

3.11 Site 10. 10 Ullswater Drive, Hethersett

Photos



Key Facts:

- Size of the Site: 2.25ha
- Habitats present: **Modified Grassland, Bramble Scrub, Artificial Unvegetated; Unsealed Surface, Developed land; sealed surface, Individual Trees, Lines of Trees.**
- Tree Preservation Orders, Conservation Areas, County Wildlife Sites (CWS), Roadside Nature Reserves, Priority Habitats, Statutory Designated Sites present on site? **TPO on an individual tree in the south of the Site.**
- Recommended habitat measures in LNRS: **Creation of other neutral grassland over the small play area in the south of the Site.**

Baseline Habitat Description and BNG Calculation

- 3.11.1 The Site comprised a large grassed recreational area with a playground and BMX tracks through grass in the south and a paved walkway lined with trees in the east. The Site is adjacent to residential housing within the village of Hethersett and adjoins to the west the grounds of Hethersett Academy.

- 3.11.2 The main habitat within the Site was modified grassland in **poor condition**. The grassland was found to be uniformly mown and with low botanical diversity with on average less than six vascular plant species per square metre. Perennial ryegrass was dominant or abundant across the grassland areas with Yorkshire fog often frequently present with some infrequent cocksfoot grass. Common wildflowers included frequent ribwort plantain and greater plantain, white clover and dandelion. Occasionally present were creeping buttercup, autumn hawkbit, creeping cinquefoil, daisy and yarrow. Rarely present were selfheal, ragwort, dovesfoot cranesbill and oxeye daisy *Leucanthemum vulgare*.
- 3.11.3 A total of 56 individual trees were recorded throughout the Site in mostly **good and moderate condition** with one tree being in **poor condition**. One notable very large mature oak was present in the south of the Site. This oak contained numerous habitat features suitable for roosting bats and nesting birds and therefore the tree has high wildlife and conservation value.
- 3.11.4 The remainder of the trees on Site were a diverse mixture of predominantly native broadleaf species including ash, silver birch, field maple, hornbeam, wild cherry, hawthorn, rowan, oak, whitebeam and lime *Tilia sp.* Infrequent non-native were present including Norway maple, raywood ash *Fraxinus angustifolia* and pear *Pyrus domestica*.
- 3.11.5 Lines of trees were present in the north-west of the site, centrally within the Site and in a corner along the northern boundary. Most of the lines of trees were found to be in **moderate condition** with one line of trees assessed to be in **poor condition**. Trees within these linear features comprised predominantly semi and early mature specimens with shrubby understoreys. Tree lines were a mixture of broadleaf species, predominantly native with varying degrees of non-native Norway maple. The tree line assessed to be in poor condition had less than 70% native species due to the prevalence of Norway maple.
- 3.11.6 Developed land; sealed surface was present along the formal footpaths through the Site as well as underneath play equipment. Artificial unvegetated; unsealed surface was also present in a small parking area.
- 3.11.7 An enclosed fenced area in the west of the Site was not accessible to the surveyor and has been excluded from the red line boundary. This area potentially contains a pond surrounded by trees.
- 3.11.8 In total, the habitats on Site represent **11.49 Habitat Units and 0.91 Hedgerow Units** as shown in Tables 15 and 16 below.

Table 15. Baseline BNG Calculation of Habitats

Habitat	Area (hectares)	Ecological Distinctiveness	Condition	Habitat Units (HU)
Modified grassland	2.134	Low	Poor	4.27
Bramble scrub	0.0041	Medium	N/A	0.02

Habitat	Area (hectares)	Ecological Distinctiveness	Condition	Habitat Units (HU)
Artificial unvegetated; unsealed surface	0.0266	Very low	N/A	0.00
Developed land; sealed surface (footpaths)	0.0811	Very low	N/A	0.00
Urban tree	0.00407	Medium	Poor	0.02
Urban tree	0.4601	Medium	Moderate	3.68
Urban tree	0.2922	Medium	Good	3.51
Total	2.25 (excluding trees)			11.49

Table 16. Baseline BNG Calculation of Hedgerow Units

Habitat	Length (kilometres)	Ecological Distinctiveness	Condition	Hedgerow Units (HeU)
Line of trees	0.193	Low	Moderate	0.77
Line of trees	0.067	Low	Poor	0.13
Total	0.26			0.91

3.11.9 A map of baseline habitats is provided in Figure 10, Appendix 1.

Proposed Biodiversity Enhancements

- Long grass and large logs for seating to be placed around the high conservation value oak in the separate red line boundary area in the south of the Site;
- Four areas of long grass around significant trees and tree lines;
- Scarification and oversowing of a native wildflower seed mix in the eastern corner of the northern boundary to create a pocket wildflower meadow; and
- Installation of five bird boxes and five bat boxes on trees.

Specification of Management Actions

3.11.10 High value oak:

- Large logs will be placed in a circle around the high value oak in the separate red line boundary area in the south of the Site. These logs will be of a suitable size to

facilitate seating by recreational users of the Site. The logs should be placed a minimum of eight metres from the stem of the tree.

- The logs will also delineate the area around the tree to be managed as long grass (see management for long grass below). The long grass will complement the existing high value habitat features within the tree itself as well as reducing the amount of footfall around the tree to prevent soil compaction which can negatively impact the tree's health and longevity.

3.11.11 Long grass:

- Four areas of long grass management will be introduced at the Site, including the aforementioned area around the high value oak tree. The three other areas are shown in Figure 10, Appendix 2 adjacent to lines of trees and individual trees. The objective is to create a more gradual change in vegetation heights from trees to long grass to mown grass for the benefit of invertebrates, birds and small mammals.
- The grass in these areas will be cut twice per year – once in late February/early March and again in late August/early September. The long grass will create enhanced microclimates for invertebrates and produce seed for birds and small mammals. The long grass will be cut with a scythe/trimmer/mower to 50mm height twice a year and kept short over the winter with regular mowing as required. All cuttings will be removed from the Site to avoid re-enrichment of the soil and encourage greater abundance and diversity of native wildflowers.
- No fertiliser, herbicide or commercial grass mix will be applied at any time.

3.11.12 Scarification and over-sowing of wildflower mix:

- Scarify the area shown as 'other neutral grassland' in the east of the northern boundary as shown in Figure 10, Appendix 2 to create a minimum of 50% bare ground. Do not scarify within five metres of tree stems to avoid root damage. Once scarified a locally sourced, British origin, native wildflower seed mix will be oversown into the scarified area at the density advised by the manufacturer (an example of a suitable seed mix would be Emorsgate General Purpose Meadow Mixture EM1¹⁵).
- The seed mix should be spread in the autumn or spring (when there is regular rain and the ground is not frozen). The seed can be broadcast by hand and tread in lightly by foot to ensure good contact between the seed and the soil. Do not cover the seed with new soil or compact heavily.
- In the first year after sowing, a flush of annual weeds may appear which can be retained to help shelter the emerging perennial wildflowers of the seed mix. Undertake the first cut in late August/early September with a

¹⁵ <https://wildseed.co.uk/product/mixtures/complete-mixtures/general-purpose-meadow-mixtures/basic-general-purpose-meadow-mixture/>



scythe/trimmer/mower to a height of 50mm. Remove arising offsite or to a dedicated compost heap.

- Keep grass short over the winter with regular mowing as required.
- In the second year and subsequent years, manage the grassland using the two-cut system (first cut late February/early March and second cut late August/early September) as described for Site 1: Knyvett Green, Ashwellthorpe.
- No fertiliser, herbicide or commercial grass mix will be applied at any time.

3.11.13 Bird and bat boxes:

- Install five bird boxes and five bat boxes on suitable trees as suggested in as shown in Figure 10, Appendix 2. Guidance on suitable boxes for trees is provided in Appendix 3 along with specifications for installation heights and aspects.

Five Year Biodiversity Enhancement Plan

3.11.14 Following the management specification and guidance above, the Table below provides the timing of management actions over 5 years.

Habitat	Management Action and Timing				
	2025/2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
High value oak	Install large seating logs and leave grass long between logs and tree stem. For long grass around tree: first cut and collect in late February/ early March. Second cut in late August/early September. Remove arisings offsite.	Same as 2025/2026 for long grass management.	Same as 2025/2026 for long grass management.	Same as 2025/2026 for long grass management.	Same as 2025/2026 for long grass management.
Long grass	First cut and collect in late February/ early March. Second cut in late August/early September. Remove arisings offsite.	Same as 2025/2026.	Same as 2025/2026.	Same as 2025/2026.	Same as 2025/2026.
Scarification and oversowing	Scarify and oversow with wildflower seed mix. Cut and collect arisings in late August/early September 2026.	First cut and collect in late February/ early March. Second cut in late August/early September. Remove arisings offsite.	Same as 2027.	Same as 2027.	Same as 2027.
Bird and bat boxes	Install bird and bat boxes on suitable trees	Check bird and bat boxes remain securely attached.	Check bird and bat boxes remain securely attached.	Check bird and bat boxes remain securely attached.	Check bird and bat boxes remain securely attached.



Annual Monitoring Checklist

- The checklist below is devised as a quick annual check to be carried out and completed by the responsible Community Asset Manager to ensure that the recommended enhancements measures above have taken place. The items in the checklist below have been replicated in a separate Annual Monitoring excel spreadsheet for ease of completion.

Annual Monitoring Checklist for Ullswater Drive, Hethersett

Habitat	Management Action	Tick relevant column if completed				
		2025/2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
High value oak	Logs installed around tree?					
	Grass kept long around tree?					
Long grass	First cut undertaken?					
	Second cut undertaken?					
	Winter mowing undertaken?					
Scarify and oversow area	Scarification and oversowing undertaken?					
	First year management undertaken					
	First and second cuts undertaken from Year 2027 onwards?					
Bird and bat boxes	Installed?					
	Annually checked to make sure still safely secured to tree?					

Post-enhancement BNG Calculation

- The proposed enhancements will generate a BNG uplift of Habitat Units of **8.49%** and an uplift in Hedgerow Units of **7.25%** over **20 years**.
- The uplift in Habitat Units derives from the proposed long grass management of modified grassland in poor condition to achieve modified grassland in good condition as well as the enhancement of one corner of modified grassland to other neutral grassland in moderate condition to create a pocket wildflower meadow. The uplift in Hedgerow Units will be achieved by enhancing one line of trees from poor to



moderate condition by allowing at least a 6m width of grassland to remain long next to the line of trees.