

Habitat Management & Monitoring Plan

Sandbrook Park, Sandbrook Road, Rochdale

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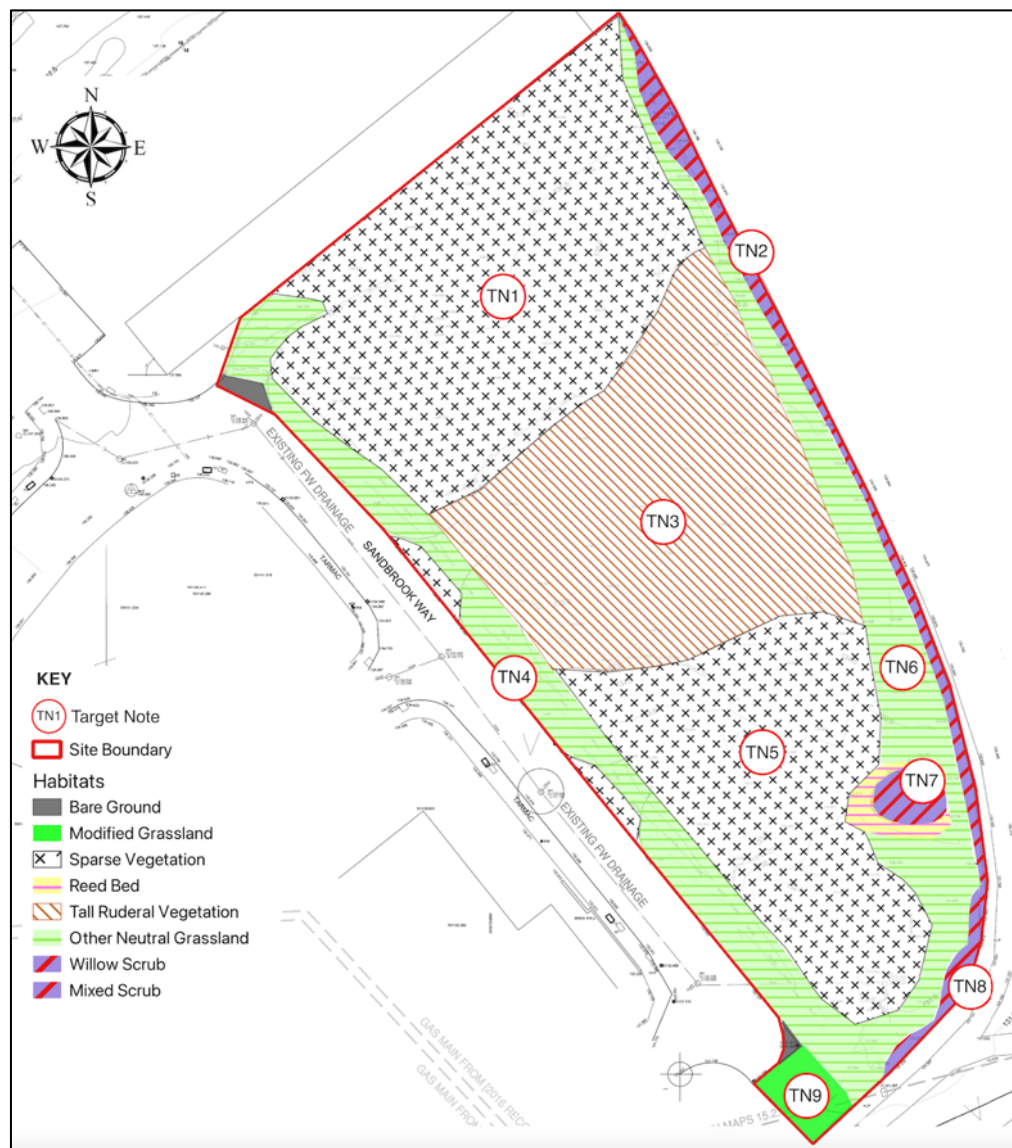
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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This report comprises a proportionate Habitat Management & Monitoring Plan (HMMP) in respect of planning application reference 24/00271/FUL comprising the erection of four industrial units along with ancillary office space, car parking, access, hard and soft landscaping and other associated works. Full details of proposed landscaping are provided within the submitted and approved master plan and detailed landscaping proposals. Details of baseline habitats, site usage are provided within the baseline Ecological Survey & Assessment submitted in support of the planning application and should be read in conjunction with this plan. Further information is provided within the Statutory BNG Metric and associated Condition Sheets. These should all be read in conjunction with this report and will not be repeated here.

Figure 1 The existing site and baseline habitat map



- 1.2 The purpose of this HMMP is provide a *proportionate level* of information regarding the management of proposed new habitat within the planning (red line) boundary as shown in *Figure 1* (existing site layout and habitats) above.

- 1.3 An overview of the proposals is provided in landscape plan prepared by Trevor Bridge Associates Ltd. (2024), drawing number 7517.01, which should be read in conjunction with this report. This includes details of the proposed new habitats. Planting schedules and specifications for management and aftercare for these areas have been submitted separately with the proposed the soft landscaping shown in *Figure 2* below. Proposed habitats are indicated by hatching or symbols as per the key.

Figure 2 Post-intervention landscaping proposals using UKHab designations. Proposed habitats are indicated by hatching or symbols as per the key



- 1.4 For the avoidance of doubt, this management plan is applicable to the following significant habitats only, as indicated on the landscaping proposals by colour coding and hatching and shown in *Figure 2* and the UKHab post-intervention habitat map in *Figure 3* above.
- Individual trees (proposed)
 - Mixed scrub (proposed)
 - Wildflower (Other Neutral) Grassland (proposed)
- 1.5 Details of the required management of these habitats only for 30 years post development/establishment are provided within this document.
- 1.6 Details of existing and proposed habitats, including their condition at the time of survey and target conditions for enhancement of retained habitat or creation of new habitat are provided within the most recent Statutory BNG Metric (B-RCHD2504-MST-V01 - Sandbrook Park - EB Complete) and associated set of condition sheets.

2.0 Site Description

- 2.1 The existing (baseline) site comprises an area of disturbed ground situated off Sandbrook Way, Sandbrook Park, Rochdale. The land is dominated by a sparse covering of ruderal vegetation, extended patches of tall-ruderal vegetation, clumps of scrub and species-poor rank grassland, along with several areas of bare ground, spoil, rubble and several wet hollows and temporary shallow pools. There are no mature trees on site or adjacent to the site boundaries, though there are several saplings to the northeast of the site. There are no buildings, ponds, streams, or other habitat of significant ecological interest on site or close enough to be affected by proposals and the site is effectively isolated from other habitat and any wildlife corridors by the presence of buildings, roads and other built-up land. There are no priority habitats within the site boundaries or that will be adversely affected by proposals.
- 2.2 Full details of the existing ecological value of habitats on site are provided within the Ecological Impact Assessment report prepared and supplementary documentation prepared and submitted by this consultancy dated March 2024.
- 2.3 There will be no retained habitat post-intervention, this management and monitoring plan being relevant to on-site landscaping only. Off-site habitats required to meet the minimum 10% net gain are dealt with separately and are not considered here.

3.0 Biodiversity Management Plan

3.1 Overview

- 3.1.1 As illustrated in *Figure 2* the site subject to this management plan comprises only significant new habitat that will be established within the Red Line Boundary and excludes any habitat where the primary purposes is amenity, specifically, amenity grassland and ornamental shrubs. The principal objectives of management are detailed below, to be measured against the relevant BNG Condition Sheets during each monitoring period with the aim of meeting the targeted value indicated in the BNG Metric. This plan must be read in conjunction with the submitted baseline ecological survey data and report (Cameron S Crook, 2024) and the submitted CEMP.

Management Objectives

- 3.1.2 The management objectives regarding biodiversity at the developed (post-intervention) site:
- (1) To maintain and enhance the proposed areas of other neutral (wildflower) grassland by control of scrub and tall-ruderal vegetation and maintain both botanical and structural diversity to meet BNG requirements for targeted condition
 - (2) To maintain and enhance the proposed new trees and native scrub and grassland areas to act as an effective wildlife corridor and to promote and maintain botanical diversity, sufficient to meet BNG requirements for target condition

3.2 Habitat Creation and Management Principles

- 3.2.1 The principles behind the management techniques described within this report are summarised below:
- (1) New trees and mixed scrub (native shrubs) to be implemented across the whole site in a holistic manner to link in with existing wildlife corridors and establish new ones, to allow passage of animals around the operational site as well as to and from adjacent sites and the proposed environmental enhancement

- (2) All works and management techniques to take account of the bird breeding and overwintering periods to avoid disturbance

3.3 Establishment Principles

- 3.3.1 This section describes the measures to be implemented during the establishment stage. This applies to proposed new habitat only (proposed areas of new trees and native shrubs). The proposed planting scheme is illustrated in the Landscape Plan (Trevor Bridge Associates 2024). Establishment of grassland areas is detailed in the landscaping plan.

General

- (1) Topsoil and subsoil resources on site to be used to inform the detailed design of the planting regime. This will include soil depths and any requirement for improvement of the soil quality. If soil improvement is required ameliorants will be used sparingly
- (2) Soil from any excavated pits to be reused when backfilling the pit or alternatively the backfill soil should be as close as possible in texture and structure to the original soil
- (3) Topsoil stored in temporary stockpiles will be retested prior to use to check for soil quality
- (4) Topsoil to be stored well away from any existing waterbodies and to avoid areas identified as scree or species-rich grassland (to be first confirmed by the site ecologist)
- (5) If topsoil is not available within the site, imported topsoil will be used. Imported topsoil will be from an approved site, in accordance with BS3882:2007 and be classified as premium grade
- (6) No ameliorants to be added to soil where waterbodies are or will be located
- (7) Topsoil will be kept separate from all other materials e.g. hardcore, so as not to be contaminated
- (8) All plants used to be in accordance with BS 3936 Part 1(1992), 'Nursery Stock Specification for Trees and Shrubs', BS3936 Part 10: 1990 'Nursery Stock Specification for Ground-cover Plants', and 'Handling and Establishing Landscape Plants' HTA 1985, revised edition March 2002
- (9) Any stock planted outside the recognised planting season to be containerised. Containerised plant stock to have fully developed root system within the specified pot size before planting is allowed. If the stock plant requires growing-on in the nursery all plant material is to be re-potted to the next approved pot size, re-spaced to allow for 15-20% growth per growing season and maintained to healthy vigorous growth irrespective of weather conditions
- (10) All planting areas to be weed free prior to planting. Allow for an application of an approved translocated systemic herbicide in line with 1997 Control of Pesticide Regulations and 2003 COSHH
- (11) All planting works to comply with BS4428:1989
- (12) Planting to be carried out during suitable weather conditions, avoiding periods of frost, water-logging or strong winds, during the period late October to late March inclusive

Proposed New Trees and Shrubs (mixed native scrub)

3.3.2 The following measures will be implemented during the establishment stage of the proposed new woodland areas:

- (1) Trees to be planted into prepared tree pits, backfilled with topsoil/soil ameliorants as specified. During the preparation of the tree pit, the base of the tree pit should remain undisturbed unless specific problems are identified such as poor drainage, soil smearing or pans, which require rectification
- (2) At the time of planting, the tree pit diameter is to be 500mm greater than the root ball, wide enough to accommodate roots when fully spread. The natural thickening between the trunk and the root collar (the root flare) shall be level with the ground surface and should not be buried by excess soil or mulch
- (3) Young seedlings (whips) to be planted in prepared pits of 300 x 300 x 300mm. Pits to be backfilled with topsoil/soil ameliorants as above
- (4) All plants to be well firmed into the soil
- (5) All trees are to be watered-in when planted with a minimum 45 litres, and then when required within the maintenance period to ensure survival
- (6) A 1000mm diameter circle around the base of the trunk should be maintained free from grass and weeds by the use of 75mm medium grade mulch (5-75mm particle size and of British origin, FSC certified) or by the use of mulch mats
- (7) Mulch is not to be placed against the stem of the tree
- (8) All trees to be fitted with proprietary rabbit guards to prevent browsing by mammals, staked and protected with spiral guard or shrub shelter (Tubex or similar approved) with at least 0.6m in height

3.4 Maintenance and Aftercare Principles

3.4.1 Regular maintenance visits shall be made for a minimum of five consecutive seasons following planting. In general, a minimum number of visits to be:

- Tree and shrub areas min. 8 visits per annum;

3.4.2 The following measures will be implemented during the initial maintenance stage:

- (1) Maintenance visits to include watering, pruning, mowing, pest/disease control, weed control, litter removal, re-mulching as required
- (2) A diameter of 1m around each tree or shrub to be kept weed free by means of a suitable herbicide to be administered by a licenced operative and also mulched to a depth of 50mm to reduce weed growth and conserve moisture. Care should be taken to ensure any vegetation developing beneath trees and shrubs beyond the 1m diameter around the plant remain un-mulched and should not be treated with herbicide, to allow the establishment of ground flora
- (3) Once trees are established (5 years after planting) good arboricultural practice to be implemented to encourage long-term good health and vitality of trees and maintain well balanced crowns
- (4) Any losses of trees or shrubs within the first five years to be replaced on a like for like basis

- (5) Any invasive species as listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife & Countryside act 1981 (Variation of Schedule 9) (England) (no 2) Order 2021 must be removed and controlled, in full accordance with the legislation and current best practice in respect of the species concerned under appropriate licence (IAS A02) as required

Long-term Management Principles

- 3.4.3 The site shall be subject to the following management regime for a minimum period of 10 years following establishment or completion of development works:

Native Trees and Mixed Native Scrub

- (1) Trees and shrubs to be inspected annually for the first five years, then subsequently on the eight and tenth year to monitor their establishment
- (2) Following the fifth consecutive season, good arboricultural practice to be continued to encourage long-term good health and vitality of trees and maintain well balanced crowns with a natural shape when reaching maturity. To include any rogue, damaged or dead branches to be removed in accordance with BS3998
- (3) Following establishment of the native tree and shrubs, woody plants to be pruned annually or as required to maintain healthy growth
- (4) Any trees or shrubs in need of pruning to be pruned during September, or exceptionally, mid-October following completion of the bird breeding season, but prior to commencement of the overwintering period (to be confirmed prior to any cutting commencing)
- (5) Any vegetation developing beneath trees and shrubs to a distance of 0.75m each side of the centre to remain uncut to allow the establishment of ground flora
- (6) Any species of tree or shrub that is becoming too dominant to be removed to maintain original proportions (+/-5%)
- (7) Trees to be thinned by 30% during Year 10, selecting for diversity rather than well-formed or vigorous trees (i.e. poorly formed or stunted trees to be retained for structural diversity and provide habitat niches) to be determined by the appointed ecologist
- (8) In year 5 and year 10, a total of 20% of shrubs to be coppiced (cut back to ground level). Felling coupes to be evenly spaced across the whole planting area, each at least 20m from the next coupe, coupes to be a maximum of 10m diameter
- (9) No deadwood to be removed unless infected by a fungal, bacterial or viral disease that may affect other plants. Any pruned branches and brushwood to be stacked in suitable piles towards the rear or sides of each planting area
- (10) Botanical diversity (including woodland ground flora beneath dense woodland cover) to be monitored once every two years during August for a minimum of ten years. Condition of the habitat to be evaluated using appropriate BNG Condition sheets
- (11) Any invasive species as listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife & Countryside act 1981 (Variation of Schedule 9) (England) (no 2) Order 2021 must be removed and controlled, in full accordance with the legislation and current best practice in respect of the species concerned under appropriate licence (IAS A02) as required

Proposed Wildflower (Other Neutral) Grassland

- (1) Once established (see the Landscape Plan for establishment details) grassland areas to be cut once a year to a minimum height of 100mm
- (2) Grassland cutting to take place ideally in September (no later than the first week in October or earlier than second week in August) to avoid impacting upon the bird breeding season and the overwintering period
- (3) Where footpaths/maintenance tracks exist, the grassland located either side of the path will be regularly mown up to one metre either side.
- (4) All grass cuttings to be removed from site
- (5) All litter and debris to be removed from site during the same period as cutting
- (1) Development of vascular plant species diversity to be monitored using fixed-quadrats by a suitably qualified ecologist, twice annually during spring and summer, to be carried out every two years for a minimum of ten years. Results to be used to determine whether cutting frequency is adequate or may require amending. Condition of the habitat to be evaluated using appropriate BNG Condition sheets
- (6) Any invasive species as listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife & Countryside act 1981 (Variation of Schedule 9) (England) (no 2) Order 2021 must be removed and controlled, in full accordance with the legislation and current best practice in respect of the species concerned under appropriate licence (IAS A02) as required

General

- (1) All retained and created habitat will be protected during construction works in accordance with the submitted and approved CEMP
- (2) Site users will be strictly confined to footpaths, hardstanding and other designated areas of access and will not be allowed onto areas of retained, enhanced or newly created habitat
- (3) Any damage to habitat will be remedied as appropriate immediately following the damage being noted by re-planting, seeding and/or amelioration of the ground as deemed necessary by the landscape architect or appointed ecologist
- (4) Any habitat damaged beyond repair will be replaced on a like for like basis
- (5) Erosion of marginal areas of habitat (adjacent to footpaths) will be monitored regularly (monthly during site operational times) and where excessive (as deemed by the project ecologist or landscape architect) will be repaired and fencing moved to reduce any further damage

Monitoring

- (1) All monitoring works will be carried out at the periods indicated in the schedule below
- (2) Vegetation and habitat surveys will follow the requirements laid out in Natural England's Biodiversity Net Gain Guidelines (2024) and UKHab recommendations, with reference to the relevant NVC Manuals as appropriate
- (3) Monitoring reports will provide information on all significant habitat and vegetation communities detailing the condition at the time of survey using standard BNG Condition Sheets, noting condition criteria, along with details of methodology used such as quadrat size, number and location, timing and species lists are appropriate

- (4) All monitoring to be carried out by a suitably qualified and experienced ecologist, as appointed by the developer or landowner

4.0 Schedule

Management & Monitoring

- 4.1 The site shall be maintained under the following management regime for a minimum period of 30 years following initial establishment.

Years 1-5

- Maintenance visits annually to check trees and shrubs 8 times per year, grassland and aquatic vegetation twice per year, and wet grassland once per year, to include mowing, pest/disease control, weed/invasive species control (where required), litter removal, replacement of new trees and shrubs as required;
- Grassland areas to be maintained by mowing/strimming once per year as detailed above;
- Trees & shrubs to be monitored to check establishment annually for first five years;
- Any losses of new tree or scrub in excess of 20% of the total to be replaced on a like for like basis;
- Any species of shrub becoming too dominant to be removed to maintain original proportions (+/-5%);
- Botanical diversity of trees, shrubs and grassland to be assessed once every two years during August;
- Any invasive species as listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife & Countryside act 1981 (Variation of Schedule 9) (England) (no 2) Order 2021 to be removed and controlled annually, in full accordance with the legislation and current best practice in respect of the species concerned under appropriate licence (IAS A02) as required
- All new and enhanced vegetation and habitat to be checked monthly during operational periods for any signs of damage or erosion and repaired or remediated at the earliest opportunity (within four weeks at the latest with the exception of tree and shrub planting which must be carried out during the autumn/winter period)

Years 6-10

- Grassland areas to be maintained by once per year mowing regime as detailed above;
- Grassland to be cut twice a year with the first cut between late July and September and the second between December and March;
- Good arboricultural practice to be implemented to encourage long-term good health and vitality of trees and maintain well balanced crowns;
- Trees & shrubs to be monitored to check for losses and diversity in Year 8 and 10;
- Woody plants to be pruned annually in September – mid-October;

- Any losses of trees or shrubs in excess of 20% of the total to be replaced on a like for like basis;
- Any species of native shrub that is becoming too dominant to be removed to maintain original proportions (+/-5%);
- During Year 10, 20% of shrubs to be coppiced;
- Scrub management to be implemented if total area increases by more than 15%;
- Botanical diversity of trees and shrubs to be assessed once every two years during August;
- Botanical diversity of grassland to be assessed twice annually in spring and summer
- Any invasive species as listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife & Countryside act 1981 (Variation of Schedule 9) (England) (no 2) Order 2021 to be removed and controlled annually, in full accordance with the legislation and current best practice in respect of the species concerned under appropriate licence (IAS A02) as required
- All new, retained and enhanced vegetation and habitat to be checked monthly during operational periods for any signs of damage or erosion and repaired or remediated at the earliest opportunity (within four weeks at the latest with the exception of tree and shrub planting which must be carried out during the autumn/winter period)

Years 11-30

- Grassland areas to be maintained by once per year mowing regime as detailed above;
- Grassland to be cut once per year with the first cut between late July and September;
- Good arboricultural practice to be implemented to encourage long-term good health and vitality of trees and maintain well balanced crowns;
- Trees & shrubs to be monitored to check for losses and diversity during Years 15 and 20;
- Woody plants to be pruned annually in September – mid-October;
- Any losses of shrubs in excess of 20% of the total to be replaced on a like for like basis, trees to be replaced on a one for one basis;
- Any species of shrub that is becoming too dominant to be removed to maintain original proportions (+/-5%);
- During Year 15, trees to be thinned by 30%;
- During Year 20, 20% of shrubs to be coppiced;
- Scrub management to be implemented if total area increases by more than 15%;
- Botanical diversity of trees and shrubs to be assessed once every two years during August;

- Botanical diversity of grassland to be assessed twice annually in spring and summer
- Any invasive species as listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife & Countryside act 1981 (Variation of Schedule 9) (England) (no 2) Order 2021 to be removed and controlled annually, in full accordance with the legislation and current best practice in respect of the species concerned under appropriate licence (IAS A02) as required
- All new, retained and enhanced vegetation and habitat to be checked monthly during operational periods for any signs of damage or erosion and repaired or remediated at the earliest opportunity (within four weeks at the latest with the exception of tree and shrub planting which must be carried out during the autumn/winter period)

5.0 Responsibilities

- 5.1 The person responsible for carrying out the above works for the duration of the period covered by this plan will be as follows:
- Appointed Ecologist: Cameron S Crook or as appointed by the landowner
 - Ecological Clerk of Works: As above
 - Site Management: The Site Manager
- 5.2 The planting, monitoring, maintenance and management of trees & shrubs will be carried out by appropriately qualified and/or skilled persons as appointed by the person named in section 5.1 above.
- 5.3 Monitoring of vegetation for biodiversity to be carried out by an appropriately qualified and experienced ecologist appointed by the person named in section 4.1 above.