

AFTERCARE, PROGRESS AND MANAGEMENT SCHEDULE REPORT 2025

Prepared by MWP Planning with input from ERAP (Consultant Ecologists) Ltd

1.0 2025 ANNUAL AFTERCARE REPORT

1.1 The Aftercare Aims are to:

- Establish, conserve and protect pond (including aquatic and marginal), woodland, scrub, wetland and neutral dry grassland habitats to the areas shown on drawing G110-202 Rev 3 and implemented in a phased manner as shown on drawing G110-262 Rev 1.

Note: The 2002 "Brief Management Plan" from which these aims are drawn (section 2.1) referred to drawings G110-011 Rev 3 and G110-061. Drawing G110-061 did not show how restoration was to be phased and is thought to have been included in error. Drawing G110-011 Rev3 has been replaced by G110-202 Rev 3 and the phasing plan G110-262 Rev 1) which was approved as a discharge of condition 8 on 22 June 2018 under planning reference 2018/91458.

- Continue to comply with the requirements of the Natural England European Protected Species Mitigation (EPSM) licence;
- Improve the ecological value of the site and increase biological interest in the surrounding local environment with reference to the Kirklees Biodiversity Strategy¹;
- Maintain the area in a safe and visually attractive condition;
- Implement the recommendations of the pond / amphibian monitoring survey reports²; and
- Ensure that a checklist (or similar) is available to facilitate record keeping and to the preparation of progress / monitoring reports for distribution as required.

1.2 The Aftercare Objectives are to:

Pond Habitats (aquatic / marginal)

- Maintain and enhance the aquatic and terrestrial habitats for great crested newt and amphibians and to conserve viable populations and to promote population increase and dispersal;
- Maintain the quality of the ponds and the area of open water habitats;
- Encourage natural colonisation of native species within the pond habitats;

New and Retained Woodland/Scrub

- Establish the planted trees, shrubs and ground cover and improve the ecological value of the area (note: native species only);
- Allow natural colonisation of native species within the woodland and scrub areas;

Wetland

- Establish the planted trees, shrubs and marginal wetland species and improve the ecological value of the area;
- Allow natural colonisation of native species within the wetland areas

¹ <https://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/delivering-services/pdf/biodiversity-strategy.pdf>

² Most recent report is *Laneside Quarry, Kirkheaton HD5 ONT. Results of Great Crested Newt Monitoring Surveys 2021* (ERAP (Consultant Ecologists) Ltd, October 2021).

Neutral Grassland

- Establish and manage appropriately a low maintenance species rich grassland with wild flowers, managed with grazing where appropriate;
- Maintain low soil fertility;
- Control the encroachment of excessive scrub growth and encourage natural colonisation of native species;

Temporary Agricultural Grassland

- Maintain fences and gates;
- Stock grazing to manage grass;

Control of Invasive Species

- Remove or control invasive weed species;
- Remove or control dominant species within individual habitats;

Protection of Habitats

- Reduce disturbance of habitats and discourage direct public access and control;
- Prohibit angling activities;

General

- Maintain a site that is free of litter and other debris;
- Maintain paths and estate fabric (paths, fences) in a safe and functional condition.

2.0 MAINTENANCE / MANAGEMENT WORKS COMPLETED IN 2024/5

2.1 General / All Areas

- 1 Inspection of grasslands for excessive growth of thistles, docks or other pernicious weeds. Plants hand dug / topped of as needed³ (no persistent weedkiller will be used on this site (with the exception of the areas of Japanese Knotweed);
- 2 Weekly litter picks;
- 4 Sycamore seedlings removal where necessary;
- 5 Drainage channels cleared of debris and undesirable sediment;
- 6 Weekly inspections of newt exclusion fencing and repairs, where necessary;
- 7 Strimming/control of vegetation along the outer perimeter of the newt exclusion fencing.

2.2 Pond and Wetland Areas

- 1 Inspections of pond conditions and Habitat Suitability Index (HSI) assessment carried out in Spring 2024. Summary report only made available by ERAP;
- 2 Maintenance of open water conditions by control (hand removal) of Bulrush (*Typha latifolia*) with the priority identified at ponds NP8, NP9, NP17, NP19 to NP22 and ongoing elsewhere (outside the bird and amphibian breeding season) in accordance with the 2021 monitoring report; To be carried out in November 2025.
- 3 Control of self-seeded Willow (*Salix* species) and Alder (*Alnus glutinosa*) around all ponds (carried out in November 2025 and outside the bird nesting season);

2.3 Woodland

- 1 Removal of rabbit guards, canes and spirals partially completed (on-going);
- 2 Planted stock inspected; no replacement required;
- 3 Hedges trimmed where necessary (outside the bird nesting season);

2.4 Neutral Grassland

- 1 Topping off of undesirable herbs such as thistles and docks carried out;
- 2 Removal of Sycamore and other non-native seedlings / woody species completed;
- 3 Fence off from Temporary Agricultural Grassland where necessary;
- 4 Spray off existing grass in late summer and re-sow with EM1 Basic General Meadow Mixture in autumn. This has not yet been done but will be in November 2025.

2.5 Temporary Agricultural Grassland

- 1 Normal agricultural practices including stocking with sheep, goats, llama and cattle;
- 2 Maintain fences and gates.

2.6 Footpaths and Fencing

- 1 Footpaths inspected and margins strimmed to clear overgrowth where necessary
- 2 All timber post and wire fencing inspected and repaired where necessary.

³ ERAP (Consultant Ecologists) Ltd has advised that the allocation of some areas of Common Ragwort (*Senecio jacobaea*) and Creeping Thistle / Spear Thistle (*Cirsium arvense / vulgare*) is desirable in appropriate areas to provide a food source for cinnabar moth (*Tyria jacobaeae*) (a Priority Species) and feeding birds such as goldfinch (*Carduelis carduelis*) respectively. Appropriate areas will be identified as part of the review and update of the Habitat Management Plan.

- 3 Footpath 10 to be re-opened; estimated by end August 2025.

2.7 Change of Ecological Consultant

- 1 Issues have been experienced with the ERAP ecological consultants in recent years, especially in the production of reports on work carried out on site. ERAP will no longer be employed to carry out work on site and RDF ecological consultants has now been commissioned. The Great Crested Newt Licence will be transferred to RDF in Summer 2025.
- 2 A planning application to extend the life of the site is to be prepared. This will require the preparation of a Preliminary Ecological Assessment (PEA) and subsequent reports on protected species and biodiversity. The groundwork for this assessment will be carried out in summer 2025 but the results are unlikely to be available in time for the August Annual Meeting.
- 3 The 2025/6 Management Programme will therefore be a rolled over version of the 2024/5 Programme.
- 4 It is unlikely that any new areas will be available for restoration in the short to medium term. Aftercare will therefore continue to apply to the permanently restored areas shown on drawing 10167/75A as previous agreed with Kirklees Council.

3.0 MANAGEMENT / MONITORING PROGRAMME / PRIORITIES FOR 2025/6

3.1 The 2025/6 Programme is presented in more detail in the accompanying document Management Programme for 2025. For ease of reference the actions are presented as a table below

Note: TCQL = Thomas Crompton Quarries Ltd

		Notes	Responsibility	Time	Status
3.1	Ecological Monitoring / Guidance				
3.1.1	Review, update and distribution of Habitat Management Plan	To make reference to Kirklees Biodiversity Strategy, and consider the 2019 Bioblitz data species in the hope they might return, the 2021 monitoring report and the updated walkovers)	Ecologist with TCQL	Summer 2025	
3.1.2	Walkover ecological surveys of habitat compartments	To be carried out through the seasons to determine / updated the current ecological baseline with the focus on the condition assessment of habitats to inform management priorities and the search for protected and Priority Species. Collate plant species lists for relevant habitats / compartments, as needed	Ecologist with TCQL	Summer 2025	
3.1.3	Prepare Management / Maintenance / Monitoring Programme for 2025/6	Programme for 2024/5 rolled over in absence of new ecological assessments	TCQL	November 2023	
3.2	General Site				
3.2.1	Litter pick across the site	Dispose of waste appropriately	TCQL	All year	
3.2.2	Inspect newt exclusion fencing	Monthly inspections. Repair, as needed	TCQL	All year	
3.2.3	Remove / control vegetation on outer perimeter of the newt exclusion fencing	Strip of 1 metre around whole perimeter. In the plant growing season	TCQL	April to September inclusive	
3.3	Ponds				
3.3.1	Continue control / hand pulling of Bulrush	Outside of bird and amphibian breeding season Aim for 75% of pond area to be clear of Bulrush.	TCQL	November	

3.3.2	Control of self-seeded trees and shrubs at pond margins	Outside of bird and amphibian breeding season	TCQL	November	
3.3.3	Great crested newt monitoring surveys at all ponds	Updated Habitat Suitability Index assessments at all ponds. Licensed population size class assessment surveys scheduled for 2026 (unless otherwise agreed with Natural England)	TCQL / Ecologist	Mid-March to mid-June inclusive	
3.4	Woodland and Scrub / Hedgerows				
3.4.1	Complete removal of tree ties and stakes	Outside bird nesting season	TCDL	September to February inclusive	
3.4.2	Selectively thin planted woodland where appropriate. [Not felt to be necessary]	If selective thinning is now appropriate, works to be carried out outside the nesting bird season. Arisings to be chipped and / or used to create deadwood habitat piles in appropriate areas (to be advised by ecologist)	TCQL and appointed arborist	September to February inclusive	
3.4.3	Maintain hedgerows at an agreed height and width	Outside bird nesting season	TCQL	September to February inclusive	
3.5	Neutral Grassland				
3.5.1	Inspect grassland areas for thistles, docks or other pernicious weeds	Treat / remove as needed	TCQL	May to September inclusive	
3.5.2	Control Bramble that is encroaching over the grassland	Control by brush cutting / removal as needed. Areas to be carried out in rotation and to be advised by ecologist (to ensure habitats for species such as grasshopper warbler and other nesting birds are retained)	TCQL Ecologist	September to February inclusive	
3.5.3	Control self-seeded trees and shrubs	Control by brush cutting / removal as needed.	TCQL Ecologist	September to February inclusive	

3.5.4	Identify grassland areas to be managed for field voles (for foraging barn owls), wildflowers/invertebrates and ground nesting birds. Create and implement appropriate management plans for each	To be assessed by new ecologist in summer 2025 with recommendations derived.	TCQL	May to September inclusive	
3.5.5	Re-establish neutral grassland by reseeding etc	Maintain fence and gated boundaries; repair where necessary. Manage stock numbers to avoid over grazing. No grazing between March and August. Mow late August, leave aftermath on ground for 7 days and remove.	TCDL TCQL TCQL	Any time	
3.6	Footpaths and Fencing				
3.6.1	Inspect footpaths annually	Carry out work as necessary to ensure the underlying material is firm yet free draining and make good any low spots.	TCQL	Any time	
3.6.2	Dress footpaths, as necessary, surface with fine gritstone	To ensure an even covering not less than 25mm deep is maintained	TCQL	Any time	
3.6.3	Strim edges to define footpath edges	As needed	TCQL	Any time	
3.6.4	inspect all posts and rails to fencing	Repair or replace as necessary to achieve stock proof barrier	TCQL	Any time	
3.7	Installation of Bird and Bat Boxes				
	Supply and installation and set out in the Habitat Management Plan (ERAP Ltd, 2015-195, November 2015)	To be assessed by new ecologist in summer 2025 with recommendations to be produced.	TCQL	Ideally before March 2026	

4.0 APPENDIX

Laneside Quarry, Kirkheaton HD5 ONT. Summary Results of Great Crested Newt Monitoring Surveys 2024 (ERAP (Consultant Ecologists) Ltd)

Separate document