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Grobby Park Farm

Preliminary Ecological Survey - Proposed Dwelling

Commissioned for:
Grobby Park Farm
Leicester Road
Markfield
Leicestershire
LE67 9RH

January 2026

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'CS' followed by a stylized flourish.

**Chris Seabridge
Managing Director**

1 Introduction

The preliminary ecological survey report relates to a proposed new dwelling at Groby Park Farm, Leicester Road, Markfield, Leicester, LE67 9RH.

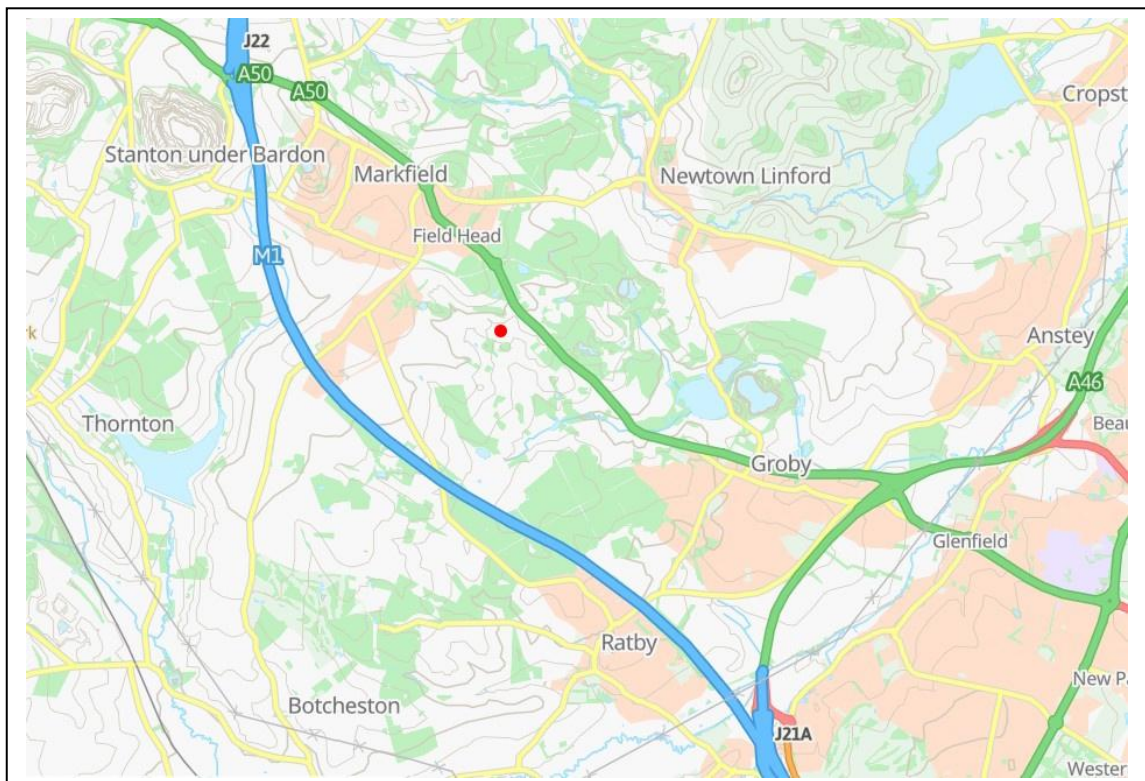
Chris Seabridge & Associates Ltd. was instructed to undertake an Ecological Survey of the proposed development area to determine its impact on habitats and species.

The methodology involved conducting a UK Habitat Classification Survey of the site and its surroundings to identify habitats and the presence or potential presence of protected species and species of conservation concern. The base-line Habitat Units for the site was calculated together with the Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) of the proposed Landscaping Plan.

1.1 Site Location

The site of the proposed new dwelling lies to the north of the farmyard which is located 1.7 km to the south-east of Markfield and 2.8km north-west of Groby at grid reference SK 5013 0889. The location of the development site is shown in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1: Map showing location of the development at Groby Park Farm (denoted by red marker)



2 Methodology

2.1 Desk Study

The following websites were also accessed to search for habitat and species records within the vicinity of the development site:

- Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside. www.magic.gov.uk

2.2 Field Survey

2.2.1 Habitats

A UK Habitat Classification Survey was carried out by Nigel Baskerville C.Env MCIEEM on 20th November 2025 in cold, dry and bright weather conditions. The survey followed the procedure described in the User Manual for UK Habitat Classification (Butcher et al, 2020). It also included recording evidence of protected species and species of conservation concern (including Local Biodiversity Action Plan species), as well as identification of features and habitats capable of supporting such species.

Results of the Habitat Survey are presented as a colour coded map. Associated photographic records are included in the assessment which is shown in Appendix IV – Photographs.

2.2.2 Protected species

Habitats or features with the potential to support protected or priority species were recorded. In addition, any of the characteristic field signs of protected species were recorded as shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Key habitats and field signs of protected and priority species

Species	Indicative habitat	Characteristic field signs
Badger <i>Meles meles</i>	Found in a variety of habitats notably woodland.	Setts, tracks, footprints, latrines, hairs caught on fence wire, scratch marks on trees. (Harris et al. 1989)
Great crested newts <i>Triturus cristatus</i>	Breeding habitat – ponds. Foraging habitat - rough grassland, scrub and woodland. Resting and hibernation habitat - log and rubble piles, animal burrows. The Habitat Suitability Score (HSI) was calculated for all ponds within the site boundary (Oldham et al. 2000). A HSI is a numerical index based on ten suitability indices giving a score of between 0 and 1.	Eggs on aquatic vegetation (spring).

Species	Indicative habitat	Characteristic field signs
	0 indicates unsuitable habitat, 1 represents optimal habitat for great crested newts.	
Bats	Roosts – buildings, trees, underground features (caves etc.). Foraging – woodland, ponds, hedgerows, wetland. Commuting routes – linear habitats (hedgerows, watercourses, tree lines).	Droppings, prey residues (such as fly or moth wings) and urine stains at roost sites.
Water vole <i>Arvicola terrestris</i>	Watercourses and water bodies.	Burrows, latrines, footprints, feeding signs in the form of 'grazing lawns'.
Reptiles	Rough grassland, log and rubble piles.	Sloughed skins.
Birds	A variety of habitats.	Nests, tree holes.
Invertebrates	All habitats. Richest sites tend to be semi-natural habitats (i.e. woodland, grassland).	Few specific signs. Solitary bee and wasp burrows.

2.3 Limitations

2.3.1 Desk Study

The biological records from the desk study are not a comprehensive list of species data and therefore it is possible that protected species not identified in the search may be present within the vicinity of the development site.

2.3.2 Field Survey

There were some minor constraints on the survey as it was undertaken outside the optimal survey window for flowering plants (April–September). While the timing was suboptimal, it is considered likely that most plant species of significance were evident. Access to the site was unrestricted and the full survey area was covered.

3 Results

3.1 Desk based study

3.1.1 Statutory sites

There are two one statutory designated sites located within 2 km of the proposed development site. Groby Pool & Woods Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) lies 1550m to the east and includes the largest natural expanse of water in Leicestershire. Ulverscroft Valley SSSI which comprises grassland, wetland and woodland habitats lies 1675m to the north of the site.

3.1.2 Presence of protected species and other species of note

Table 2 below shows the protected and priority species that maybe potentially impacted by the development. Selection of the species is based on the following;

- Species identified within the vicinity from the record search and desktop study.
- Suitable habitat on or near the site with the potential to support the species.
- Confirmed field evidence of the species.

Table 2: Protected and priority species within 2km of the development site

Species	Status	Distance from site	Most recent record	Recorded during survey
Amphibians				
Great Crested Newt <i>Triturus cristatus</i>	HR; UKBAP; S.41; WCA-Sch5; RedList_LC	413m	2023	
Bats				
Leislars bat <i>Nyctalus leisleri</i>	Bern-A2; CMS; EUROBATS; HR; WCA-Sch5; HabReg; UKBAP; S.41	1875m	2022	
Noctule Bat <i>Nyctalus noctula</i>	Bern-A2; CMS; EUROBATS; HR; WCA-Sch5; HabReg; UKBAP; S.41	780m	2020	
Common Pipistrelle <i>Pipistrellus pipistrellus sensu stricto</i>	Bern-A2,A3; CMS; EUROBATS; HR; WCA-Sch5; HabReg	910m	2022	
Soprano Pipistrelle <i>Pipistrellus pygmaeus</i>	Bern-A2; CMS; EUROBATS; HR; WCA-Sch5; HabReg; UKBAP; S.41	780m	2020	
Brown Long-eared Bat <i>Plecotus auritus</i>	Bern-A2; CMS; EUROBATS; HR; WCA-Sch5; HabReg; UKBAP; S.41	780m	2020	
Other Mammals				
Eurasian Badger <i>Meles meles</i>	Bern-A3; PBA	780m	2025	

Species	Status	Distance from site	Most recent record	Recorded during survey
West European Hedgehog <i>Erinaceus europaeus</i>	Bern-A3; UKBAP; S.41	350m	2024	
Reptiles				
Grass Snake <i>Natrix helvetica</i>	WCA-Sch5; UKBAP; S.41	780m	2023	
Common lizard <i>Zootoca vivipara</i>	WCA-Sch5; UKBAP; S.41	1870m	2024	
Birds				
Barn Owl <i>Tyto alba</i>	WCA-Sch1; UKBAP; S.41; Amber	780m	2001	
Skylark <i>Alauda arvensis</i>	WCA (general); Red; UKBAP; S.41	680m	2022	
Linnet <i>Linaria cannabina</i>	WCA (general); Red; UKBAP; S.41	780m	2012	
House Sparrow <i>Passer domesticus</i>	WCA (general); Red; UKBAP; S.41	660m	2025	
Dunnock <i>Prunella modularis</i>	WCA (general); Amber; UKBAP; S.41	780m	2025	Yes
Bullfinch <i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula</i>	WCA (general); Amber; UKBAP; S.41	660m	2023	
Starling <i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	BirdsDir; Red; UKBAP; S.41	660m	2025	
Song Thrush <i>Turdus philomelos</i>	WCA (general); Amber; UKBAP; S.41	660m	2023	
Lapwing <i>Vanellus vanellus</i>	WCA-Sch1; Red; UKBAP; S.41	1150m	2011	

Key

WCA: Wildlife & Countryside Act

PBA: Protection of Badgers Act

LBAP: Local BAP species

S.41: Section 41 species (NERC Act 2006) Species of wild flora and fauna

HR: Habitat Regulations

UKBAP: UK BAP species

Cites: Convention on International Trade in Endangered

Amber: Bird species with an unfavourable conservation status in Europe; whose population or range has declined moderately in recent years; and whose population has declined historically but made a substantial recent recovery; rare breeders; and those with internationally important or localised populations.

Red: Bird species globally threatened according to IUCN criteria; whose population or range has declined rapidly in recent years; and those that have declined historically and not shown a substantial recent recovery.

3.2 Field Survey

3.2.1 Habitats

The location and extent of habitats are shown on the Habitat map in Figure 1 in Appendix II.

Modified grassland (g4)

The proposed new dwelling lies within an improved grass field, grazed as part of the dairy cow enterprise. The sward consequently has a uniform structure and is dominated by Perennial Rye-grass, with herbs including White Clover (*Trifolium repens*), Common Chickweed (*Stellaria media*) and Dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale*).

Hedgerows

No hedgerows lie within the development boundary. However, hedgerows along the surrounding field boundary were surveyed, as shown below:

Hedgerow (h2) – H1

This hedge is located along the south-western boundary of the field in which the proposed dwelling lies. The hedge is composed primarily of Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*) with blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*), elder (*Sambucus nigra*), hazel (*Corylus avellana*) and holly (*Ilex aquifolium*). The hedge is trimmed to height of 1.5m with a width of 2m.

Hedgerow (h2) – H2

This hedge is located along the western boundary of the field. The hedge is composed primarily of Hawthorn with blackthorn and elder. There is a single mature hedgerow oak tree (*Quercus robur*). The hedge is untrimmed with a height of 3-4m.

Hedgerow (h2) – H3

This hedge is located along the north-western boundary of the field in which the proposed dwelling lies. The hedge is composed of blackthorn, dog rose (*Rosa canina*), hazel and holly with two mature oak trees. The hedge is trimmed to height of 2m with a width of 2m.

3.2.2 Presence of protected species and other species of note

Bats

There are historic records of five species of bat within 2km of the site. The proposed site does not contain any Potential Roost Features such as mature infield trees.

The site itself offers very limited foraging opportunities for bats with the open improved grass field in which the proposed development lies, likely to support little invertebrate life and sheltered conditions for hunting. In the wider landscape, there are several blocks of broad-leaved woodland which offer both potential foraging and roosting habitat for bats.

Badgers

No setts or signs of badgers were found within or adjacent to the development site. The improved grassland habitat offers some foraging habitat for badgers, but no signs such as snuffle holes were located during the survey.

Birds

Several farmland and hedgerow birds have been recorded in the vicinity and are likely to be breeding in the local area. Notable species include skylark, house sparrow, starling and song thrush which are all red listed species of UK Conservation concern.

Reptiles

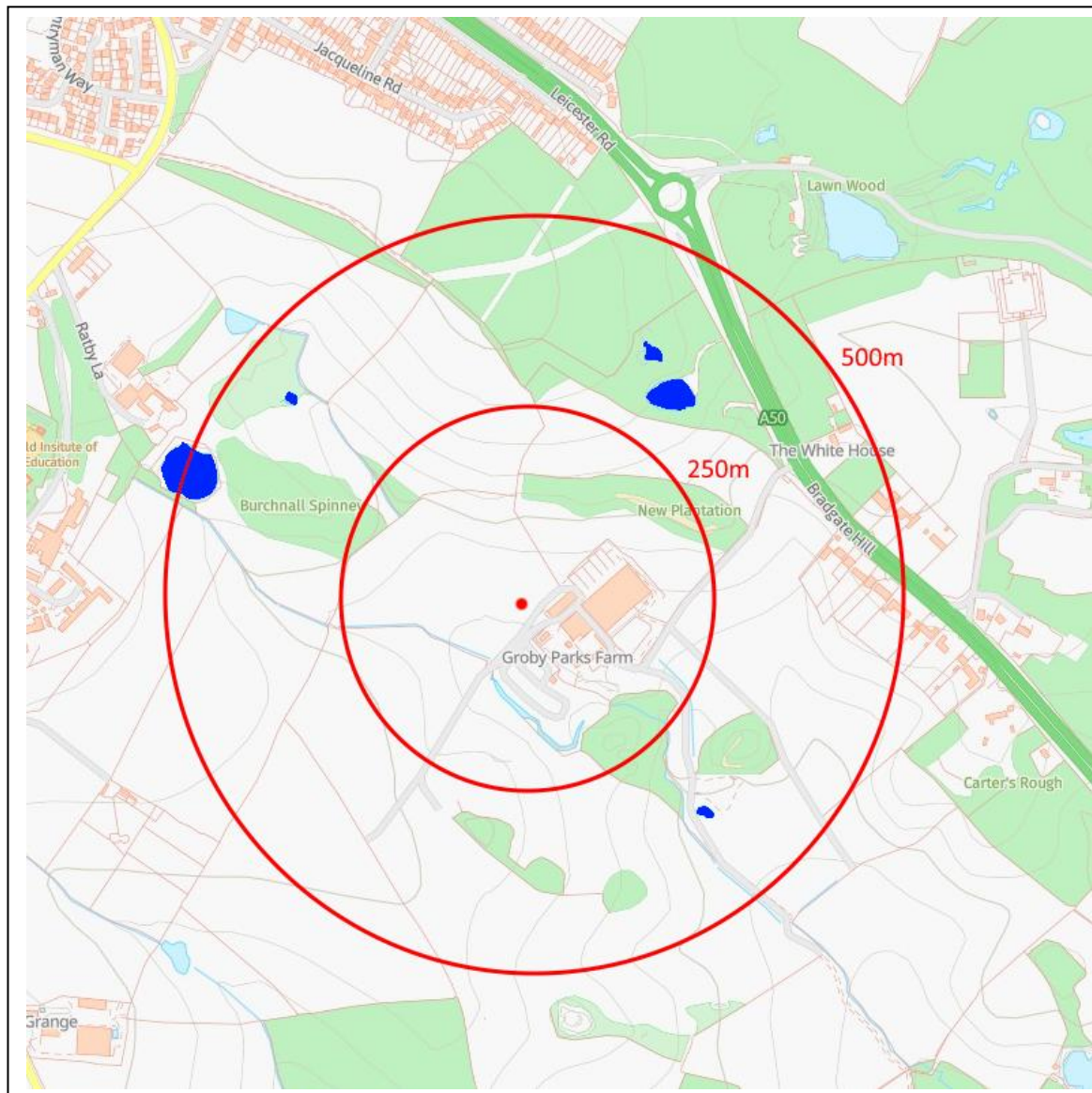
There are historic records of two species of reptiles within 2 km of the proposed development site, namely grass snake and common lizard. However, the short grazed and uniform sward of the site represents poor terrestrial habitat for potential reptiles.

Great Crested Newts

There are several Great Crested Newt (*Triturus cristatus*; hereafter GCN) records within 2km of the development site. The most recent record (2023) is located approximately 413 m to the northwest of the proposed development site.

There are six ponds located within 500 m of the site, of which four are within 250m (see Figure 2).

Figure 2: Map showing ponds within 500m of the proposed development site.



As shown in Figure 2, there are five ponds located within 500 m of the site, the closest of which lies approximately 360m to the south-east of the site. There are no ponds within 250m of the site.

It is likely that the ponds may hold breeding great crested newts, particularly those to the north-west of the site where there are recent records from 2023, approximately 413m from the site. The field in which the proposed dwelling is planned comprises quite poor foraging habitat for newts with the sward of uniform structure and lacking species diversity. The hedgerows to the north and south of the site (H1 and H2) offer potential migration routes for GCN to move across the landscape.

4 Impact Assessment

4.1 Statutory sites

It is unlikely for the development to have a significant adverse effect on the two SSSIs within 2km of the site owing to the small scale of the development and its distance from the site which lacks any linking features.

4.2 Habitats

The proposed new dwelling will result in the loss of approximately 0.1133 hectares of 'poor' condition modified grassland, which is considered to have a low conservation value due to it containing less than six vascular plant species per square metre and having a uniform structure.

4.3 Species

4.3.1 Badgers

No signs of badgers were found on site and therefore the development is unlikely to impact this species.

4.3.2 Great crested newts

Although there are recent records within 2 km of the development site, based on habitat suitability and site conditions, the likelihood of GCNs inhabiting the proposed development site is considered negligible. The site comprises grassland with low floristic and structural diversity, offering poor foraging opportunities for this species.

There are five ponds within 500 m, which may provide suitable breeding and foraging habitat in view of recent historical records of GCN, particularly to the north-west of the site. Hedgerows along field boundaries provide some connectivity between ponds may allow occasional movement of GCNs near the site. However, such usage is expected to be infrequent due to the low-quality habitat within the development area.

As a precaution, please refer to Appendix I Statement of reasonable avoidance measures - Great Crested Newts.

4.3.3 Bats

The proposed site does not contain any Potential Roost Features such as mature infield trees. The development is considered unlikely to have a negative effect on bat species and further survey work is not required.

4.3.4 Birds

It is not proposed to remove any trees as part of the proposed development which may potentially contain nesting birds. In addition, the development is unlikely to affect ground nesting birds such as skylark due to the structure of the grazed sward which lacks the tussocky grass features that this species prefers to nest in.

Any works that could potentially cause disturbance to nesting birds including mitigation measures should be ideally conducted outside the main bird nesting season (March – August inclusive). If works are carried out during the nesting season, then a suitably qualified ecologist should make a check for nesting birds immediately before works commence.

4.3.5 Reptiles

Although there are historic records of grass snake and common lizard in the vicinity, the site comprises managed grassland with low structural diversity and is considered suboptimal for reptiles. Reptile species typically favour habitats with dense, tussocky vegetation, unmanaged grassland, or areas providing a mosaic of cover and basking opportunities. Consequently, the likelihood of reptiles being present within the development site is considered negligible.

5 Mitigation Measures

5.1 On-site grassland enhancement

There will be an area of grassland enhancement, where the existing 'poor condition' modified grassland will be enhanced to 'moderate' condition modified grassland. This area is a total of 0.1923 hectares.

5.1.1 Establishment

Preparatory works and sowing of seed should be ideally sown in the spring (mid March to end of May).

The grass sward should be cut short and areas of bare ground created to allow seed to have good contact with the soil and so promote germination. The floristically enhanced seed mixture should be broadcast at a minimum rate of 20kg/ha and rolled in.

Emerging flowers and weeds should be cut at least twice in year 1 to prevent weeds smothering the slow-growing flowers so all sown species can establish successfully.

The Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) area will be actively managed to promote a more diverse and structurally varied sward. Management aims to achieve a more species-rich grassland supporting 6–8 vascular plant species per square metre, including at least two forb species. A list of recommended wildflower species for the BNG area is provided in Table 3 below.

Table 3: *Recommended wildflowers for grassland enhancement*

Species	Latin	Quantity
Crested dog's-tail	Cynosurus cristatus	20%
Sheep's fescue	Festuca ovina	15%
Chewings fescue	Festuca rubra	10%
Smooth-stalked meadow grass	Poa pratensis	10%
Common bent	Agrostis capillaris	15%
Red clover	Trifolium pratense	7%
Birds-foot trefoil	Lotus corniculatus	5%
White clover	Trifolium repens	5%
Ribwort plantain	Plantago lanceolata	5%
Yarrow	Achillea millefolium	4%
Selfheal	Prunella vulgaris	4%

Sow at 20kg/ha (8 kg/acre)

5.1.2 On-going management

- The sward should be cut/grazed to 10cm from late August following flowering and seed set of the herbs. All cuttings should be removed to prevent the build-up of nutrients.
- No fertilisers or manures should be applied to the sward. In addition, no pesticides or herbicides should be applied except to spot treat or weed wipe to control nettles, injurious weeds or non-invasive plant species.
- To ensure the 'moderate' condition target is achieved and maintained, it is necessary that there are 6-8 vascular species per m² present, including at least 2 forbs.

5.2 Tree establishment

A total of five trees will be planted within the same area of modified grassland that is being enhanced to a 'moderate' condition.

5.2.1 Establishment

Planting of trees shall only be undertaken during the dormant season (November to March).

No preparation or planting works shall be undertaken when soil and weather conditions are unsuitable. Work should not be carried out when the soil is so wet, it would result in loss of structure and compaction or during periods of heavy frost, abnormally hot weather or strong winds.

The trees should be protected from rabbit browsing with the use 0.6m high tree shelters. If livestock are kept in the field, then taller more substantial tree protection will be required such as post and rail fencing.

A list of recommended tree species is shown in Table 4 below:

Table 4: *Recommended tree species*

Species	Number	Size
Silver birch - <i>Betula pendula</i>	1	40-60cm
Wild cherry – <i>Prunus avium</i>	2	40-60cm
Field maple - <i>Acer campestre</i>	2	40-60cm

5.2.2 On-going management

Weed control is to be carried out for the first three years after establishment through use of approved chemicals in accordance with manufacturer's recommendations, or preferably from an environmental perspective, mulch mats or a suitable organic mulching material.

It may also be necessary to water the trees, carry out formative pruning and replace any failed or lost trees.

6 Biodiversity net gain

The Environment Act 2021 and (through amendments to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990) requires all planning permissions in England (subject to exemptions) to be granted subject to a new general pre-commencement condition that requires approval of a biodiversity gain plan.

The planning authority can only approve the biodiversity gain plan if the biodiversity value attributable to a development exceeds the pre-development biodiversity value of the onsite habitat by 10% which, for the purposes of the legislation, is known as the 'biodiversity gain objective'.

Biodiversity net gain is mandatory from 12th February 2024.

6.1 Statutory Biodiversity Metric

6.1.1 Biodiversity Metric Methodology

The biodiversity accounting system is underpinned by a Metric that calculates the ecological value of both development and habitat restoration/creation. The Mandatory Biodiversity Metric Calculation tool (Version 1.0.4, updated July 2025) was used to assess Biodiversity Net Gain.

The metric is based on an assessment of habitat type and condition. Habitat types are classified into three bands of 'distinctiveness' which are: priority habitats as defined in The NERC Act (high), semi-natural habitats (medium) and managed habitats such as arable farmland (low).

Compensation arrangements must be like-for-like or better i.e. the loss of semi-natural habitats can only be compensated for through the creation of priority or other semi-natural habitats, not through creation of lesser quality habitat. 'Trading up' options allow for the loss of poor-quality habitat, such as farmland, to be compensated for with the creation of high-quality habitat.

The ecological value of the habitat lost to development is a function of its distinctiveness, its condition and the area lost – scores are assigned to all three variables and multiplied together to arrive at the number of units lost. To compensate for a loss, the same or more units ('conservation credits') must be delivered through habitat creation or restoration at another site that is going to be managed for wildlife (the 'receptor site or compensation site').

The number of credits delivered by the compensation receptor sites are also a function of the type, condition and area of the habitat being created or restored, but additionally, there are a further range of 'multipliers' applied to the creation of habitat because there are a number of risks to take account of – spatial, temporal and delivery.

Our normal approach is to work with clients to implement biodiversity gain directly, either within the site boundary or on other land under the same ownership. This provides greater control over delivery, management, and long-term stewardship of habitats.

However, in certain circumstances it may be more advantageous to secure biodiversity units from accredited third-party providers. Organisations such as local Wildlife Trusts, landowners or habitat banks deliver and manage habitat creation or restoration schemes specifically designed to generate measurable biodiversity gains. These providers put in place long-term management and monitoring commitments, ensuring that the biodiversity gain objective is achieved and maintained in line with statutory requirements. Purchasing such off-site units offers a recognised and practical mechanism to meet mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain obligations and, in some cases, may represent a more cost-effective solution over the long term.

6.1.2 Mapping and Assessment

The UK Habitat Classification survey was carried out on 20th November 2025 in cold, dry and bright weather conditions and provided the baseline data for the BNG Metric. Habitats were mapped and areas measured using ARC GIS software. The condition of the habitats was assessed using the criteria outlined within the Statutory Biodiversity Metric condition assessment sheets (Version July 2025).

6.1.3 Assessing strategic significance

A desk study of Local Authority documentation including the local plan were consulted together with on-line information held on MAGIC (Multi Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside) to determine the strategic significance of the site.

6.1.4 Site habitat baseline

The habitat baseline for the site (0.5246 ha) is shown in Table 5 below. There is a total of 0.61 Habitat Units.

Table 5: *The habitat baseline at the development site*

UK HAB habitat	Area (ha)	Condition	Total Habitat Units
Grassland – Modified grassland (g4)	0.3068	Poor	0.61
Urban - Artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface	0.2142	N/A	N/A
Urban - Developed land; sealed surface	0.0036	N/A	N/A

6.1.5 Proposed On-Site Enhancement & Creation

It is proposed to enhance and establish 0.1923 ha of 'moderate' condition modified grassland on-site. At present, this grassland is assessed as being in 'poor' condition. A total of five trees will be planted within the same area of modified grassland that is being enhanced to a 'moderate' condition. A post-intervention map of the site layout is provided in Figure 2, Appendix III.

Table 6: Net Biodiversity gain for habitat enhancement & creation

Habitat	Area (ha)	Habitat units delivered
Enhancement: Modified grassland (moderate condition)	0.1923	0.65
Creation: Developed land; sealed surface	0.0246	N/A
Creation: Developed land; sealed surface	0.0716	N/A
Creation: Artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface	0.0191	N/A
Creation: Artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface	0.0109	N/A
Creation: Artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface	0.0007	N/A
Creation: 5 Individual trees (moderate condition)	0.0204	0.06
Total		0.71

The results of net biodiversity gain for the development using the Statutory Biodiversity Metric Calculation tool are shown in the following table.

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Headline Results

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On-site baseline	Area habitat units	0.61	
	Hedgerow units	0.00	
	Watercourse units	0.00	
On-site post-intervention (Including habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	Area habitat units	0.72	
	Hedgerow units	0.00	
	Watercourse units	0.00	
On-site net change (units & percentage)	Area habitat units	0.11	17.13%
	Hedgerow units	0.00	0.00%
	Watercourse units	0.00	0.00%
Off-site baseline	Area habitat units	0.00	
	Hedgerow units	0.00	
	Watercourse units	0.00	
Off-site post-intervention (Including habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	Area habitat units	0.00	
	Hedgerow units	0.00	
	Watercourse units	0.00	
Off-site net change (units & percentage)	Area 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)	Area habitat units	0.11	
	Hedgerow units	0.00	
	Watercourse units	0.00	
Spatial risk multiplier (SRM) deductions	Area 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)	Area habitat units	0.11	
	Hedgerow units	0.00	
	Watercourse units	0.00	
Total net % change (Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	Area habitat units	17.13%	
	Hedgerow units	0.00%	
	Watercourse units	0.00%	
Trading rules satisfied?	Yes ✓		

Unit Type	Target	Baseline Units	Units Required	Unit Deficit
Area habitat units	10.00%	0.61	0.67	0.00
Hedgerow units	10.00%	0.00	0.00	0.00
Watercourse units	10.00%	0.00	0.00	0.00

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

It can be concluded that there will be a net biodiversity gain for habitats of 17.13% following the development.

7 References

The UK Habitat Classification User Manual Version 2.01 at <https://ukhab.org/ukhab-documentation/>

The Statutory Biodiversity Metric Tool

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/statutory-biodiversity-metric-tools-and-guides>

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Appendix I: Statement of reasonable avoidance measures - Great Crested Newts

Given that the presence of great crested newts (GCN) within the development area cannot be absolutely excluded, in order to minimise the risk of an offence occurring, a 'Statement of Reasonable Avoidance Measures' should be followed during the construction works.

As long as the following measures are fully implemented, no Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations derogation Licence should be necessary. This will ensure that all reasonable efforts have been taken and there will be no reasonable foreseeable likelihood of impacts upon GCN.

The statement of reasonable avoidance measures ensures that:

- Reasonable steps are taken to ensure that the risk of GCN being killed or injured is minimal.
- No breeding/foraging/hibernation habitat will be directly affected as works will not occur within the ponds, or the immediate vicinity of the ponds.
- GCN are not significantly disturbed by the works
- There will be no negative effects on the local conservation status of GCN.

If GCN are found during the works and the works are considered to present more of a risk to GCN than is currently believed, works must stop immediately and a licence application to Natural England submitted.

1. Timing of Works

All works will be undertaken during daylight hours only. GCN are predominantly nocturnal and are more likely to move across terrestrial habitats at night. Restricting works to daylight hours reduces the risk of encountering active individuals.

2. Seasonal Considerations

Where practicable, vegetation clearance and initial groundworks will be undertaken during the active season (typically March–October), when GCN are less likely to be in hibernation. This reduces the risk of disturbing hibernating individuals during soil stripping and excavation.

3. Toolbox Talk

Prior to commencement of works, a toolbox talk will be delivered to all site personnel by a suitably qualified ecologist (or under their guidance). This will include:

- Legal protection afforded to GCN;
- Identification of GCN;
- Procedure to follow should a GCN be encountered.

4. Excavation and Groundworks

As excavation will be required for foundations and services, the following precautions will be implemented:

- Topsoil stripping will be undertaken in a phased and supervised manner where appropriate.
- Open excavations will be covered overnight with boards or suitable sheeting, or fitted with a means of escape (e.g. a gently sloping plank) to prevent wildlife becoming trapped.
- Trenches will be backfilled as soon as practicable.

5. Storage of Materials

Building materials, soil, and spoil will not be stored in long-term piles directly on bare ground where possible. Materials will be kept tidy and stored on pallets or hardstanding where practicable. Spoil will be removed from site promptly or used immediately in construction to prevent the creation of refuges.

6. Site Housekeeping

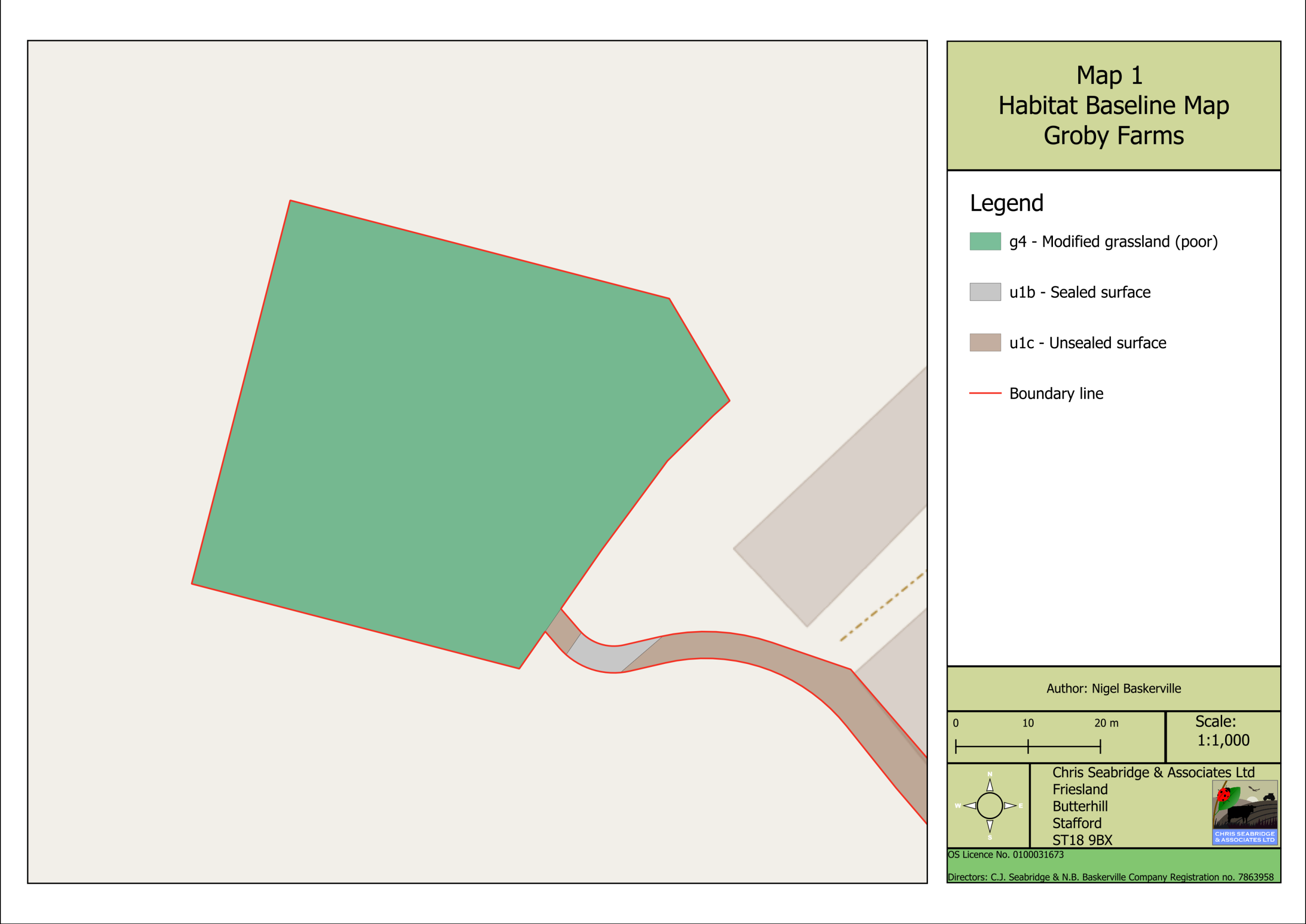
The working area will be kept tidy throughout the construction period to avoid the creation of temporary refuges. Any debris or stored materials will be checked before movement.

7. Procedure if GCN are Found

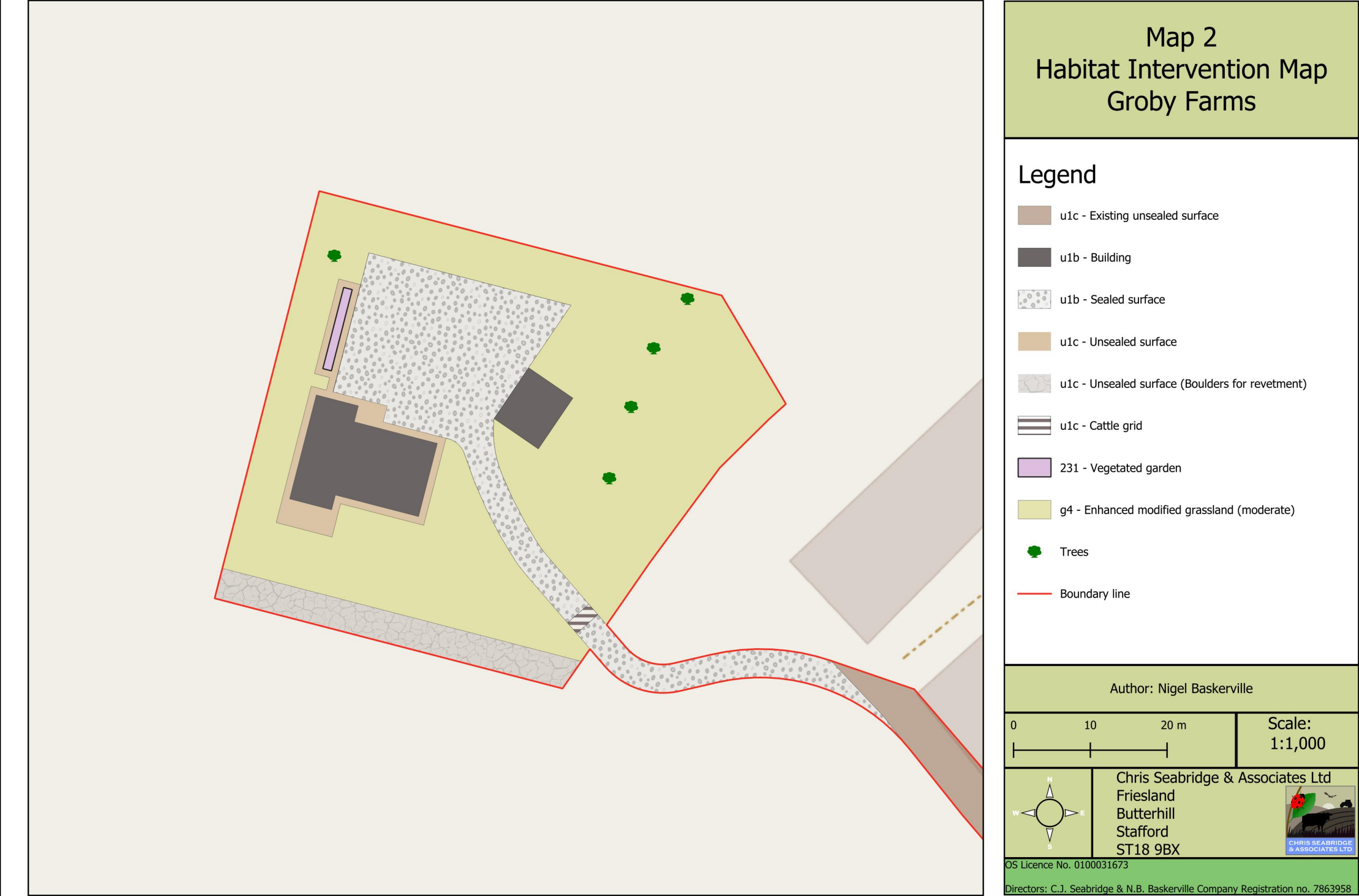
If a great crested newt is discovered during works:

- All works in the immediate area will cease immediately.
- The site manager will contact a licensed ecologist for advice.
- Works will not recommence in that area until appropriate mitigation measures have been agreed.
- If required, a licence application will be submitted to Natural England.

Appendix II: On-site Habitat Baseline – Map 1



Appendix III: On-site Habitat Intervention – Map 2



Appendix IV: Photographs



Plate 1: Looking north with Groby Park Farm on the right and the proposed new dwelling site on the left.



Plate 2: Looking northwest across the proposed site of the dwelling located within an improved grassland field grazed by dairy cattle.



Plate 3: Close up of sward which is dominated by perennial rye-grass and lacking herb cover.



Plate 4: Looking north from adjacent field with the proposed site of the dwelling in the centre of the picture (denoted by stakes).



Plate 5: The adjacent farm building of Groby Park Farm which comprise modern steel framed buildings set in a concrete yard.



Plate 6: Looking from the northwest across the grazed improved grass field with the proposed site of the dwelling in the background.

Appendix V: Legislation

Legal information given below is a summary and intended only for general guidance. The original legal documents should be consulted for definitive information.

Habitat Regulations

The conservation (Natural Habitats & c.) Regulations 1994, as amended by the Conservation (Natural Habitats & c.) (Amendment) Regulation 2007 and 2009 respectively, transpose Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and Wild Flora and Fauna (Habitats Directive) into English law, making it an offence to deliberately capture, kill or disturb any wild animal protected under the Habitat Regulations. It is also an offence to damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place of such an animal (even if the animal is not present at the time).

Wildlife & Countryside Act

The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, as amended by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act (CRoW) 2000 and the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (NERC) 2006, consolidates and amends existing national legislation to implement the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (Bern Convention) and Council Directive 79/409/EEC on the Conservation of Wild Birds (Birds Directive), making it an offence to:

- Intentionally kill, injure or take any wild bird or their eggs or nests (with certain exceptions) and disturb any bird species listed under Schedule 1 to the Act, or its dependent young while it is nesting.
- Intentionally kill, injure or take any wild animal listed under Schedule 5 to the Act; intentionally damage, destroy or obstruct any place used for shelter or protection by any wild animal listed under Schedule 5 to the Act; disturb certain Schedule 5 animal species while they occupy a place used for shelter or protection.
- Pick or uproot any wild plant listed under Schedule 8 of the Act.

Protection of Badgers Act

The Protection of Badgers Act 1992 makes it illegal to kill, injure or take a badger or to intentionally or recklessly interfere with a badger sett. Sett interference includes disturbing badgers whilst they are occupying a sett or obstructing access to it.