



01423 313353

info@elgplanning.co.uk

www.elgplanning.co.uk



ECOLOGICAL MANAGEMENT PLAN

LPA REF. 2020/1032 – ERECTION OF A NEW FACTORY/WAREHOUSE (USE CLASS B2 GENERAL INDUSTRIAL & USE CLASS B8 STORAGE & DISTRIBUTION) WITH INSTALLATION OF UP TO A 1MW BIOMASS BOILER, ASSOCIATED PARKING AND CIRCULATION SPACE.

THE SYMPHONY GROUP, PARK SPRING ROAD, GRIMETHORPE, BARNSELY, S72 7EZ

8 Princes Square, Harrogate , HG1 1LX

The purpose of this Ecological Management Plan is to set out the actions required to maintain the biodiversity value of the site for a period of 15 years as requested by the Council’s ecologist.

Application site

Symphony is the UK’s largest privately owned manufacturer of fitted kitchen, fitted bedroom and fitted bathroom furniture supplying independent retailers, merchants, housebuilders, residential housing developers and social housing providers. The Symphony Headquarters are at Grimethorpe, located to the north east of Barnsley roughly equidistant between the M1 motorway to the west and the A1 to the east.

The 32ha. site has developed in stages over a number of years, the 2020 application related to Phase 3. The development took place on the former Grimethorpe Colliery site following its closure in 1993 and subsequent restoration some years later. The restoration left some areas of the former colliery as regenerating brownfield land/green infrastructure but also some land planted and naturally regenerated with trees to be managed as a nature reserve for public recreation this lies immediately to the west of the Symphony site and is known as Cudworth Common.

There are several ponds on all sides of the Symphony site including landscaped ponds, amphibian mitigation ponds and shallow scrapes. Also surrounding the site are other factories, a sewage works, wooded countryside, a stream along the eastern perimeter, and the inter-connecting Dearne Valley wetlands which include the RSPB managed Edderthorpe Ings.

As part of the 2020 approval for the Phase 3 factory/warehouse to the north of the Symphony site a nature reserve of 1.55 ha was established to the south of the Symphony site in order to help compensate for the loss of habitats on the development site and the loss of 20 pairs of breeding ground-nesting bird (as well as brown hare, common toad and some invertebrate species).



Figure 1: Aerial view of the site – nature reserve circled in red (source: Apple Maps).

Existing habitat baseline and nature reserve composition

The Symphony Nature Reserve (SNR) lies to the south of the Symphony site where a small SUDS area which includes swamp and a reedbed has been established over the three phases of development here. The SNR is fenced with a post and rail fence along the northern boundary albeit an access gate is provided here for maintenance, no public or employee access is provided.

Compartment 1

The berm and slope south of the SUDS were found in 2020 to consist of a sparse grassland vegetation including wild carrot, black knapweed, coltsfoot and bird's-foot trefoil supporting a range of existing wildlife value, including common blue butterflies and the priority species small heath and dingy skipper.

The SNR provided a scrape (4 x 10m) created to a depth of 25cm to benefit ground nesting waders and in anticipation of supporting one pair of lapwings.

Compartments 2 and 3

The area was assessed in 2020 and found to be mostly bare gravel, likely to be from the construction of the SUDS feature. Several plants were starting to establish, notably some grasses, dog rose, bramble and dog-wood. Some herbs noted including Hieracium sp. and bird's-foot trefoil. The culvert for the SUDS pond passes underneath compartment 3.

A pond was proposed to be created within compartment 2 to be approximately 6x10m in size, excavated to approximately 1m in depth, lined with a suitable membrane, filled and then left to colonise naturally. This was proposed to increase opportunities for amphibians which were recorded in ponds to the south as well as aquatic plants and invertebrates.

Compartment 4

This area forms a SUDS basin with swamp habitat and a small Phragmites reedbed, reed canary grass and several sallows. The sides are vegetated with false oat grass and other coarse grass species, black knapweed, broad-leaved dock and colonising dog roses. The basin drains from the eastern end via a culvert into the main stream and is lined with an impervious membrane.

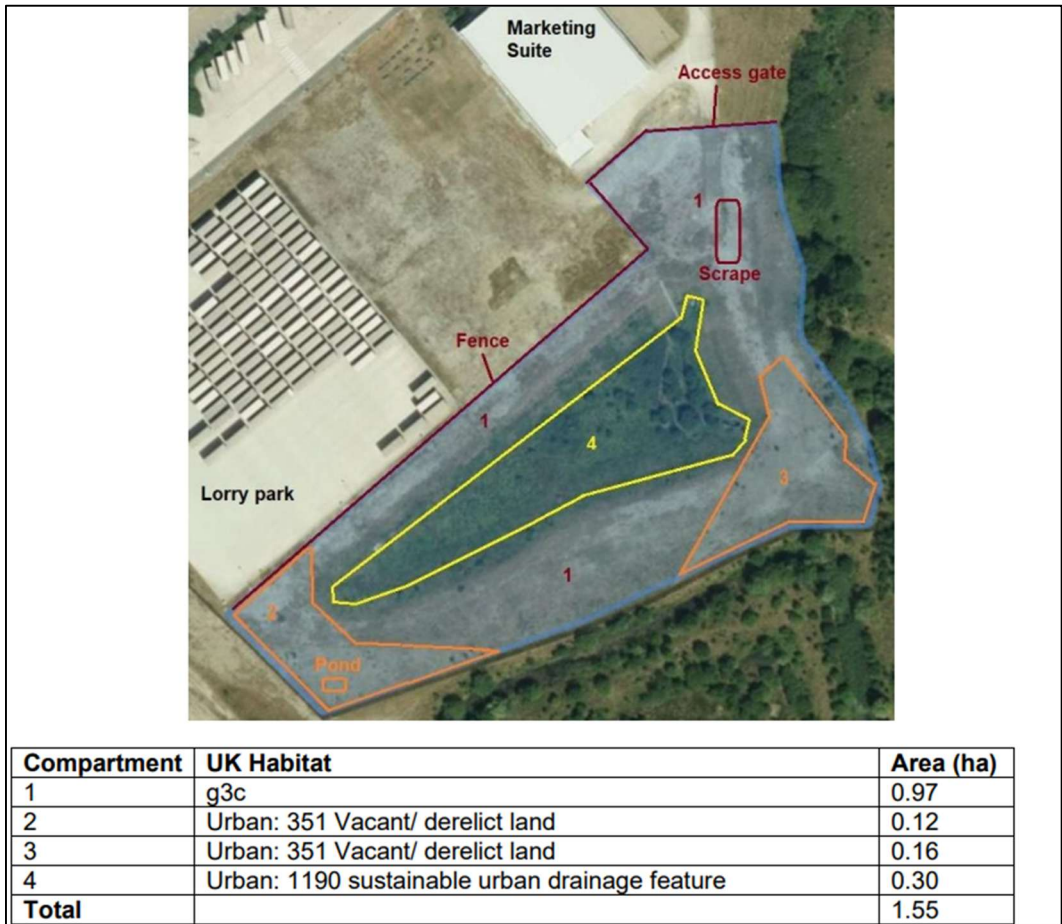


Figure 2: Baseline habitat map of proposed nature reserve showing proposed pond and scrape features (Gray's Ecology January 2021).

Habitat management

Generally, the approach to the nature reserve is to adopt minimal intervention as the intention is to allow natural processes to deliver the desired outcome—a functioning habitat of grasslands, reedbeds, and aquatic features.

The nature reserve is fenced off to prevent accidental damage through recreation and casual littering. The fencing will be checked every 6 months with repairs being prioritised. Litter picking will take place annually.

Grassland

Grassland condition to be maintained with annual checks for invasive non-native plant species as listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981). Proposed mowing/strimming only if surrounding scrub/unmaintained ground begins to encroach to prevent the grass becoming overtaken by rushes, which might self-seed here if it is consistently damp.

SUDS feature

Pioneering species identified in 2020 should be allowed to establish and mature for a period of 6-8 years. No management should be undertaken during this time. Once established the scrub should endure an annual cut back. 10% of the scrub should be cut each year. Areas of scrub should be cut

in rotation - this will allow an age range of species to form alongside rides and glades within the scrub. To retain structure, pruning should occur as and when required so to reduce any shrub species out competing any other shrubs. Annual checks undertaken for invasive non-native plant species as listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981).

Pond

Regular checks undertaken for invasive non-native plant species as listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981). Clearing only to take place if any one species is outcompeting others and becoming dominant. The pond is not fed by nutrient rich agricultural run off and so algae blooms and reedmace are not anticipated to be an issue. However, if weed removal or clearing banks and deadwood is required measures taken should be proportionate and not affect all of the water body at any one time. Removed material will be laid on the pond banks overnight to allow creatures to vacate before being removed and disposed of appropriately.

Habitat Monitoring

The Applicant will submit monitoring photos at years 5, 10, and 15 to evidence the condition of the planting.