native ecology
PROMOTING BIODIVERSITY INTEGRATION

BNG: BASELINE HABITAT ASSESSMENT

TUDOR COTTAGE

MEOPHAM, KENT

Native Ecology, Unit 90, Waterham Business Park, Highstreet Road, Waterham, Faversham, Kent. ME13 9EJ

t: 01227 656757 **e**: info@native-ecology.co.uk **w**: www.native-ecology.co.uk

DISCLAIMER

This report has been prepared by Native Ecology in its professional capacity as consultants in accordance with the terms and conditions set out within the contract with the commissioning party (the 'Client').

This report is issued to the Client for their sole use and for the intended purpose as stated in the agreement between the Client and Native Ecology under which this work was completed. No part of this report may be copied or reproduced by any means without written permission from Native Ecology. The use of this report by unauthorised thirdparties is at their own risk and Native Ecology accepts no duty of care to any such third party. Opinions, information and recommendations provided within the report should be read and relied upon only in the context of the document as a whole. Opinions and recommendations are based upon Native Ecology using due skill and diligence with the information made available at the time that Native Ecology performed the work. The content of this report has been provided in accordance with the provisions of the CIEEM Code of Professional Conduct and to the principles and requirements of British Standard BS42020.

Nothing in this report constitutes legal opinion. If legal opinion is required the advice of a qualified legal professional should be sought.

Reference	Ref: 1805_R02_BNG Baseline Habitat Assessment
Report status	Information
Author	John Rowland BSc (Hons)
Checked by	Megan Knapp BSc (Hons) Amy Wright BSc MSc CEcol MCIEEM
1st issue date	28th July 2025
Revised	-
Revision issue	-

Native Ecology LLP is a Limited Liability Partnership registered in England and Wales, number OC424800.
Any reference to a partner in relation to Native Ecology LLP means a member of Native Ecology LLP.
Registered Office: Camburgh House, 27 New Dover Road, Canterbury, Kent, CT1 3DN

CONTENTS

1.	INTRODUCTION	5
2.	SITE LOCATION PLAN	6
3.	EXISTING SITE PLAN	7
4.	LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITY / NATIONAL CHARACTER AREA PLAN	8
5.	BIODIVERSITY OPPORTUNITY AREA MAP	9
6.	METHODOLOGY	10
7.	BASELINE HABITAT CONDITION ASSESSMENT PLAN	11
8.	RESULTS	12
9.	REFERENCES	13
10.	ADDENDUM	14

LIST OF FIGURES & APPENDICES

FIGURES

Figure 1: Site Location Plan

Figure 2: Existing Site Plan

Figure 3: Local Planning Authority & National Character Area (NCA) Plan

Figure 4: Biodiversity Opportunity Area (BOA) Plan

Figure 5: Baseline Habitat Plan

LIST OF ADDENDUMS

Addendum 1: Habitat Condition Assessment report

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This report details a Biodiversity Net Gain Baseline Habitat Assessment undertaken in respect of proposed development at Tudor Cottage, Nash Street, Meopham, Kent, DA13 9AA (site centred TQ 64096 69078).

Table 1. Site Location

Site address	Tudor Cottage, Nash Street, Meopham
Grid reference (at centre)	TQ 64096 69078
Local Planning Authority	Gravesham Borough Council
County	Kent
National Character Area	North Downs
Biodiversity Opportunity Area	None

COMMISSION

1.2 Native Ecology was commissioned Nurstead Court Ltd in February 2025 to undertake a Biodiversity Net Gain Baseline Habitat Assessment at Tudor Cottage.

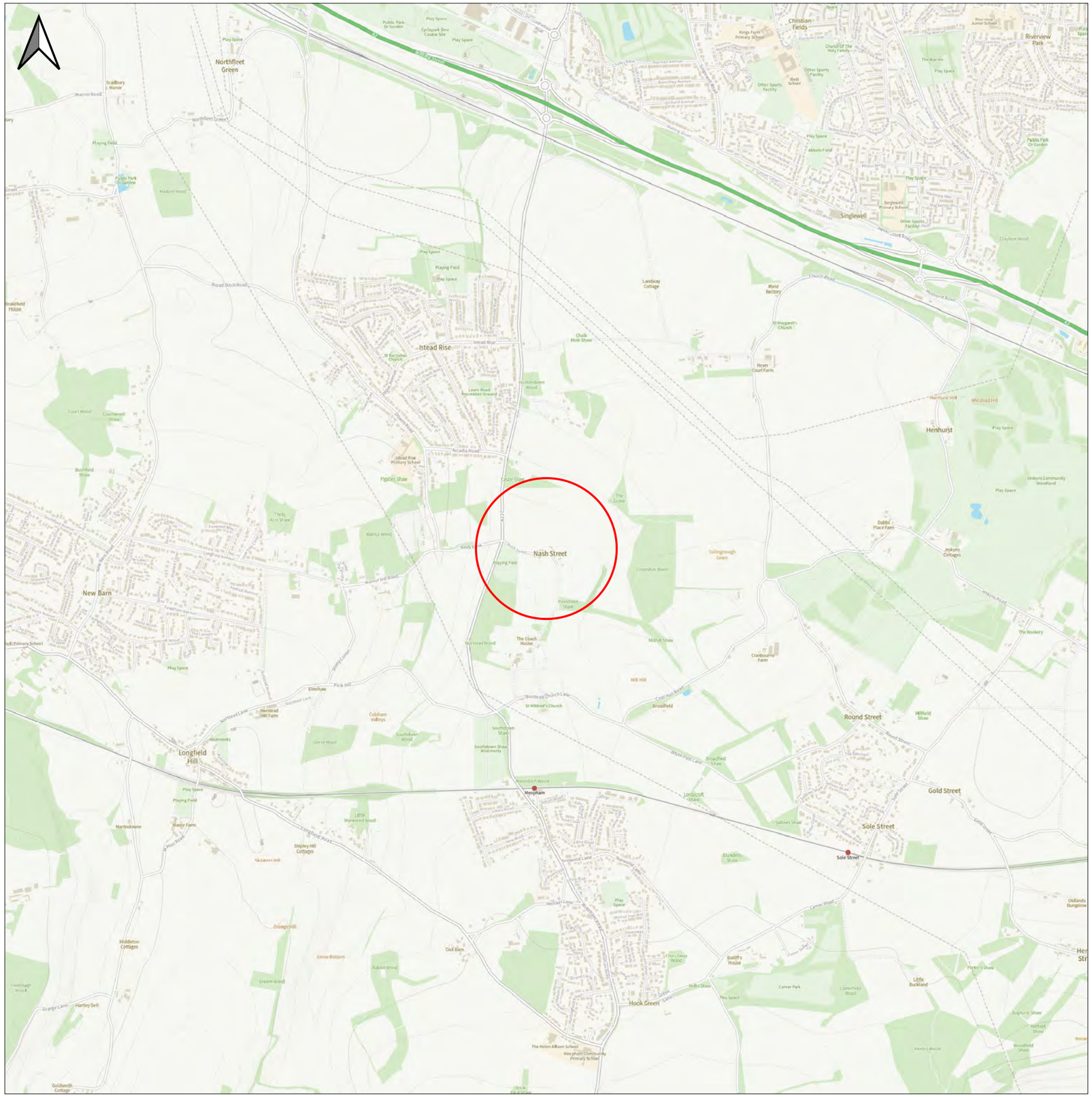
APPLICATION SITE

1.3 The Site comprises a section of short sward, intensively managed modified grassland and intensively horse grazed field. The Site extends to 0.03ha.

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.4 The objectives of the report are to:

- Provide the necessary ecological data (habitat type, area, and condition) for input into the Statutory Biodiversity Metric calculation tool.
- Establish the pre-development biodiversity unit value, which serves as the fundamental benchmark for measuring biodiversity losses and determining the required gains to achieve the mandatory 10% BNG.
- Inform the application of the mitigation hierarchy by clearly defining the ecological baseline present on site.
- Create a transparent and verifiable record of the ecological baseline for planning authorities, stakeholders, and future monitoring.



0 1 2 3 km

0 10 20 30 40 50 m

native ecology
PROMOTING BIODIVERSITY INTEGRATION

Site location plan	
Tudor Cottage Meopham, Kent	
Figure ref:	1805_Figure 1
Revision:	-
Date:	16/07/2025
Scale:	1:20,000 (Main canvas)
Paper size:	A3

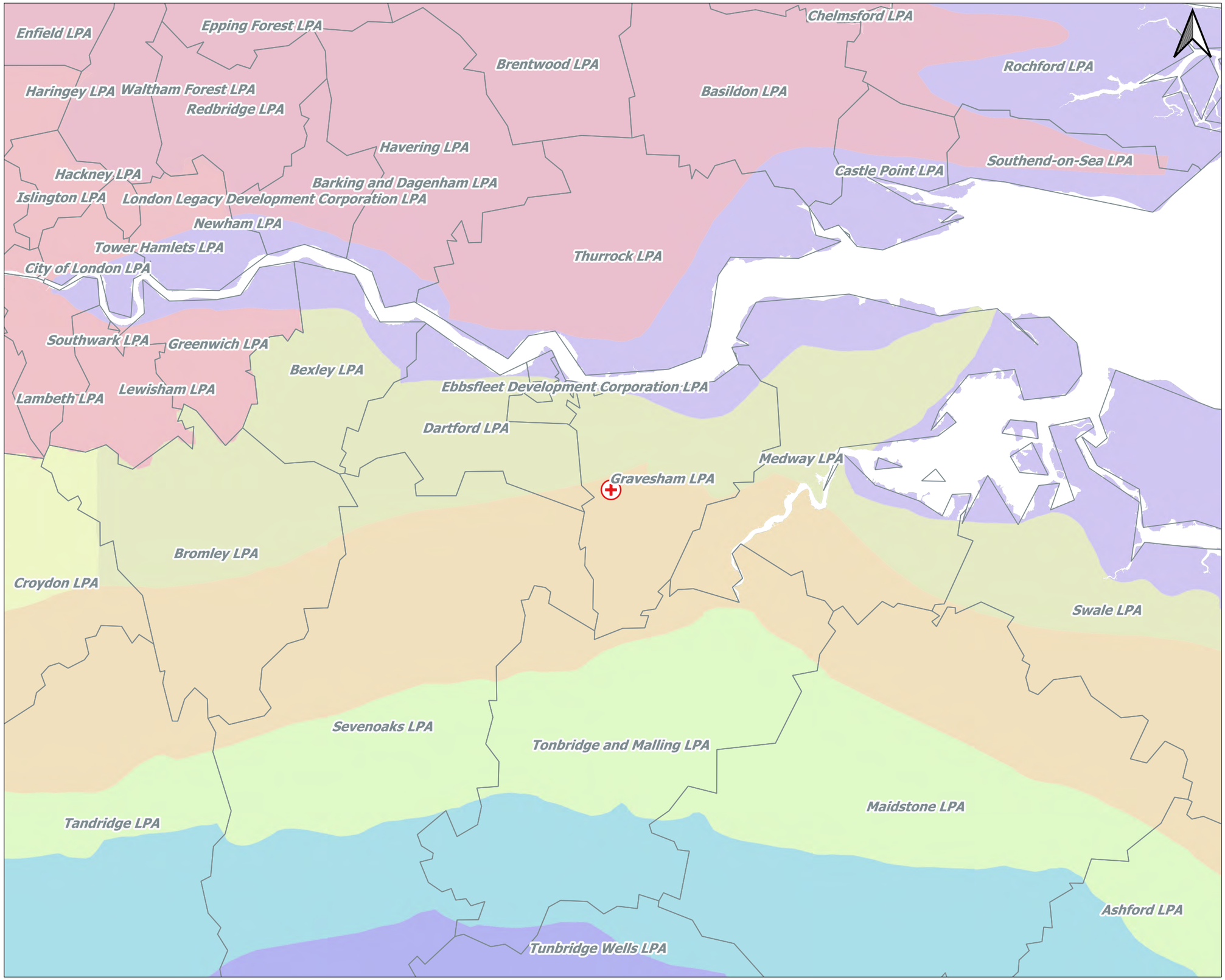
0 14 28 42 56 70 m

Legend

Site boundary

native ecology
PROMOTING BIODIVERSITY INTEGRATION

Existing Site Plan	
Tudor Cottage Meopham, Kent	
Figure ref:	1805_Figure 2
Revision:	-
Date:	16/07/2025
Scale:	1:350
Paper size:	A3



Legend

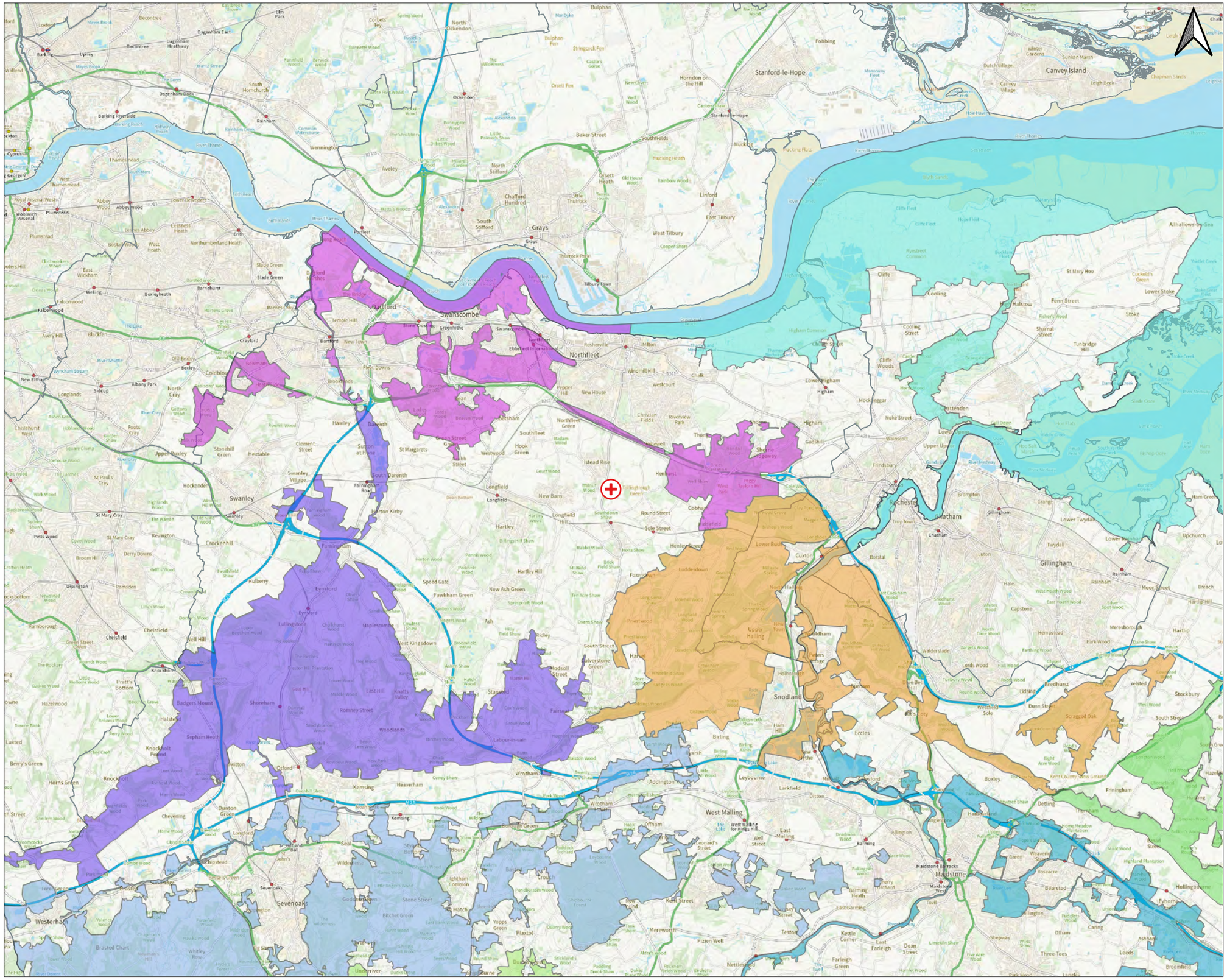
- Site Location
- LPA
- Greater Thames Estuary
- High Weald
- Inner London
- Low Weald
- North Downs
- North Kent Plain
- Northern Thames Basin
- Thames Basin Lowlands
- Wealden Greensand

native ecology
PROMOTING BIODIVERSITY INTEGRATION

LPA and NCA Plan

Tudor Cottage
Nash Street, Kent

Figure ref:	1805_Figure 3
Revision:	-
Date:	20/02/2025
Scale:	1:200000
Paper size:	A3


Stanford-le-Hope
Canvey Island
Grays
Swanscombe
Northfleet
Gravesend
Rochester
Chatham
Gillingham
Snodland
West Malling
Maidstone
Sevenoaks
Swanley
Orpington
Westerham
Eynsford
Shoreham
Farningham
Dartford
Cliffe
Cooling
Halstow
Higham
Cuxton
Eccles
Aylesford
Leybourne
Wrotham
Addington
Kemsing
Otford
Hulberry
Hartley
Longfield
Cobham
Meopham
Sole Street
Henley Street
Luddesdown
Birling
Ditton
Boxley
Detling
Bearsted
Harrietsham
Lenham
Hollingbourne
Eyhorne Street
Ham Green
Upchurch
Lower Twydall
Twydall
Bredhurst
Stockbury
Hartlip
Newington
Rainham
Moor Street
Meresborough
Capstone
Hempstead
Wainscott
Upper Upnor
Frindsbury
Borstal
Burham
Wouldham
Aylesford
Ditton
Allington
Maidstone Barracks
Maidstone West
Tovil
Barming
East Malling
Leybourne
Larkfield
Ditton
Aylesford
Kemsing
Seal
Sevenoaks
Otford
Shoreham
Eynsford
Farningham

6. METHODOLOGY

STATUTORY BIODIVERSITY METRIC

6.1 The Statutory Biodiversity Metric has been used to carry out the calculation. The Statutory Biodiversity Metric calculation tool provides a way to measure the biodiversity value of a site. It is used to inform and guide habitat enhancement and creation plans and decisions on achieving biodiversity net gain within a project.

6.2 The metric uses habitat type as a proxy for the relative biodiversity value of a site. The on-site habitats are converted into measurable biodiversity units, taking into account the habitat type, condition, distinctiveness and strategic significance, which then provide the basis of the calculations.

6.3 The output of the Statutory Metric tool gives the existing biodiversity unit value of the Site.

Habitat Type

6.4 The habitat type for each parcel, classified in accordance with the The Professional Edition of the UK Habitat Classification 2.0 during the Site visit, was input into the Metric.

6.5 Addendum 1 provides full results of the habitat condition assessment, which includes rationale for habitat classification.

Habitat distinctiveness

6.6 Each habitat type (based on the UKHab classification) is pre-assigned a 'distinctiveness' score by the Metric.

Condition

6.7 The calculations presented within this assessment are based on the baseline habitat condition assessment undertaken on 12/06/2025.

6.8 The full results and supporting documentation from this habitat condition assessment are included in Addendum 1.

Strategic significance

6.9 Each habitat parcel was assigned a level of strategic significance and given a score based on whether it is located within an area that is locally significant for that habitat type.

6.10 The following resources were used to inform the assignment of strategic significance:

- Summary of Interim Strategic Significance Guidance for Biodiversity Net Gain in Kent and Medway (Kent County Council, 2024)
- The Kent Biodiversity Strategy (Kent Nature Partnership, 2020)

Legend

- Application site boundary
- Modified grassland

Note:

Habitats mapped based on UK Habitat Classification following Preliminary Ecological Appraisal site visit undertaken on 12/06/2025.

Numbers refer to area parcel references.

Habitat Condition
* poor habitat condition
** moderate habitat conition
*** good habitat condition
n/a condition assessment not applicable

native ecology
PROMOTING BIODIVERSITY INTEGRATION

Biodiversity Net Gain
Baseline Habitat Plan

Tudor Cottage
Meopham, Kent
DA13 9AA

Figure ref:	1805_Figure 5
Revision:	-
Date:	21/07/2025
Scale:	1:350
Paper size:	A3

8. RESULTS

A-1: ON-SITE AREA HABITAT BASELINE

8.1 Table 2 below shows details of the on-site baseline assessment for area habitat types in line with the Statutory Biodiversity Metric.

Table 2. Baseline assessment for Area Habitat types

Parcel No.	Broad Habitat	Habitat Type	Irreplaceable habitat	Area (Ha)	Distinctiveness	Condition	Strategic Significance	Total Habitat units
1	Grassland	Modified grassland	No	0.033	Low	Poor	Low	**0.07**
Total Habitat Biodiversity Units								**0.07**

8.3 The total site habitat area is 0.03ha, with a baseline value of 0.07 Biodiversity units.

9. REFERENCES

- CIEEM (2019). Biodiversity net gain. Good practice principles for development. A practical guide.
- CIEEM (2021). Biodiversity Net Gain Report & Audit Templates. Version 1.
- Defra (2024). Statutory Biodiversity Metric calculation tool. February 2024
- Defra (2024). Statutory Biodiversity Metric Condition Assessments. February 2024.
- Defra (2024). The Statutory Biodiversity Metric. User Guide. February 2024.
- Kent County Council (2024). Biodiversity Net Gain Guidance Note: Interim Strategic Significance Guidance for Biodiversity Net Gain in Kent and Medway. January 2024.
- Multi-agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) Interactive Map. Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. http://magic.defra.gov.uk (accessed: 16/07/2025).

10. ADDENDUM

Addendum 1: Habitat Condition Assessment report

native ecology
PROMOTING BIODIVERSITY INTEGRATION

HABITAT CONDITION ASSESSMENT : AREA HABITATS

TUDOR COTTAGE

MEOPHAM, KENT

Native Ecology, Unit 90, Waterham Business Park, Highstreet Road, Waterham, Faversham, Kent. ME13 9EJ

t: 01227 656757 **e**: info@native-ecology.co.uk **w**: www.native-ecology.co.uk

DISCLAIMER

This report has been prepared by Native Ecology in its professional capacity as consultants in accordance with the terms and conditions set out within the contract with the commissioning party (the 'Client').

This report is issued to the Client for their sole use and for the intended purpose as stated in the agreement between the Client and Native Ecology under which this work was completed. No part of this report may be copied or reproduced by any means without written permission from Native Ecology. The use of this report by unauthorised thirdparties is at their own risk and Native Ecology accepts no duty of care to any such third party. Opinions, information and recommendations provided within the report should be read and relied upon only in the context of the document as a whole. Opinions and recommendations are based upon Native Ecology using due skill and diligence with the information made available at the time that Native Ecology performed the work. The content of this report has been provided in accordance with the provisions of the CIEEM Code of Professional Conduct and to the principles and requirements of British Standard BS42020.

Nothing in this report constitutes legal opinion. If legal opinion is required the advice of a qualified legal professional should be sought.

Reference	Ref: 1805_R03_BNG Habitat Condition Assessment
Report status	Information
Author	John Rowland BSc (Hons)
Checked by	Megan Knapp BSc (Hons) Amy Wright BSc MSc CEcol MCIEEM
1st issue date	28th July 2025
Revised	-
Revision issue	-

Native Ecology LLP is a Limited Liability Partnership registered in England and Wales, number OC424800.
Any reference to a partner in relation to Native Ecology LLP means a member of Native Ecology LLP.
Registered Office: Camburgh House, 27 New Dover Road, Canterbury, Kent, CT1 3DN

CONTENTS

1.	INTRODUCTION	5
2.	METHODOLOGY	6
3.	RESULTS: HABITAT CLASSIFICATION	9
4.	RESULTS: CONDITION ASSESSMENT	10
5.	PHOTOGRAPHS	11
6.	REFERENCES	12
7.	APPENDIX 1: GRASSLAND QUADRAT RESULTS	13
8.	APPENDIX 2: GRASSLAND CLASSIFICATION	14

LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Grassland Quadrat Results

Appendix 2: Grassland Classification

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This report details a Habitat Condition Assessment for Area Habitats undertaken in respect of proposed development at Tudor Cottage, Nash Street, Meopham, Kent, DA13 9AA.

Table 1. Site Location

Site address	Tudor Cottage, Nash Street, Meopham
Grid reference (at centre)	TQ 64096 69078
Local Planning Authority	Gravesham Borough Council
County	Kent

COMMISSION

1.2 Native Ecology was commissioned by Nurstead Court Ltd in February 2025 to undertake a Habitat Condition Assessment at Tudor Cottage.

APPLICATION SITE

1.3 The Site comprises a section of short sward, intensively managed modified grassland and intensively horse grazed field. The Site extends to 0.03ha.

1.4 Th following plans are provided in the Baseline Report (1805_R02, Native Ecology 2025):

- Location Plan
- Existing Site Plan
- Plan in relation to Local Planning Authority/National Character Area boundaries
- Plan in relation to biodiversity opportunity areas

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.5 The objectives of the report are to:

- Measure and map the habitats present within the Site.
- Provide a Condition Assessment for the Area baseline habitat types;
- Assign each habitat parcel a unique reference ID based on habitat type and condition.

2. METHODOLOGY

DESK STUDY

2.1 MAGIC Map was used to identify any pre-assigned habitat types within and adjacent to the Site, including Habitats of Principal Importance and irreplaceable habitats, such as ancient woodland. In addition the search included any statutory and non-statutory designated sites within and adjacent to the Site.

2.2 Current Google Earth aerial images were used to identify recent and historic land use of the Site, as well as to identify any recent or historic damage to the habitats within and around the Site which might impact the condition of baseline habitats.

FIELD STUDY

2.3 A Site visit was undertaken by Megan Knapp of Native Ecology on 12th June 2025.

Table 2. Survey details

Survey date	12th June 2025
Surveyor	Megan Knapp BSc (Hons)
Time on Site	20:30 - 21:00
Weather	18°C, clear sky, BF 1, no rain, ground dry

Habitat classification

2.4 Habitat classification across the Site was conducted in adherence to the Professional Edition of the UK Habitat Classification (UKHab) Version 2.0. This process was further informed by the habitat type requirements specified within the Statutory Biodiversity Metric (November 2024) and supplementary Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) guidance documents.

2.5 Habitat features were delineated and recorded spatially as polygons (areas), lines, and points. Each identified feature was assigned a primary habitat type based on the UKHab hierarchical system. To provide a more comprehensive description, relevant secondary codes were also applied where applicable.

2.6 Classification primarily focused on identifying habitats to Level 4 of the UKHab hierarchy. This level of detail was selected to ensure compatibility with the habitat categories mandated by the Statutory Biodiversity Metric for the baseline assessment. In instances where the Statutory Biodiversity Metric requires finer habitat subdivisions that correspond to UKHab codes beyond Level 4, these more specific classifications were applied.

2.7 Classification primarily focused on identifying habitats to Level 4 of the UKHab hierarchy. This level of detail was selected to ensure compatibility with the habitat categories mandated by the Statutory Biodiversity Metric for the baseline assessment. In instances where the Statutory Biodiversity Metric requires finer habitat subdivisions that correspond to UKHab codes beyond Level 4, these more specific classifications were applied.

2.8 A detailed list of botanical species was recorded for each distinct habitat parcel during the site visit, undertaken by a suitably experienced ecologist. To support the accurate classification and assessment of grassland habitat condition, vegetation data was collected from a representative number of strategically placed quadrats, including adjacent off-site habitat if appropriate.

Condition Assessment

2.9 Following the habitat classification using UKHab, an assessment of habitat condition was undertaken for all relevant habitat parcels within the Site using the Statutory Metric Condition Assessment Sheets.

2.10 The assessment was conducted by competent ecologists using condition assessment sheets appropriate for each classified habitat type. These sheets list key ecological indicators and characteristics relevant to the condition of that particular habitat, such as the presence and abundance of desirable and undesirable plant species, habitat structure, and signs of damaging influences or inappropriate management. Each habitat parcel was evaluated in the field against the criteria presented on the relevant sheet.

2.11 Based on this systematic evaluation against the criteria on the condition assessment sheets, each habitat parcel was assigned an overall condition status, categorised as either Poor, Moderate, or Good. The determination for each criterion was documented, providing a clear rationale for the final assigned condition.

2.12 As specified by the assessment guidance, certain habitat types are exempt from field condition assessment and are allocated a fixed condition score. This includes some habitats of Low distinctiveness, which are assigned a condition of 'Poor' (noted as 'No assessment required – condition fixed at 'Poor'').

2.13 Habitats of Very Low distinctiveness are excluded from condition assessment and are listed as Not Applicable (N/A) in the relevant tables.

Digital mapping

2.14 All relevant Site data was collated on the digital mapping program 'Merginmap' which was then synchronised to the geographical mapping system 'QGIS' in order to be refined and to measure habitat parcels.

2.15 The fine scale Minimum Mapping Unit (MMU) was used to complete the dataset. This includes area habitats from 25m^2 and 5m for hedgerow features. This fine scale method allows subtle habitat differences to be considered.

2.16 Anything smaller than the MMU was mapped as a point and identified with a target note

LIMITATIONS AND ASSUMPTIONS

2.17 There were no limitations to the survey.

3. RESULTS: HABITAT CLASSIFICATION

Habitat Degradation

3.1 No evidence of habitat degradation was identified during the desk or field study.

Area habitats

3.2 Table 3 below provides a habitat classification and description of the area habitats present within the Site. The table also provides the parcel reference number.

Table 3. Area habitat description

Parcel No.	Habitat type	Habitat description
1	Modified grassland	A parcel of short sward modified grassland, which includes a garden area of a rural residential dwelling and an intensively horse grazed field. Numerous patches of bare ground are present. Species present include annual meadow grass (*Poa annua*), perennial ryegrass (*Lolium perenne*), Yorkshire fog (*Holcus lanatus*), white clover (*Trifolium repens*), cleavers (*Galium aparine*), creeping buttercup (*Ranunculus repens*), common daisy (*Bellis perennis*), and garden sorrel (*Rumex acetosa*).

4. RESULTS: CONDITION ASSESSMENT

Area habitats

4.1 Table 4 summarises the Condition Assessment results for the habitat parcel within the Site in accordance with the Statutory Biodiversity Metric Condition Assessment Sheets.

Table 4. Condition Assessment summary for Area Habitats within the Site.

Parcel No.	Habitat type	Condition assessment sheet	No. criteria passed	Condition assessment			Condition
				Criteria	Result	Description	
1	Modified grassland	5A. Grassland Low	Passes 3 of 7 criteria. Does not pass essential criterion A.	A	N	The parcel does not have more than 6 plant species per m².	Poor
				B	N	The sward length does not vary throughout the parcel and remains very short.	
				C	Y	Scrub is absent from the parcel.	
				D	N	Physical damage exceeded 10% of the total area of the parcel due to excessive grazing.	
				E	N	Cover of bare ground within the parcel is greater than 10% due to excessive grazing.	
				F	Y	Bracken is absent from the parcel.	
				G	Y	Invasive non-native species are absent from the parcel.	

4.3 The full Condition Assessment results are provided in the accompanying Habitat Condition Assessment Sheets Proforma.

5. PHOTOGRAPHS

Photograph 1. Heavily grazed modified grassland (parcel 1) with high coverage of bare ground, facing south.

Photograph 2. Location of the proposed new access track and stable buildings, facing north east.

Photograph 3. Area of grassland between the horse field and main road.

Photograph 4. Area of grassland south of the horse field.

6. REFERENCES

- CIEEM (2019). Biodiversity net gain. Good practice principles for development. A practical guide.
- CIEEM (2021). Biodiversity Net Gain Report & Audit Templates. Version 1.
- Defra (2024). Statutory Biodiversity Metric calculation tool. February 2024
- Defra (2024). Statutory Biodiversity Metric Condition Assessments. February 2024.
- Defra (2024). The Statutory Biodiversity Metric. User Guide. February 2024.
- Multi-agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) Interactive Map. Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. http://magic.defra.gov.uk (accessed: 05/06/2025).
- Native Ecology (2025). Condition Assessment Sheets.

7. APPENDIX 1: GRASSLAND QUADRAT RESULTS

Table 5. Grassland Quadrat Results

SPECIES RECORDED		QUADRAT				
		Q01	Q02	Q03	Q04	Q05
COMMON NAME	LATIN NAME	PARCEL NUMBER				
		1				
Annual meadow grass	*Poa annua*	x	x	x		
Perennial ryegrass	*Lolium perenne*	x	x	x		x
White clover	***Trifolium repens***	x	x	x		
Cleavers	*Galium aparine*	x				
Dove's-foot crane's-bill	*Geranium molle*	x				
Greater plantain	***Plantago major***	x			x	x
Yarrow	*Achillea millefolium*	x				
Yorkshire fog	*Holcus lanatus*		x		x	
Lesser trefoil	*Trifolium dubium*		x	x		
Creeping buttercup	***Ranunculus repens***			x		x
Watercress	*Nasturtium officinale*			x	x	
Common daisy	*Bellis perennis*			x		
Garden sorrel	*Rumex acetosa*				x	x
Bird's foot trefoil	*Lotus corniculatus*					x
TOTAL SPECIES		7	5	7	4	5
AVERAGE SPECIES PER PARCEL		6				
TOTAL SPECIES EXCLUDING UNDESIRABLE SPECIES (IN BOLD)		5	4	5	3	3
AVERAGE DESIRABLE SPECIES PER PARCEL		4				

8. APPENDIX 2: GRASSLAND CLASSIFICATION

Table 6. Grassland Classification Results

Criteria	Parcel number
	1
>20% cover of broadleaved herbs and sedges.	Y
>8 species per m^2 (including forbs, grasses, sedges and rushes and excluding bryophytes).	N
At least one grass species that is not generally sown for intensive agricultural production is at least abundant.	N
Cover of rye-grasses and white clover is <30%.	N
Total Pass criteria	**1**
Grassland type	**Modified grassland**