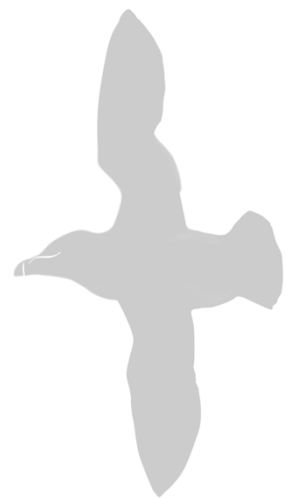




**Land at Lindridge Lane,
Desford**

**Habitat Management and
Monitoring Plan
(HMMP)**

April 2026



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The advice within this document has been produced in accordance with guidance from the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management.

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Appendix 1: Condition Assessment Criteria

1.0 Introduction

Background / Site Context

- 1.1 This report has been prepared by Alca Ecology and provides information pertaining to the creation and ongoing management of proposed habitats at a site located at Land at Lindridge Lane, Desford. The site received planning permission (planning ref 25/01125/FUL) on April 8th 2026 for the erection of four detached residential dwellings with associated garaging.
- 1.2 A Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) assessment of the site was undertaken in January 2026 by Alca Ecology. This report should be read in conjunction with the site's Ecological Appraisal / BNG report and the site's Statutory Biodiversity Metric.
- 1.3 As some of the proposed habitat creation will contribute towards the site's BNG strategy, one of the conditions of this granted planning permission includes the production of a Habitat and Management and Monitoring Plan (HMMP).
- 1.4 The site (approximately 0.46 hectares in extent) lies on the northeastern extent of the village of Desford, Leicestershire. The site consists of a single building, large grass lawn with associated garden planting and small area of ruderal / ephemeral habitat. The site is bound by residential development to the south and north, and a mix of grassland and farmland to the east and west.
- 1.5 This report has been prepared in order to discharge Condition 6 of planning permission reference 25/01125/FUL.
- 1.6 Condition 6 states:

The development shall not commence until a 30 year Habitat Monitoring and Management Plan (HMMP) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The HMMP shall be submitted concurrently and in accordance with the Biodiversity Gain Plan. The approved HMMP shall be strictly adhered to and implemented in full for its duration and shall contain the following:

- *Description and evaluation of the features to be managed;*
- *Ecological trends and constraints on site that may influence management;*
- *Aims, objectives and targets for management - links with local and national species and habitat action plans;*
- *Description of the management operations necessary to achieving aims and objectives;*
- *Preparation of a works schedule, including annual works schedule;*
- *Details and a timetable of the monitoring needed to measure the effectiveness of management;*

- *Details of the persons responsible for the implementation and monitoring;*
- *Mechanisms of adaptive management to account for necessary changes in work schedule to achieve the required targets; and*

Details of methodology and frequency of monitoring reports to be submitted to the Local Planning Authority to assess biodiversity gain.

- 1.7 Government guidance regarding Habitat Management and Monitoring Plans (HMMP) have informed this report, as well as the HMMP Template, HMMPT Planning Document, HMMPT Checklist¹. Publications from Forest Research² have also informed this document.
- 1.8 On-site habitat creation will contribute to some of the site's BNG score, however it was not possible to provide 10% uplift on-site, therefore 0.55 habitat units will also be purchased from a third party biobank.

Aims

- 1.9 The overall aims of this document are to:
- Detail methods for the creation and management of proposed habitats;
 - Provide a timetable for their creation, management and monitoring;
 - Detail the parties responsible for the ongoing management / monitoring of created habitat.

Baseline / Created Habitats

- 1.10 Baseline habitats include modified grassland, bramble scrub, ruderal/ephemeral vegetation, tall forbs, individual trees, artificial unvegetated; unsealed surface and developed land; sealed surface. No linear habitats are present.
- 1.11 Created habitats detailed herein are based on the most up-to-date proposals for the site (Drawing ref: 25.330.01 A, R3Design Developments Ltd), as well as the site's BNG Strategy (Alca Ecology, 2026).
- 1.12 Habitat creation which will contribute to the site's BNG strategy includes mixed scrub (targeted to poor condition), small individual trees (targeted to moderate condition) and modified grassland (targeted to poor condition). Vegetated gardens are also provided however these are not covered within this HMMP.
- 1.13 These habitats will provide potential nesting / foraging areas for birds, bats, invertebrates and other mammals, as well as strengthening the connectivity of habitats within the surrounding area.

¹ Natural England, 2024. <https://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/5813530037846016>

² Forest Research, 2025. The management and creation of woodland for biodiversity and wider environmental benefits (Research Note).

2.0 Roles and Responsibilities

- 2.1 It will be the responsibility of the landowner to either assume responsibility for adhering to the provisions detailed within this document, or to appoint a management company. The landowner and/or management company will be responsible for ensuring proposed habitats are created, managed and monitored sufficiently, as well as ensuring habitats meet their targeted condition within 30 years. The landowner and/or management company may also assign an ecologist or arboriculturist to undertake monitoring visits. It will also be the responsibility of the landowner (or appointed body such as a management company) to feedback any management failings to the LPA.
- 2.2 It is recommended that the tree planting is carried out by a specialist contractor to ensure health of specimens and increase the likelihood of their survival and establishment.

3.0 Habitat Management and Monitoring

Habitat Creation and Management

- 3.1 Details are given below for implementation of proposed habitat creation and their ongoing management. Section 4 provides a schedule for each stage of management. If required, this management plan may be adapted to suit the site / client. Ecologist advice should be sought before amending the management plan.
- 3.2 Specific criteria for achieving the target habitat conditions are detailed in Appendix 1.

Created – Individual Trees

- 3.3 Trees will be planted along the western edge of the site. Planting will include a mix of native fruit / nut bearing species, including but not limited to:
- Silver birch *Betula pendula*;
 - Pedunculate oak *Quercus robur*;
 - Holly *Ilex aquifolium*;
 - Small-leaved lime *Tilia cordata*;
 - Wild cherry *Prunus avium*;
 - Rowan *Sorbus aucuparia*;
 - Hornbeam *Carpinus betulus*; and
 - Beech *Fagus sylvatica*.
- 3.4 The above species should be planted in approximately equal proportions. Trees will be planted during the autumn / winter (October to March) and should avoid periods of heavy rainfall or

prolonged icy conditions. The following planting / early management principles should be followed:

- Trees should be planted within a suitably sized hole to accommodate the root ball and backfilled with topsoil and a suitable organic material;
- Support stakes and ties should be used to prevent damage during heavy winds. Rabbit / deer guards should also be used to prevent grazing damage. These should be removed after 2-3 years;
- 2-3 years after planting, when trees are more established and rabbit guards removed, care must be taken when mowing to avoid trunk damage. It is recommended that the area within the proposed woodland be left un-mown, however dense growth (e.g. bramble) should be removed;
- Trees to be watered as necessary, particularly during the first 5 years when trees are establishing. During watering, all topsoil should be saturated. More frequent watering may be required during periods of reduced rainfall / drought; and
- Trees should be inspected annually for any signs of disease / damage, particularly after storms or heavy winds. Any dead or dying trees are to be replaced as soon as possible during the next available planting window.

3.5 Proposed trees are targeted to moderate condition, meaning at least three of the six condition criteria must be met. Four criteria are targeted, which are detailed below. The full list of condition assessment criteria is provided in Appendix 1.

- *Criterion A: The tree is a native species (or at least 70% within the block are native species).*
 - The trees planted will be native species and so this criterion will be met automatically.
- *Criterion 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).*
 - This criterion will be met automatically as all trees will be classed as individual trees.
- *Criterion 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.*
 - Herbicide should not be used to control vegetation near trees. Trees should not be pruned unless posing a health and safety risk.
- *Criterion F: More than 20% of the tree canopy area is oversailing vegetation beneath.*

- Trees will all be planted within modified grassland and so will pass this criterion providing all modified grassland succeeds.

- 3.6 No nutrient enrichment in the form of fertilisers should be used on proposed trees.
- 3.7 Following the abovementioned management principles will ensure the created individual trees meet the definition of the targeted condition (moderate) within 30 years.

Created - Modified Grassland

- 3.8 Proposed areas of modified grassland will be targeted to poor condition and will therefore mostly provide amenity value. A seed mix such as Naturescape NL4 'Hardwearing Lawn Mixture' (or similar approved by LPA) should be used. The following principles are recommended:
- Any existing vegetation to be cleared and arisings removed. A low fertility topsoil will then be laid and raked to produce a fine, firm tilth;
 - Sowing should take place in autumn or spring;
 - Soil should be lightly rolled to flatten surface;
 - During establishment, sown areas should be mown to a minimum height of 150mm, until around 2 months from germination. Thereafter, grass can be mown whenever it reaches a height of approximately 60mm. Grass should be cut to a height of around 100-200mm or higher if desired;
 - Avoid mowing a 500mm radius around planted trees; and
 - Any failed areas should be reseeded as necessary.
- 3.9 As the proposed modified grassland is targeted to poor condition, there is no minimum number of condition assessment criteria passes required. The above management principles will promote a short sward grassland suitable for amenity areas. If this sort of grassland is not desired, the cutting schedule can be relaxed to allow a longer sward.

Created – Mixed Scrub

- 3.10 Native species whips must be used, with as much species diversity as possible. An example of the species composition of a hedgerow would be 50% hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna*, 25% hazel *Corylus avellana*, 10% blackthorn *Prunus spinosa*, 5% holly *Ilex aquifolium*, 5% field maple *Acer campestre* and 5% guelder rose *Viburnum opulus*. Species composition can vary however the species used should contain mostly hawthorn, hazel and blackthorn.
- 3.11 Areas of mixed scrub should be planted during the period October to March, avoiding periods of heavy rainfall or prolonged icy conditions. The following management principles are recommended:

- Whips should be planted in a random, irregular formation, similar to natural habitats. Avoid 'neat rows' where possible;
- Whips to be protected with biodegradable rabbit guards to prevent grazing damage and supported with stakes and ties. These should be checked regularly for damage and can be removed 3-5 years after planting;
- Any failed specimens should be replaced as soon as possible within the next available planting window;
- Watering and mulching may be required within the first 5 years, particularly during periods of reduced rainfall and high temperatures.

3.12 As the proposed mixed scrub is targeted to poor condition, there is no minimum number of condition assessment criteria passes required, however the above management principles will ensure the enhanced area of mixed scrub will meet correct habitat definition within 30 years.

Monitoring

- 3.13 Monitoring of all proposed habitats will take place at years 1, 2, 5, 10, 20, 25 and 30 from commencement, with reports made to the LPA after each monitoring visit. Monitoring visits will seek to establish whether the habitats are forming well and to determine the likelihood of targeted conditions being met. These monitoring visits may be undertaken by an ecologist, arboriculturist or management company. Monitoring visits should include a condition assessment (using the Statutory Biodiversity Metric Condition Assessment sheets).
- 3.14 Due to the relatively simple nature of the proposed habitat creation / enhancement, it is considered that there is scope to reduce the number of monitoring visits required, if agreed with the LPA.
- 3.15 The management recommendations detailed within this section should be sufficient to ensure habitats establish well and meet their proposed definition / condition. If during any monitoring visit it is considered that the target habitats are not being achieved, advice from an ecologist or arboriculturist should be sought and adaptations to the management plan may be required. Any failings of the habitat management will be fed back to the LPA within a report. This will include further recommendations as to how proposed habitat management may be amended to tailor the site.

4.0 Management Schedule

Management Provision	Years with Priority							
	1	2	3	4	5	10	15	20
Created – Individual Trees								
Trees to be planted between October and March.								
Support stakes / ties and rabbit guards to be used.								
Avoid mowing 500mm radius around trees.								
Trees to be watered when required, particularly during periods of reduced rainfall.								
Trees inspected regularly for signs of disease / damage.								
No nutrient enrichment to be used.								
Created – Modified Grassland								
Remove existing vegetation and prepare a bed of low fertility topsoil. Sow with Naturescape NL4 seed mix (or similar approved by LPA) in autumn or spring. Sown area to be lightly rolled.								
Mow to a minimum height of 150mm for 2 months from initial germination.								
After 2 months, mow to a height of 100-200mm, or longer if desired.								
Any failed areas to be reseeded where necessary.								
Mixed Scrub								
Support stakes / ties and rabbit guards to be used.								
Keep bases weed free.								
Watering and mulching where necessary.								

5.0 Potential Constraints

Nesting Birds

- 5.1 When nesting, all wild birds are protected under Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). This includes the intentional or reckless destruction of nests from the nest-building phase through to when all chicks have fully fledged the nest.
- 5.2 Management practices affecting the proposed mixed scrub should take place outside the peak bird breeding season (March to September, inclusive), in order to reduce the potential impact on nesting birds.

Appendix 1: Condition Assessment Criteria³

Individual Trees

Criteria		Targeted Condition
A	The tree is a native species (or at least 70% within the block are native species).	Targeted
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).	Targeted
C	The tree is mature (or more than 50% within the block are mature).	
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.	Targeted
E	Natural ecological niches for vertebrates and invertebrates are present, such as presence of deadwood, cavities, ivy or loose bark.	
F	More than 20% of the tree canopy area is oversailing vegetation beneath.	Targeted
Total passes		3

5-6 passes: Good condition; 3-4 passes: Moderate Condition; 1-2 passes: Poor condition

Modified Grassland

Criteria	
A	6-8 species per m ²
B	Varied sward height
C	Scrub cover less than 20%
D	Physical damage in less than 5% of area
E	Cover of bare ground between 1% and 10%
F	Cover of bracken less than 20%
G	Absence of invasive non-native species

6-7 passes and passes Criterion A: Good condition; 4-5 passes and passes Criterion A: Moderate condition; 3 passes or fewer OR passes 4-6 criteria but fails Criterion A

³ GOV, 2023. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/statutory-biodiversity-metric-tools-and-guides>

Mixed Scrub

Criteria	
A	Represent a good example of its habitat type: At least 80% of scrub is native There are at least three native woody species No single species comprises more than 75% of the cover
B	Seedlings, saplings, young shrubs and mature are all present.
C	Absence of invasive non-native species
D	Well-developed edge
E	Presence of clearings/glades/rides
Total	

>4 passes: Good condition; 3-4 passes: Moderate condition; <3 passes: Poor condition