0.1701	0.00
Urban tree	Moderate	Area not in local strategy	1.6123	4.93
Total BU within post-development:				7.31

Total Net BU Change: 1.53 equating to 21.93% net gain.

4.3 LIMITATIONS

Some areas of the site were difficult to access due to dense vegetation, however, this was not considered a significant constraint given visibility of these areas was otherwise unimpeded.

The assessment in this report has been completed within version 4.0 of the BNG Metric. Any projects planning applications submitted after January 2024 must be updated to the most recent version of the Statutory BNG Metric in order to be accepted for planning.

4.4 BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN PROPOSALS

4.4.1 Trading Rules

The trading rules for this project are not currently satisfied. There is an overall loss of 2.36 units of medium distinctiveness grassland units, 0.38 units of medium distinctiveness heathland and shrub and 0.4 units of medium distinctiveness woodland and forest.



4.5 HABITAT MANAGEMENT AND MONITORING

In accordance with current best practice at the time of the assessment⁸, it is advised that as part of the planning decision a Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (HMMP) is conditioned which sets out how the biodiversity measures incorporated into the development will be managed and their impact on biodiversity monitored to ensure that net gain is achieved.

4.5.1 Monitoring Period

The site will be monitored for 30 years as per best practice guidelines. The site will be subject to a UKHAB classification survey alongside a condition assessment of the created and enhanced habitats. This survey will be carried out by a suitably qualified ecologist, starting 1 year after the project is completed, with second visit in year 5 and then further visits every 5 years until the final visit on year 30. A Monitoring Report will be submitted to the Local Planning Authority (LPA) following each visit. The 10th year after the project is completed, a full updated BNG assessment will be carried out ensure that the habitats are on track to reach their predicted conditions, the assessment will again be submitted to the LPA.

4.6 CONCLUSION

The baseline habitats on site provide a total of 6.99 Habitat Units. The habitats on site post-development provide a total of 8.52 Habitat Units. This leads to a net change of 1.53 equating to 21.93% net gain in Habitat Units. Trading rules are not currently satisfied for this project.

⁸ CIEEM (2019) Biodiversity Net Gain: Good practice principles for developers CIRIA C776a



APPENDICIES

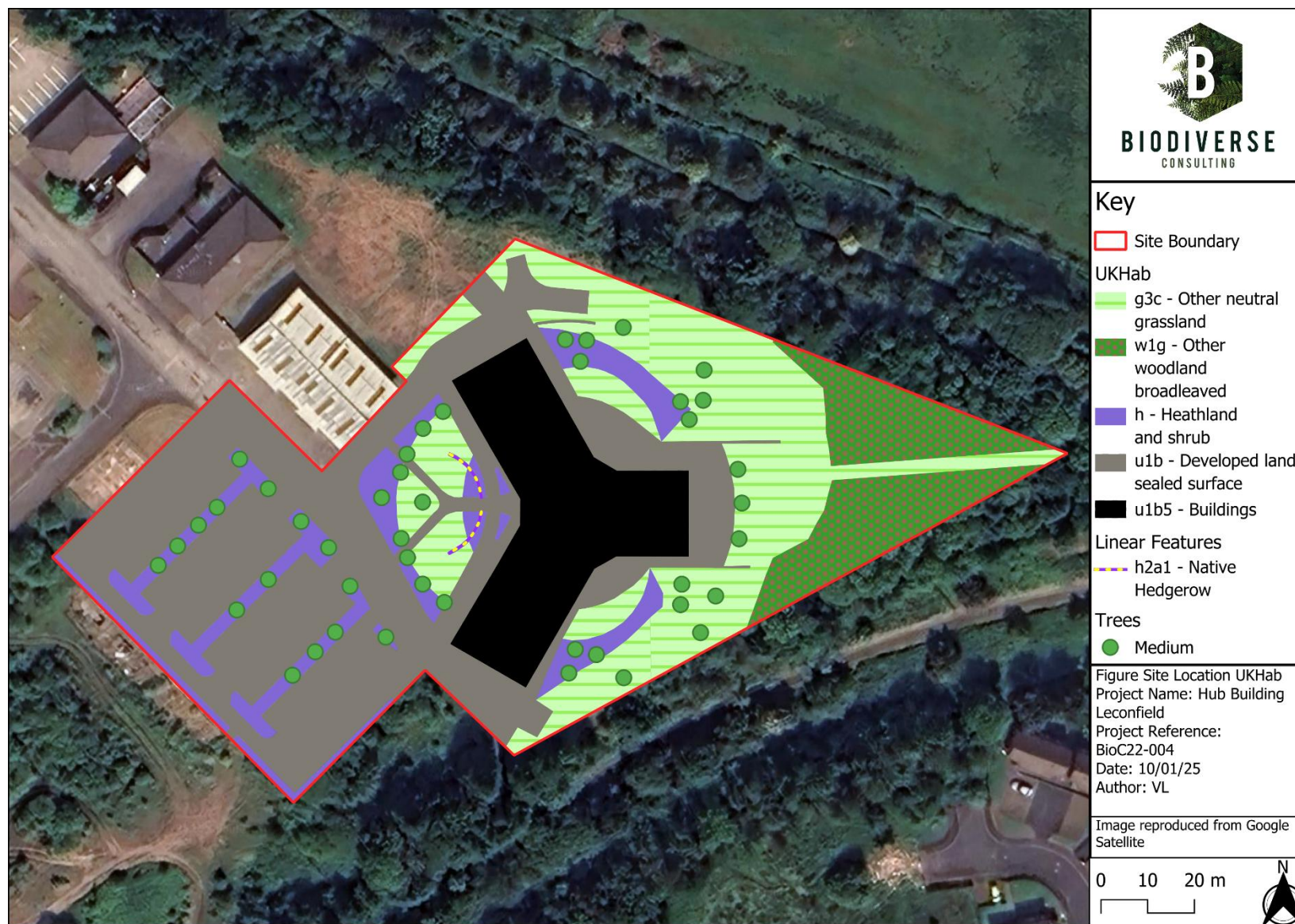


APPENDIX A – BASELINE UKHAB MAP

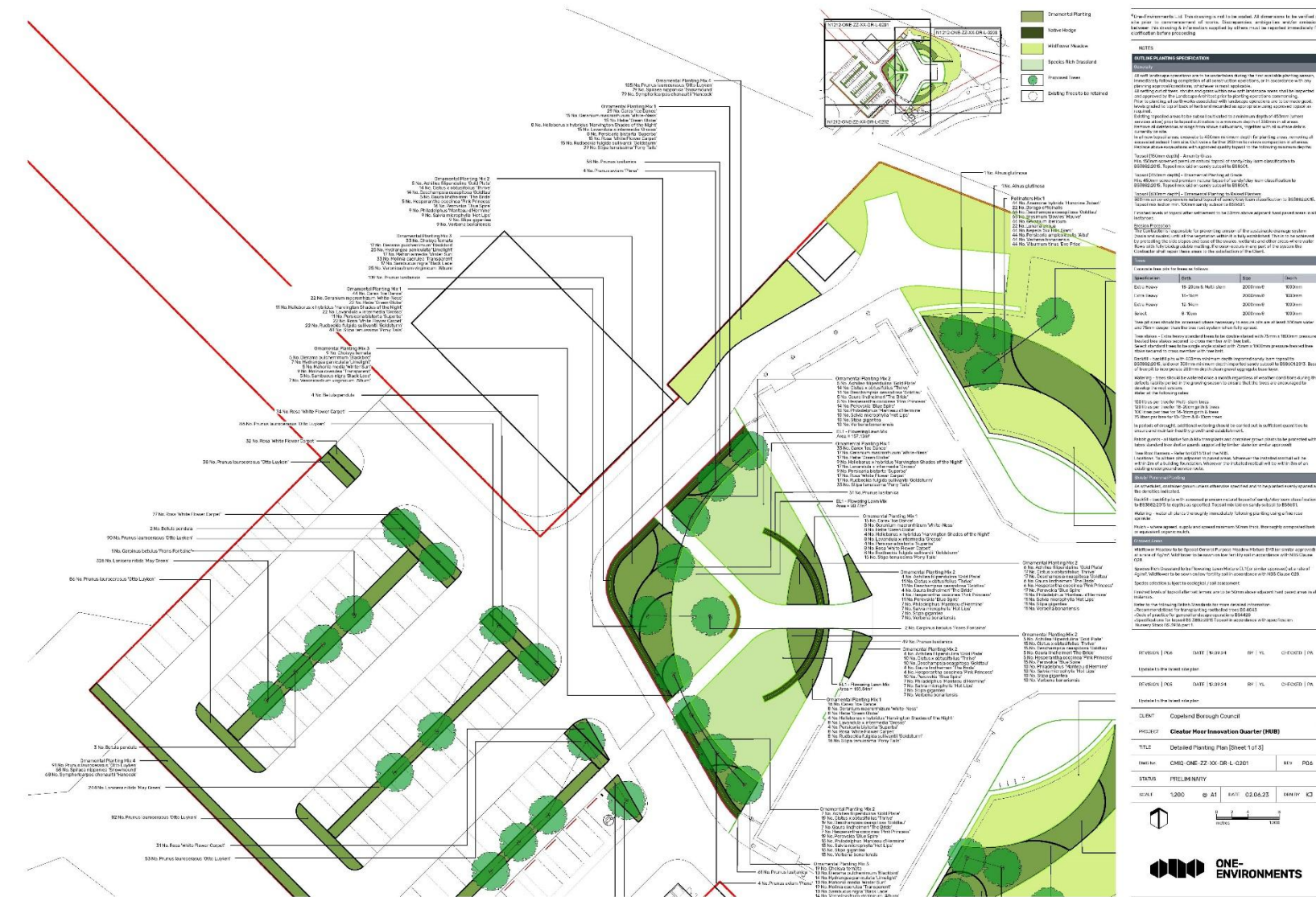


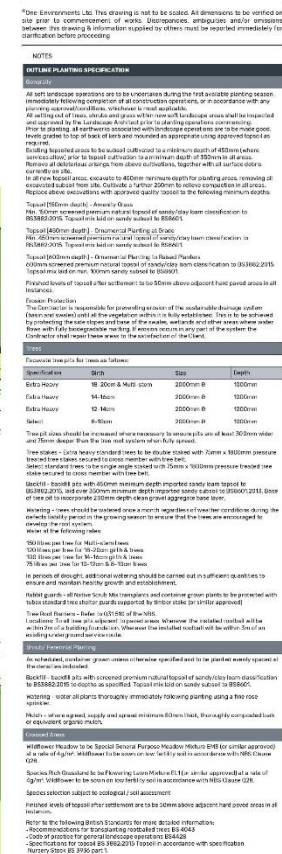


APPENDIX B – POST DEVELOPMENT UKHAB MAP

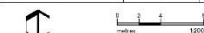


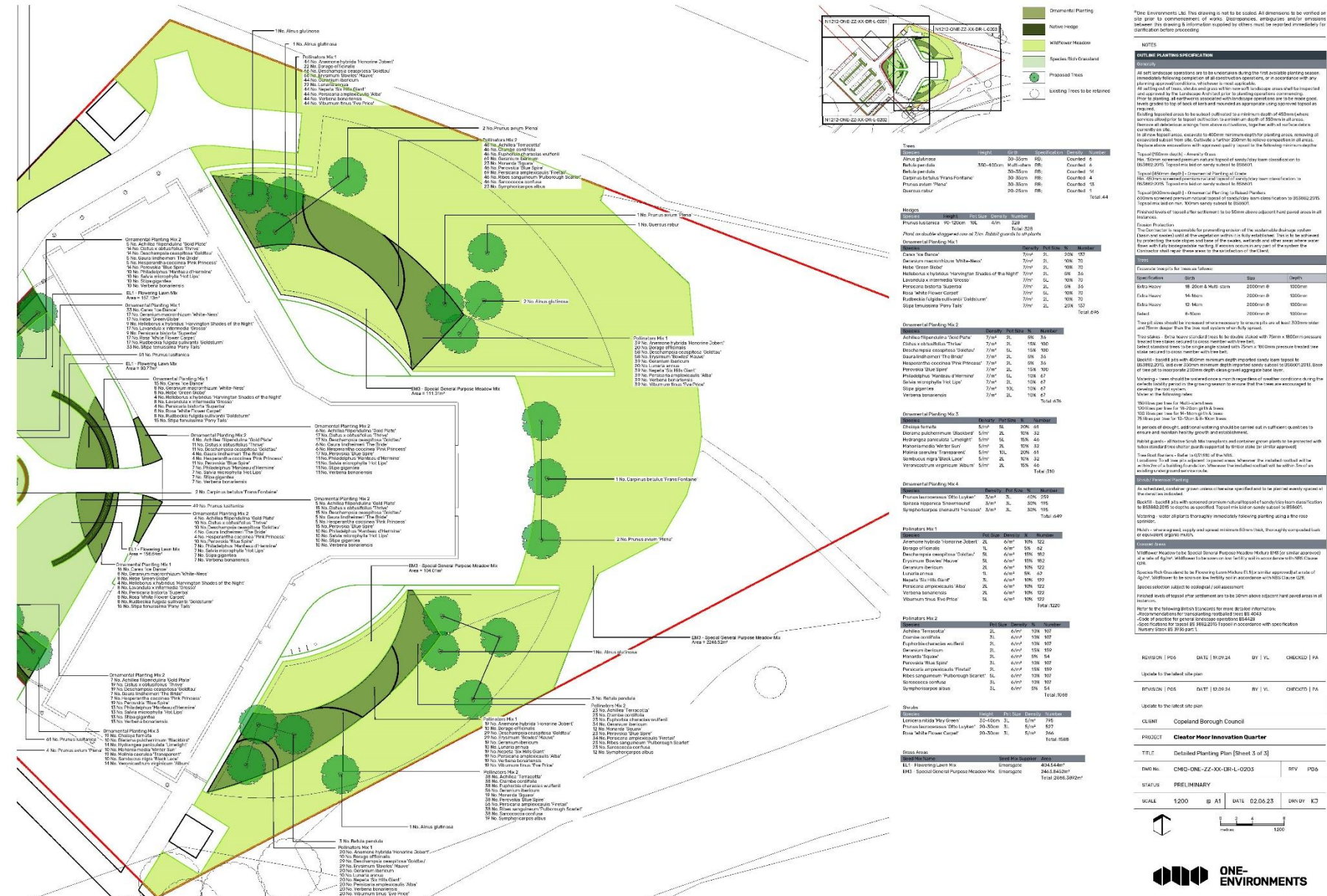
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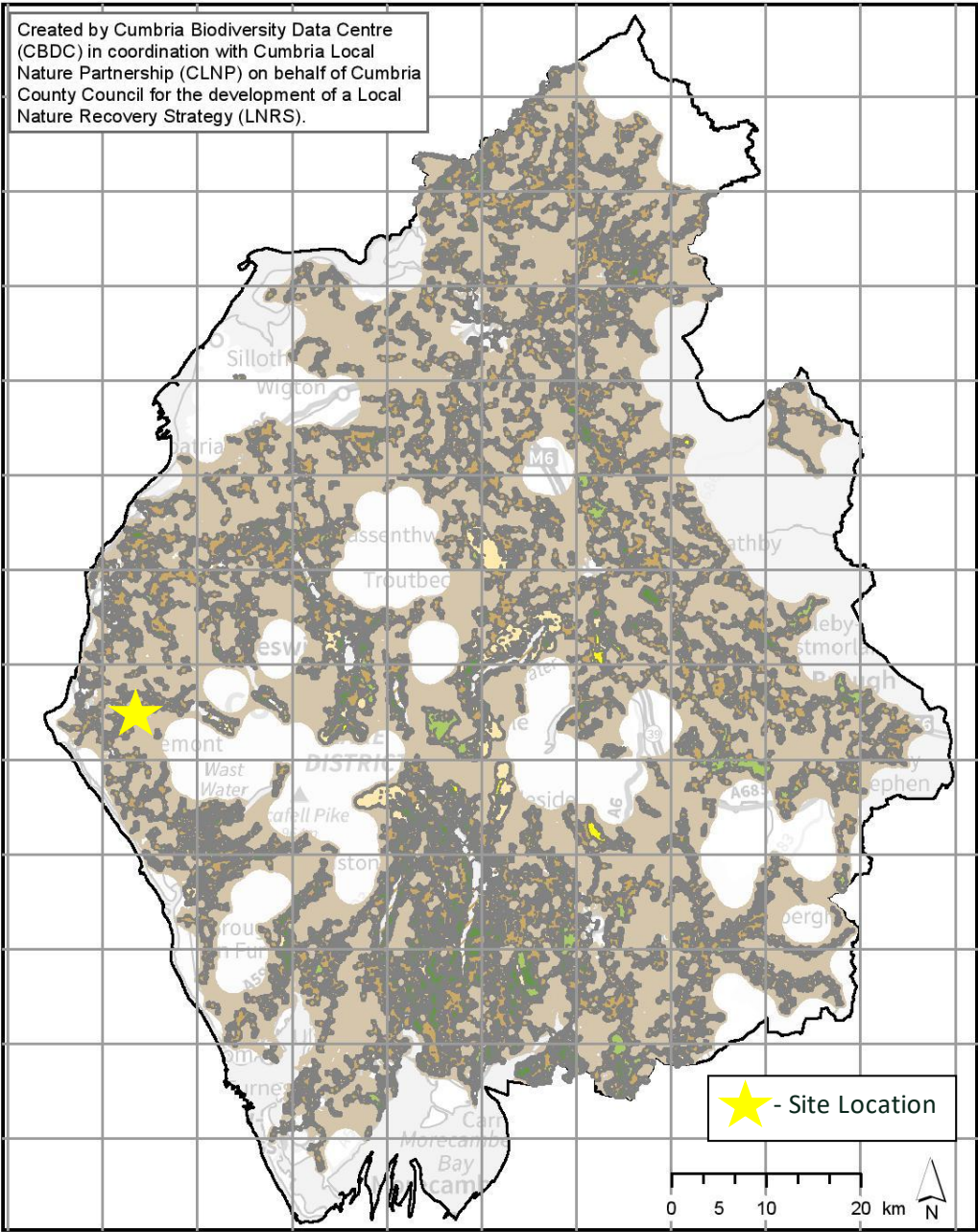
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Update to finished site plan			
REVISION / POS	DATE / 10.09.24	BY / VL	CHECKED / PA
Update to latest site plan			
CLIENT	Copeland Borough Council		
PROJECT	Clester Moor Innovation Quarter (HUB)		
TITLE	Detailed Planting Plan (Sheet 2 of 3)		
Dwg No.	CMIG-ONE-ZZ-S01-DR-L-0202		RIV / POS
STATUS	PRELIMINARY		
SCALE	1:200	@ A1	DATE / 02.06.23
			DRAWN BY / R3



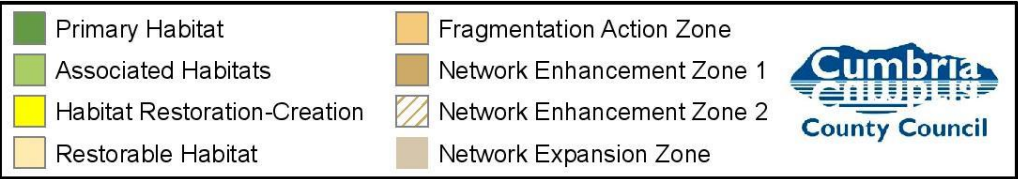




APPENDIX D – LOCAL NATURE RECOVERY STRATEGY MAP



Cumbria LNRN Habitat: Woodland (Update)



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APPENDIX E – POLICY AND LEGISLATION

Planning Policy – National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)⁹

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2024 sets out the Government’s requirement for the planning system in England and in doing so establishes the framework within which local planning authorities can develop their own planning policies. The NPPF explicitly addresses the conservation and enhancement of the natural environment, including biodiversity, through paragraphs 187–201.

⁹ National Policy Planning Framework 2024. Available from: [National Planning Policy Framework - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/national-planning-policy-framework)



APPENDIX F – SPECIES LIST

Common name	Latin name	Common name	Latin name
Other neutral grasslands			
Perennial ryegrass	<i>Lolium perenne</i>	Creeping cinquefoil	<i>Potentilla reptans</i>
Common hogweed	<i>Heracleum sphondylium</i>	Common nettle	<i>Urtica dioica</i>
Variegated clover	<i>Trifolium variegatum</i>	Rough hawkbit	<i>Leontodon hispidus</i>
Cocks foot	<i>Dactylis glomerata</i>	Coltsfoot	<i>Tussilago farfara</i>
Meadow vetch	<i>Lathyrus pratensis</i>	Hop trefoil	<i>Trifolium campestre</i>
Bush Vetch	<i>Vicia sepium</i>	Timothy	<i>Phleum pratense</i>
Daisy	<i>Bellis perennis</i>	Bramble	<i>Rubus sp.</i>
Fern grass	<i>Catapodium rigidum</i>	Curled dock	<i>Rumex crispus</i>
Pineapple weed	<i>Matricaria discoidea</i>	Crested dog's-tail	<i>Cynosurus cristatus</i>
Great plantain	<i>Plantago major</i>	Dandelion	<i>Taraxacum officinale</i>
Black medic	<i>Medicago lupulina</i>	Common ragwort	<i>Jacobaea vulgaris</i>
Creeping thistle	<i>Cirsium arvense</i>	Bird's-foot trefoil	<i>Lotus corniculatus</i>
Yarrow	<i>Achillea millefolium</i>	Sticky mouse	<i>Cerastium glomeratum</i>
Oxeye daisy	<i>Leucanthemum vulgare</i>	Red fescue	<i>Festuca rubra</i>
Knapweed	<i>Centaurea sp.</i>	Fairy foxglove	<i>Erinus alpinus</i>
Wild carrot	<i>Daucus carota</i>	False fox	<i>Carex otrubae</i>
Great willowherb	<i>Epilobium hirsutum</i>	Spear thistle	<i>Cirsium vulgare</i>
Common bent	<i>Agrostis capillaris</i>	Goats beard	<i>Aruncus dioicus</i>
Male fern	<i>Dryopteris filix-mas</i>	Kidney vetch	<i>Anthyllis vulneraria</i>
Self-heal	<i>Prunella vulgaris</i>	Yellow rattle	<i>Rhinanthus minor</i>
Creeping buttercup	<i>Ranunculus repens</i>	Rosebay willowherb	<i>Chamaenerion angustifolium</i>
Silver weed	<i>Potentilla anserina</i>	Common gorse	<i>Ulex europaeus</i>
Goat willow	<i>Salix caprea</i>	Red clover	<i>Trifolium pratense</i>
Common sedge	<i>Carex nigra</i>	Meadow sweet	<i>Filipendula ulmaria</i>
Common twayblade	<i>Neottia ovata</i>	Common sorrel	<i>Rumex acetosa</i>
Hoary willowherb	<i>Epilobium parviflorum</i>	Soft rush	<i>Juncus effusus</i>
Wild angelica	<i>Angelica sylvestris</i>	Ragged robin	<i>Silene flos-cuculi</i>
False oat	<i>Arrhenatherum elatius</i>	Compact rush	<i>Juncus conglomeratus</i>
Ribwort plantain	<i>Plantago lanceolata</i>	Annual meadow-grass	<i>Poa annua</i>
Yorkshire fog	<i>Holcus lanatus</i>	Sweet vernal	<i>Anthoxanthum odoratum</i>
Rough meadow-grass	<i>Poa trivialis</i>	Great plantain	<i>Plantago major</i>
Zigzag clover	<i>Trifolium medium</i>	Dog rose	<i>Rosa canina</i>
Meadow buttercup	<i>Ranunculus acris</i>	Large trefoil	<i>Trifolium aureum</i>
Common spotted orchid	<i>Dactylorhiza fuchsii</i>	Perforate St. John's-wort	<i>Hypericum perforatum</i>
Cleavers	<i>Galium aparine</i>	Cat's ear hawkbit	<i>Hypochaeris radicata</i>
Hawthorn	<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>		
Dense scrub			
Goat willow	<i>Salix caprea</i>	Sessile oak	<i>Quercus petraea</i>
Bramble	<i>Rubus sp.</i>	Alder	<i>Alnus glutinosa</i>
Hawthorn	<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>	Common dogwood	<i>Cornus sanguinea</i>
Elder	<i>Sambucus nigra</i>	Silver birch	<i>Betula pendula</i>
Broadleaved woodland			
Beech	<i>Fagus sylvatica</i>	Alder	<i>Alnus glutinosa</i>
Ash	<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>	Dog rose	<i>Rosa canina</i>
Goat willow	<i>Salix caprea</i>	Bramble	<i>Rubus sp.</i>
Hawthorn	<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>	Aspen	<i>Populus tremuloides</i>
Broadleaved woodland ground flora			
Meadow sweet	<i>Filipendula ulmaria</i>	Common nettle	<i>Urtica dioica</i>
Cocks foot	<i>Dactylis glomerata</i>	Common hogweed	<i>Heracleum sphondylium</i>
Bramble	<i>Rubus sp.</i>	Seedlings	
False oat	<i>Arrhenatherum elatius</i>		



APPENDIX G – HABITAT PHOTOS

Image 1 – Other Neutral Grassland and Other Woodland; Broadleaved



Image 2 – Other Neutral Grassland and Bare Ground



Image 3 – Other Neutral Grassland and Dense Scrub



Image 4 - Hardstanding





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