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Habitat Management & Monitoring Plan

Site Name

Danefold Farm

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About the Author

This report has been prepared by Owen Crawshaw a Principal Ecologist at The Ecology Co-Op, with over 10 years' experience. As a full member of the Chartered Institute for Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM), and a Chartered Ecologist through this body, he is bound by their code of professional conduct.

About the Reviewer

This report has been reviewed by Kate Priestman, who is a Principal Ecologist with over twenty years' experience. Kate has undertaken extensive survey work and reporting, encompassing a breadth of deliverables, and prepared European Protected Species licences for numerous schemes. As a Full member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) and a Chartered Environmentalist (CEnv), she is bound by CIEEM's code of professional conduct.



Report Summary

Purpose	The Ecology Co-op was commissioned by Danefold Farm to provide a Habitat Management & Monitoring Plan (HMMP) in relation to a Section 106 agreement for a proposed slurry lagoon with associated bunkers at the farm.
Context	The Biodiversity Impact Calculation for the development at Danefold Farm was undertaken by The Ecology Co-op in December 2025. The proposed development scheme at this site will enhance: On-site • Modified grassland (0.782ha) enhanced from poor condition to other neutral grassland moderate condition through the planting of an appropriate wildflower seed mix and addition of several non-agricultural grassland species (as specified within the proposed planting plan). Post intervention the following semi-natural habitats will be created: On-site • Mixed scrub (0.316ha) – poor condition • Other neutral grassland (0.079ha) – moderate condition.
Biodiversity Enhancements	Section 3 sets out the proposed habitat enhancement/creation for medium distinctiveness grassland and scrub habitats.
Post-construction management	Post construction management for the ecological features are detailed in full in section 3 and a work schedule is provided in section 5. The report also sets out management responsibilities and remedial actions should they be necessary.



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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose of the Report

The Ecology Co-operation was commissioned by Danefold Farm to provide a Habitat Management & Monitoring Plan (HMMP) in relation to a planning application for a slurry lagoon and associated bunkers at the farm.

This document outlines the habitat compensation, as well as targeted enhancement measures. It also includes the management objectives, responsibilities and maintenance schedules including remedial responsibilities, should they be necessary, relating to the proposed off-site habitat parcel.

The prescribed habitat creation measures described within this document will be issued to relevant works contractors to ensure that they are carried out in full.

1.2 Background

The site measures 2.43ha in area and comprises parcels of modified grassland (Figure 1).

The proposed layout plan for the slurry lagoons and metric are shown in (Figure 2).



Figure 1. An aerial image showing the location of the site at Danefold Farm. The approximate site boundary is outlined in red. Produced using QGIS Software (version 3.16.3 Hannover).

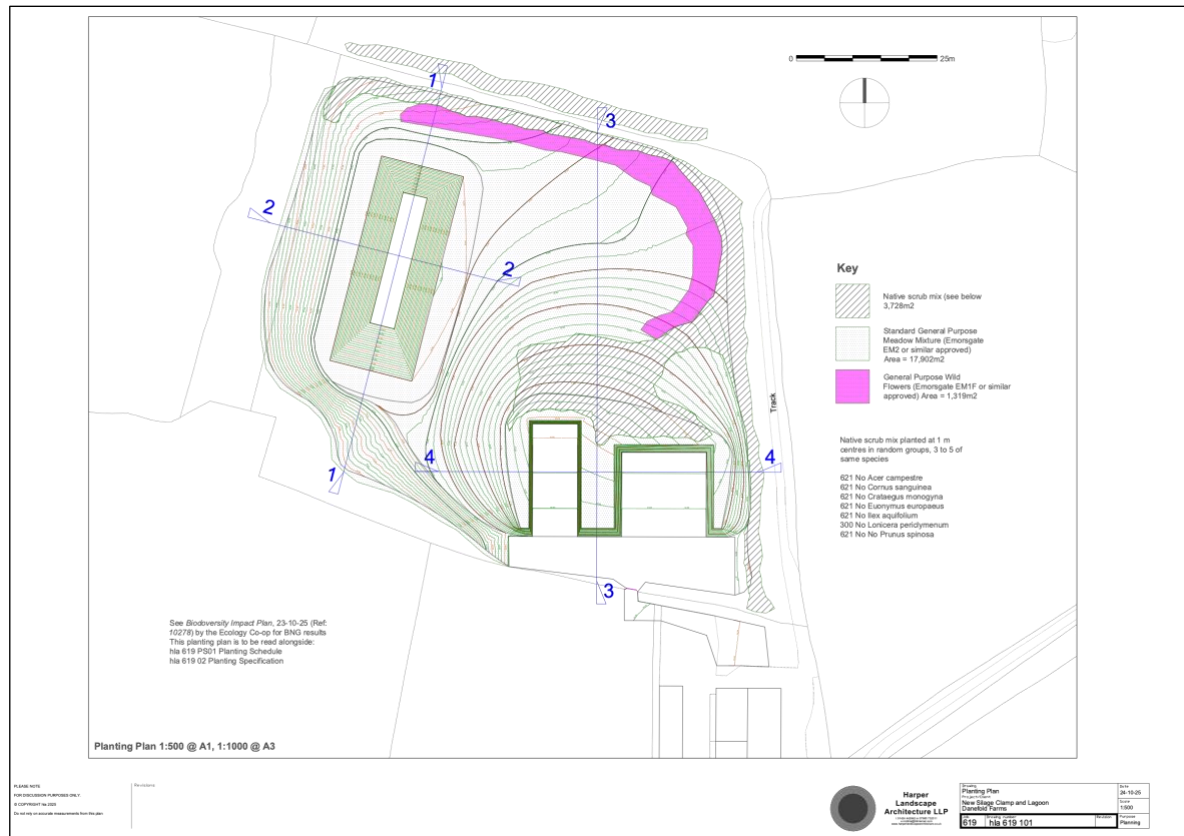


Figure 2. Proposed scheme layout for the development at Danefold Farm, reproduced from Harper Landscape Architecture, drawing number hla 619 101, dated 24th October 2025.

1.3 Summary of Previous Survey Work

An Ecological Assessment and subsequent Biodiversity Impact Calculation (BIC) using the Statutory Biodiversity Metric were undertaken by The Ecology Co-op in 2025¹².

The BNG calculation, including both on-site and off-site areas, identified the potential for net gain of 2.01 habitat units (+38.66%) through the creation/enhancement of the following habitats:

- modified grassland (0.782ha) **enhanced** from poor condition to other neutral grassland moderate condition;
- mixed scrub (0.316ha) **created** in poor condition;
- other neutral grassland **created** in moderate condition.

2 RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1 Prior to Handover

Implementation of all habitat creation (see section 3) will be the responsibility of **Danefold Farm**.

¹ The Ecology Co-op (2025). *Land off Cemetery Lane, Upton Grey – Preliminary Ecological Appraisal*.

² The Ecology Co-op (2025). *Danefold Farm – Biodiversity Impact Calculation, Rev 03*.



2.2 Post-handover

Implementation of all habitat management (see section 3) and contingency measures (see section 0) will be the responsibility of **Danefold Farm** for the duration of the work schedule (see section 6).

3 HABITATS

3.1 Other Neutral Grassland

On-site – Habitat Enhancement & Creation

An approximate 0.782ha of g4 – modified grassland (poor condition) will be enhanced to g3c – other neutral grassland (moderate condition). A small 0.079ha area of g3c – other neutral grassland (moderate condition) will be created.



Figure 3. A plan showing the location and extent of the enhanced and created grassland within the developed site.

In order to enhance the existing modified grassland to other neutral grassland in 'moderate' condition, and create g3c – other neutral grassland in moderate condition, under the Statutory Biodiversity Metric, three to five of the following condition assessment criteria, including essential criterion A, shall need to be met at the end of the 30-year project period:

- **Condition A (essential):** The parcel represents a good example of its habitat type, with a consistently high proportion of characteristic indicator species present relevant to the specific



habitat type.

- **Condition B:** Sward height is varied (at least 20% of the sward is less than 7cm and at least 20% is more than 7cm) creating microclimates which provide opportunities for insects, birds and small mammals to live and breed
- **Condition C:** Cover of bare ground is between 1% and 5%, including localised areas, for example, rabbit warrens.
- **Condition D:** Cover of bracken *Pteridium aquilinum* is less than 20% and cover of scrub (including bramble *Rubus fruticosus* agg.) is less than 5%.
- **Condition E:** Combined cover of species indicative of suboptimal condition and physical damage (such as excessive poaching, damage from machinery use or storage, damaging levels of access, or any other damaging management activities) accounts for less than 5% of total area. If any invasive non-native plant species (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA) are present, this criterion is automatically failed.
- **Condition F:** There are 10 or more vascular plant species per m² present, including forbs that are characteristic of the habitat type.

Ground preparation

Good ground preparation via scarification is essential to the success, followed by sowing a suitable seed mix between late August and the end of September during mild and wet weather or during mid-March to mid-May, when the ground has sufficient moisture and there is very little risk of frosts. These precautions will help to ensure the best conditions for seedling establishment. The scarifying process is intended to create an area of at least 50% bare ground to allow the wildflower seed mix to establish, whilst some grasses remain to provide some shelter and cover to adjacent seedlings.

Seed mix and sowing

A suitable general-purpose seed mixture, will be sown across the ground at a density of four grams per square metre. The species included **must all be of native British origin** and the recommended mixtures are EM2 –General Purpose Meadow Mixture across the main site and EM1F – General Purpose Wildflowers Mixture along the border with the new scrub as per the planting plan produced by Harper Landscape Architecture LLP (Figure 4).

Table 1. Emorsgate EM2 – General Purpose Meadow Mixture composition.

%	Common name	Scientific name
<i>Wildflowers</i>		
0.45	Yarrow	<i>Achillea millefolium</i>
0.75	Betony	<i>Betonica officinalis</i>
2.25	Common knapweed	<i>Centaurea nigra</i>
1.5	Wild carrot	<i>Daucus carota</i>
0.75	Hedge bedstraw	<i>Galium album</i>
0.9	Lady's bedstraw	<i>Galium verum</i>
1.5	Oxeye daisy	<i>Leucanthemum vulgare</i>
0.45	Ribwort plantain	<i>Plantago lanceolata</i>
1.2	Salad burnet	<i>Poterium sanguisorba</i> ssp <i>sanguisorba</i>
0.75	Cowslip	<i>Primula veris</i>
1.2	Selfheal	<i>Prunella vulgaris</i>



%	Common name	Scientific name
1.2	Meadow buttercup	<i>Ranunculus acris</i>
0.3	Yellow rattle	<i>Rhinanthus minor</i>
0.6	Red campion	<i>Silene dioica</i>
1.2	Bladder campion	<i>Silene vulgaris</i>
<i>Grasses</i>		
8.5	Common bent	<i>Agrostis capillaris</i>
29.75	Crested dogstail	<i>Cynosurus cristatus</i>
25.5	Red fescue	<i>Festuca rubra</i>
4.35	Smaller cat's-tail	<i>Phleum bertolonii</i>
17	Smooth-stalked meadow-grass	<i>Poa pratensis</i>

Table 2. Emorsgate EM1F – General Purpose Wildflowers Mixture composition.

%	Common name	Scientific name
<i>Wildflowers</i>		
10.00%	Betony	<i>Betonica officinalis</i>
15.00%	Common knapweed	<i>Centaurea nigra</i>
10.00%	Wild carrot	<i>Daucus carota</i>
10.00%	Oxeye daisy	<i>Leucanthemum vulgare</i>
15.00%	Ribwort plantain	<i>Plantago lanceolata</i>
8.00%	Salad burnet	<i>Poterium sanguisorba ssp sanguisorba</i>
15.00%	Selfheal	<i>Prunella vulgaris</i>
2.00%	Yellow rattle	<i>Rhinanthus minor</i>
10.00%	Meadow buttercup	<i>Ranunculus acris</i>
5.00%	Red campion	<i>Silene dioica</i>

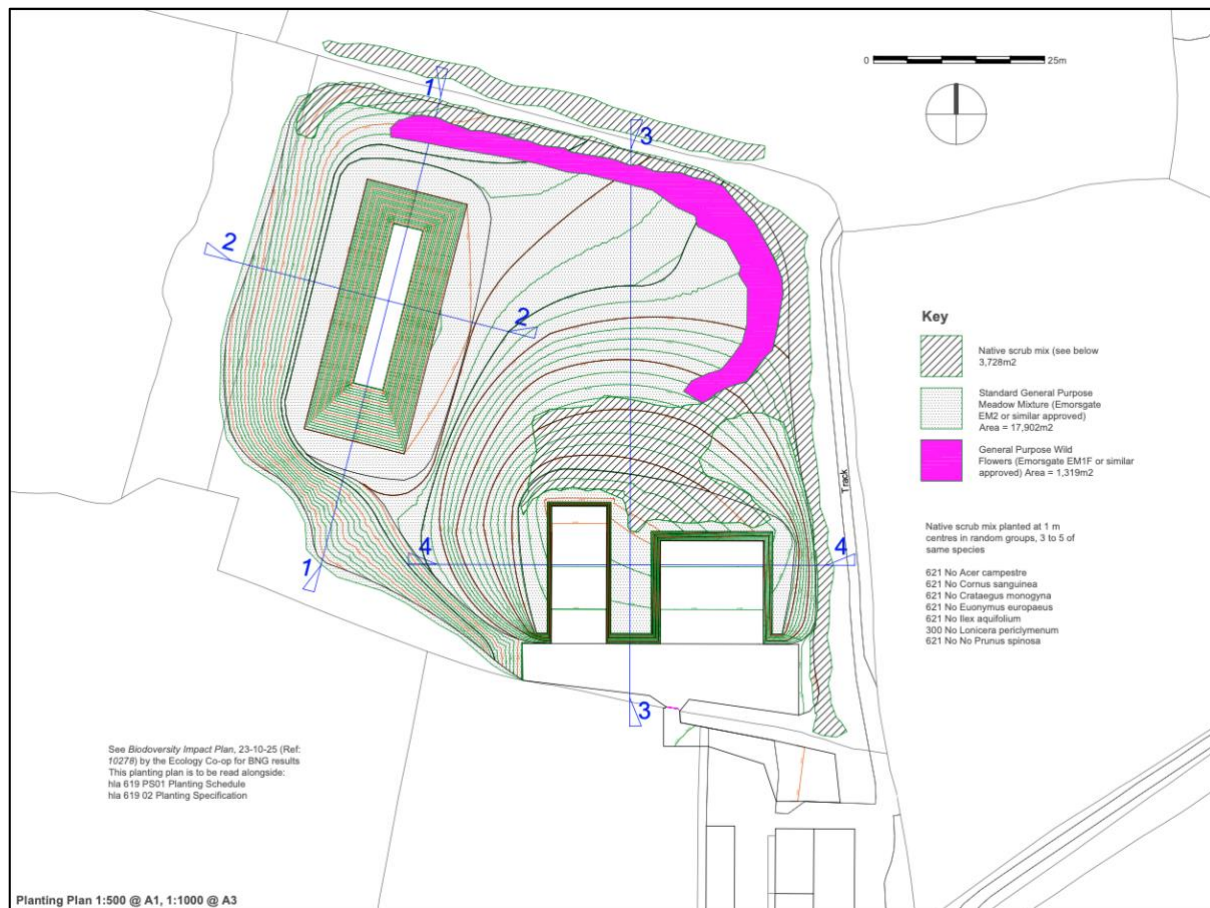


Figure 4. The planting plan for Danefold Farm. Produced by Harper Landscape Architecture LLP. Drawing No. 619 hla 619 101 (dated: 24.10.25).

Ecological Value at Point of Handover

At the point of handover, the enhanced grassland area will have been seeded but is not expected to have established. It is likely that the habitat will consist primarily of existing grassland habitat and will be in 'moderate' condition as per the criteria used in the Statutory Biodiversity Metric. The metric contains a built-in temporal multiplier, and it is expected that the g3c – other neutral grassland will reach its 'moderate' target condition in 10 years.

Habitat Management

Year 1

The sward should be cut and gathered to a height of approximately 5cm at least two times in its first year of establishment to control the flush of annual weeds which will grow during the first growing season and suppress faster growing grass species to encourage establishment of less competitive flowering species.

The first cut should be in early spring (March to April) and cut to between 5cm and 7cm to reduce the dominance of grass species, allowing light to reach emerging wildflowers. All cuttings are to be removed to prevent nutrient build up.

The second cut will be in mid-summer (June to July) and only completed if the grasses are growing aggressively and outcompeting the wildflower species, this cut is only to be a light cut and only if required. If yellow rattle is establishing, then this cut (if required) must be delayed until it has set seed



(June to August).

A final cut to be completed in late summer to early autumn (September to October), most wildflowers will have now seeded and grassland can be cut to 4-5cm height. All arisings must be removed to prevent excessive soil enrichment and encourage biodiversity.

Year 2 onwards

As part of on-going management, the wildflower meadow should be cut and gathered each year to a height of approximately 5cm after flowering in August. This process can be carried out with an appropriate tractor mowing or by strimming in locations that cannot be easily accessed. This is important to ensure that species diversity of the area is maintained and grass species do not become dominant. Where necessary, a second cut could be taken in March each year if the sward is growing too coarsely. The grassland should **not** be cut between the 1st of April and mid-August so that plants are given the opportunity to flower. Grass cuttings should be left in situ for a period of drying lasting 1-5 days before being collected. All litter will be removed from the habitat on a weekly basis.

Cuts should be planned to ensure that a varied sward height remains, following the establishment of the increased species diversity. The improved species diversity will likely result in this increased sward height naturally due to the variation in height of proposed species, however, 'tactical' cuts may be used in line with the above cutting regime to avoid certain sections thus retaining their increased sward height. Care should be taken to ensure that this method does not result in a reduction of grassland quality and if 'tactical cuts' are required these must be rotated with a single parcel omitted from a cut must not be omitted the following cut.



Photograph 1. Example of other neutral grassland in 'moderate' condition noting the varied sward height across the image.

3.2 Scrub

On-site – Habitat Creation

0.316ha of h3h – mixed scrub will be created within the site (



Figure 5).



Figure 5. A plan showing the location and extent of the newly created scrub within the developed site.

The creation of scrub should include native species only. Planting will include whips planted in clumps with areas of bare ground in-between, and the recommended planting density is 1 shrub per 1 metre squared. All shrubs would need to be planted as bare root stock between late November and late February to avoid the need for watering, stress on the roots and an increased risk of failure.

Shrubs will be composed of the species listed below:

- field maple *Acer campestre*;
- dogwood *Cornus sanguinea*;
- hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna*;
- spindle *Euonymus europaeus*;
- holly *Ilex aquilifolium*;
- honeysuckle *Lonicera periclymenum*;
- blackthorn *Prunus spinosa*.

The proposed mixed scrub has been assigned a 'poor' condition, under the Statutory Biodiversity Metric, as a result, the habitat does not need to be meet any of the below criteria at the end of the 30-year project period, however it is recommended that the below is used as a guide on how to achieve the best outcome possible:



- **Condition A:** The parcel represents a good example of its habitat type - the appearance and composition of the vegetation closely matches its UKHab description (where in its natural range).
 - 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 (except hazel, common juniper *Juniperus communis*, sea buckthorn *Hippophae rhamnoides* (only in its restricted native range), or box *Buxus sempervirens*, which can be up to 100% cover).
- **Condition B:** Seedlings, saplings, young shrubs and mature (or ancient or veteran) shrubs are all present.
- **Condition C:** There is an absence of invasive non-native plant species (as listed on Schedule 9 of Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)) and species indicative of suboptimal condition make up less than 5% of ground cover.
- **Condition D:** The scrub has a well-developed edge with scattered scrub and tall grassland and or forbs present between the scrub and adjacent habitat.
- **Condition E:** There are clearings, glades or rides present within the scrub, providing sheltered edges.



Photograph 2. An example of h3h – mixed scrub in poor condition.

Ecological Value at Point of Handover

At the point of handover, the created scrub areas will have been planted with shrubs, but these are not expected to have established. It is likely that the habitat will be in 'poor' condition as per the criteria



used in the Statutory Biodiversity Metric.

Annual Management

Very little management will be required for the scrub to achieve and maintain its poor condition. Where any cutting back of scrub is required, this cutting must only be timed outside the bird nesting season (1st March to 31st August).

4 MONITORING

Monitoring through habitat condition assessments³ undertaken by a suitably qualified surveyor will be conducted at the following intervals:

- Year 2
- Year 5
- Year 10
- Year 15
- Year 20
- Year 30.

Monitoring reports will be submitted to Horsham District Council.

5 CONTINGENCY MEASURES

The following measures will be implemented in order to trigger appropriate remedial actions to address previously unforeseen impacts:

- any newly planted trees/shrubs which fail within the first two years will be replaced;
- in the event that grassland has failed to establish within the first two years, specialist advice will be sought; this will include (but may not be limited to) input from an ecologist and a soil specialist. Further soil testing may be required as well as re-seeding and or changes to the prescribed management regime.

³ DEFRA (2023). *Statutory Biodiversity Metric Condition Assessments*. Available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/statutory-biodiversity-metric-tools-and-guides>



6 WORK SCHEDULE

Table 3. Work schedule for the 30-year management period.

Action	Jan	Feb	Mar	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Wildflower grassland cutting				Year 1		Year 1		(Year 1 & Year 2 onwards)				
Litter removal	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Scrub cutting (in sections as required)									X	X	X	