

BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN SCHEME LOWER VALLEY FARM



Delivering Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) at landscape scale in South Cambridgeshire to maximise environmental and social outcomes

This is an exciting opportunity for developers to become part of an innovative scheme and to be at the forefront of a strategic ecological opportunity area

Distances

- Fulbourn 2 miles
 - Great Shelford 4 miles
 - Cambridge City 5 miles
- (All distances are approximate)

Biodiversity units for sale

Enquiries

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Introduction

To provide a solution to developers required to deliver net gains for biodiversity, Bidwells has partnered with Cambridgeshire County Council to develop an innovative scheme which enables biodiversity units to be purchased 'off-the-shelf', allowing offsite BNG provision for developments within the Greater Cambridge area.

Location

The site is located to the west of the A11 and south of Balsham Road, situated to the southeast of Cambridge City.

Considered of high strategic significance due to the site being located within the Cambridge Nature Network and in close proximity to surrounding SSSIs.

Landscape character

The site and surrounding countryside are predominantly agricultural, comprising large fields bounded by hedgerows, as well as scattered small woodlands.

Land size

The farm is circa 140 hectares (346 acres).

Geology and soils

The land is characterised as shallow well drained calcareous course loamy and sandy soils over chalk rubble. Also, deep non-calcareous loamy soils in places.

Current use and baseline habitats

The land is principally farmed for combinable crops. Baseline habitat is predominantly arable, with boundary hedgerows and small areas of woodland.

Habitat creation

Creation of high-quality biodiverse habitats targeting 'good' condition as defined by the DEFRA Biodiversity Metric 3.0, comprising:

- Botanically diverse calcareous and other neutral grassland
- Scrub and woodland
- Species rich hedgerows

Land management

Strategic spatial planning of habitat delivery across the site has been undertaken and a robust and flexible long-term management structure is in place to maximise environmental outcomes.



Lower Valley Farm biodiversity enhancement plan



Woodland



Species-rich hedgerows



Dense scrub



Grazing



Hay meadow



Pollinators



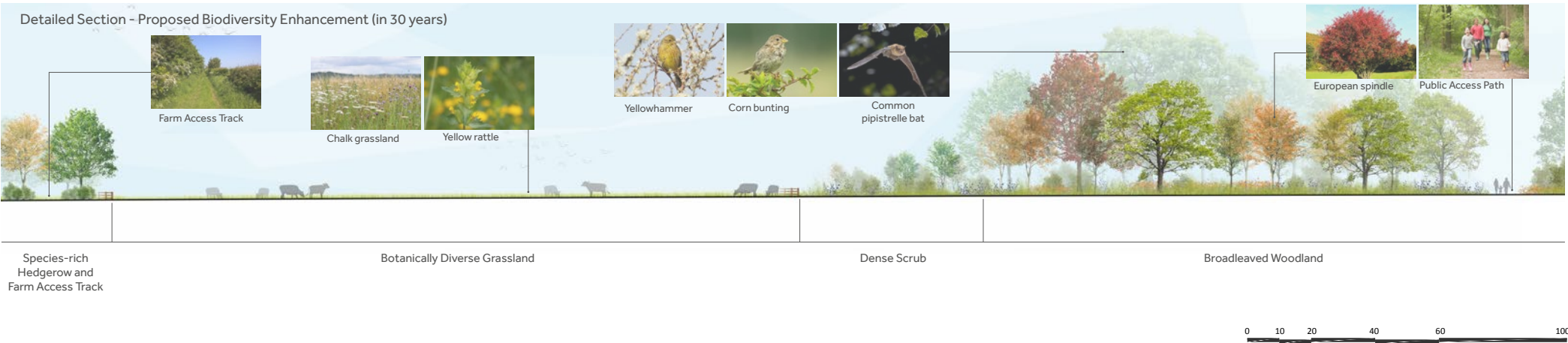
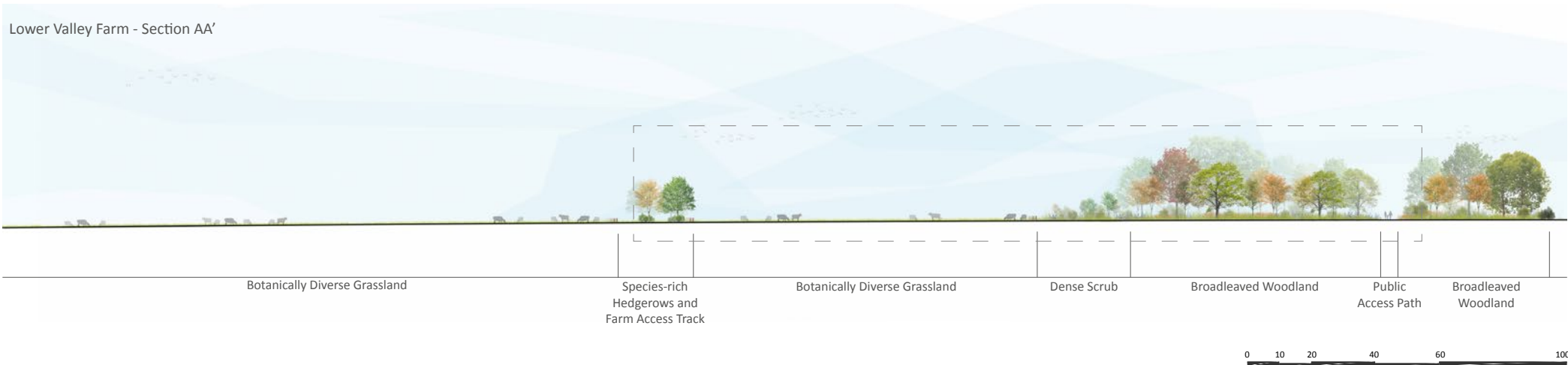
Pathway through woodland



Viewpoint and picnic area



Section illustrating proposed habitats



Method and terms of sale

Biodiversity units which meet local developer compensation requirements in terms of habitat types and extents can be purchased 'off-the-shelf'.

An option for the purchase of biodiversity units will be granted to purchasers, allowing them to secure planning consent before funding the physical habitat creation. The physical habitat creation works will commence once the option is called or in advance as an active habitat bank.

Environmental outcomes

This innovative habitat creation scheme will not only benefit nature but also contribute to a range of other ecosystem services including:

- Community access to nature
- Improved amenity value
- Improved air and water quality
- Natural flood attenuation
- Carbon sequestration

Scheme benefits

There are huge advantages in delivering BNG requirements through a scheme of this nature:

- Providing significant contributions to recognised local ecological priorities
- Owned and administered by a highly credible and committed public body
- Greater confidence in the security of long-term sustainable management beyond the requisite contractual 30-year period

The scheme aligns with the South Cambridgeshire Biodiversity Strategy objectives and has the support of the Local Planning Authority and other key stakeholders.

The scheme will become a showcase for the effective delivery of BNG, demonstrating how offsetting development through habitat creation on a landscape scale is most efficient, cost-effective and maximises environmental and social outcomes.

The provision of biodiversity units 'off-the-shelf' reduces the risks and delays to developers in seeking credible solutions to satisfy offsite BNG requirements

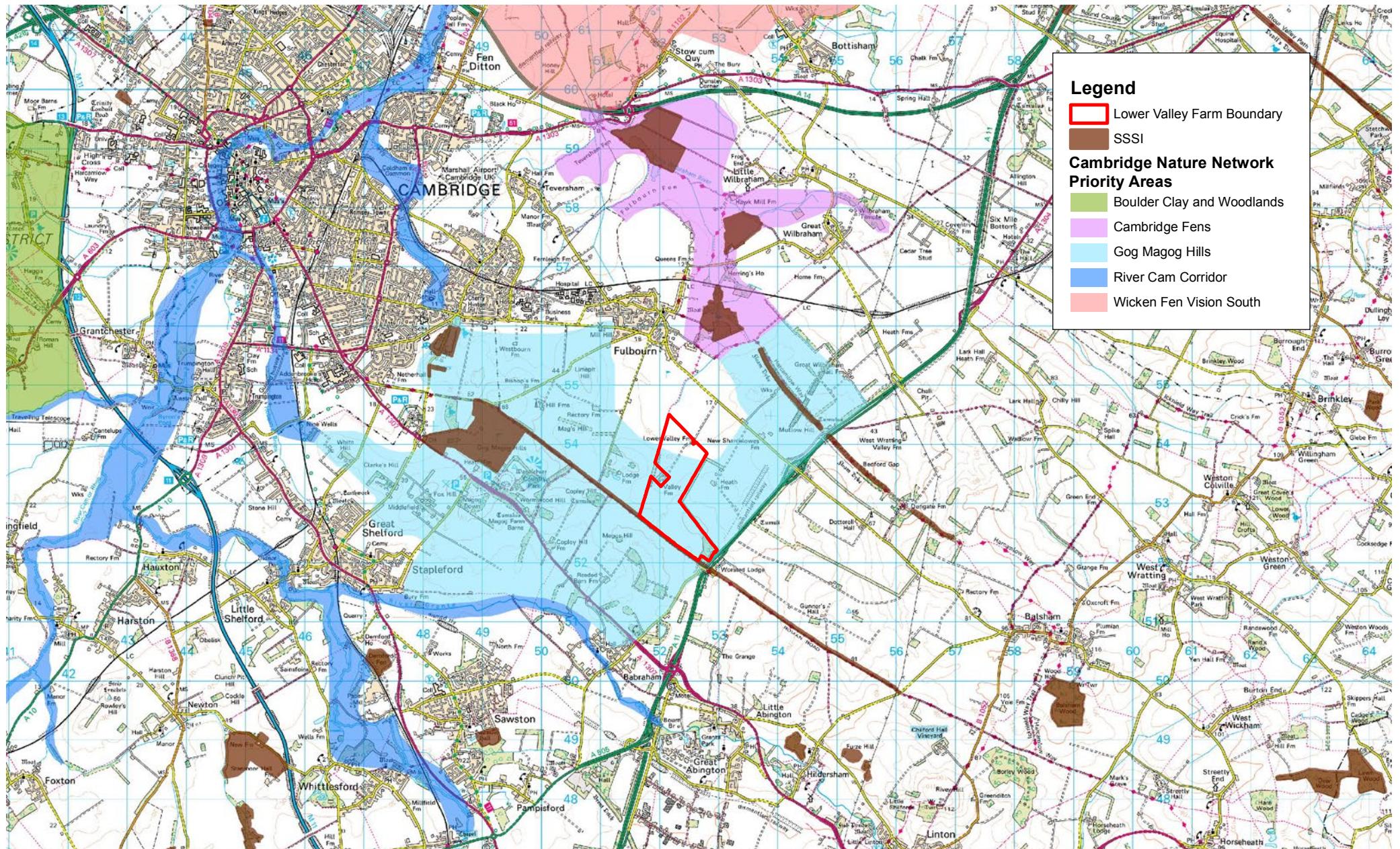
Project website

Further information about this scheme can be found at the following dedicated web address:

www.bidwells.co.uk/LowerValleyFarmBNG



Regional context



Further Information

Should you have any queries or wish to make an inspection, please contact:

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