

Site Optimisation and Closure Works

Biodiversity

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Surveys of the ecology and habitats within the Low Level Waste Repository (LLWR) have shown that it incorporates a range of different environments, some of which support habitats whilst others, such as the operational areas and within the vaults, do not. These habitats support a range of species.

Where necessary, appropriate licenses will be obtained prior to works to identified habitats take place.

Impacts

The ecological assessment has identified impacts on on-site habitats supporting the following species.

- Pennyroyal on the southern edge of the trench cap
- Great Crested newts and Natterjack toads in breeding ponds and associated habitats within and around the development area
- Reptiles in grassland on the trench cap and in stockpile areas
- Breeding birds nesting in plantation woodland and on grassland on the trench cap

No significant impacts have been identified on habitats supporting: barn owls, bats, badgers, otters, deer.

Neither will habitats in the Drigg Coast SAC/SSSI and other non-statutory designated sites close to the LLWR site be affected.

Mitigation and Enhancements

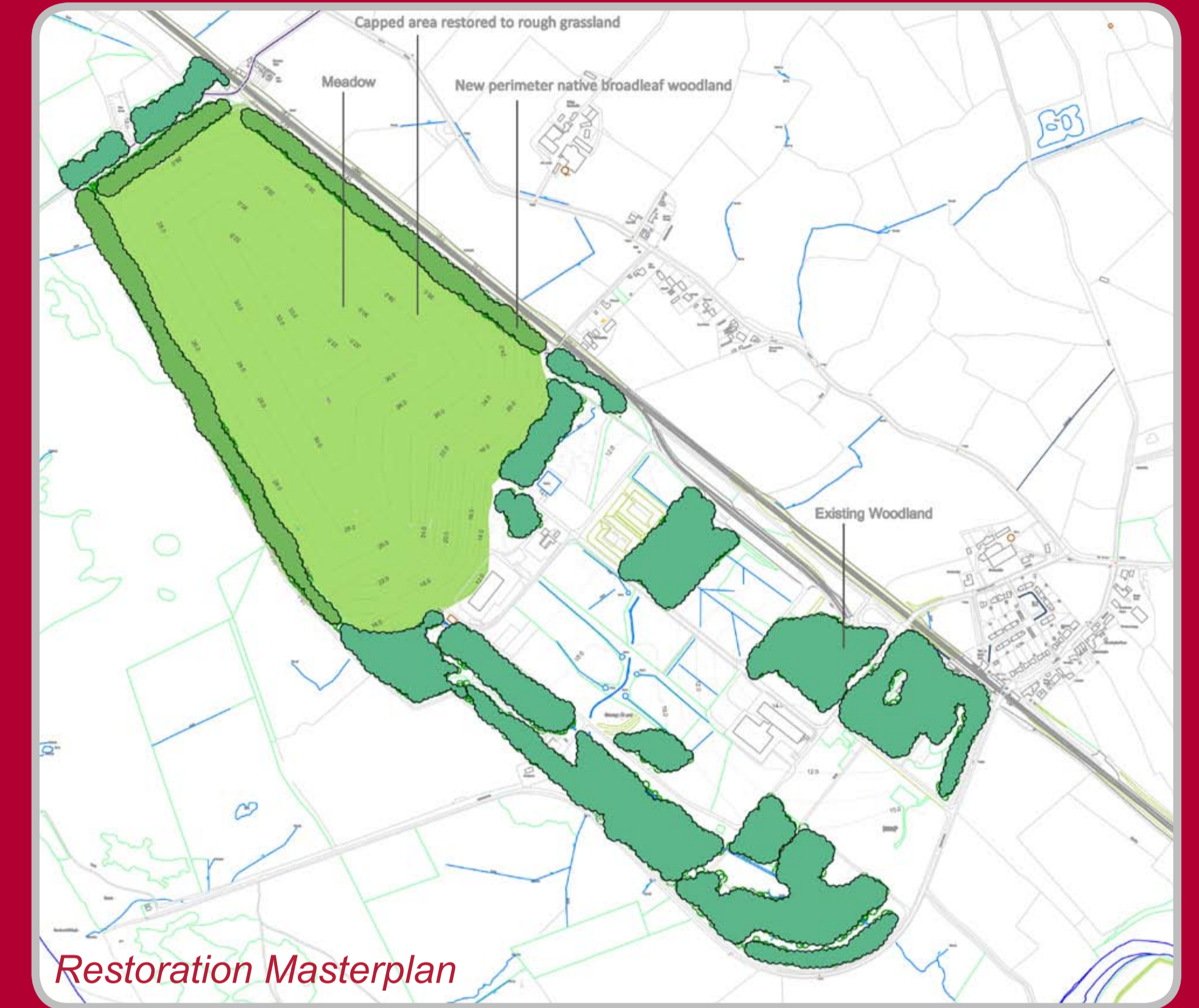
Key mitigation measures that have been included with the proposed scheme design are broadly:

- Those that avoid the adverse impact (for example habitat retention)
- Where this is not possible, methods and designs to minimise/reduce/ameliorate the magnitude of impact have been considered
- Biodiversity enhancement through habitat restoration (ensuring net long-term benefits in terms for habitat quality and biodiversity potential)

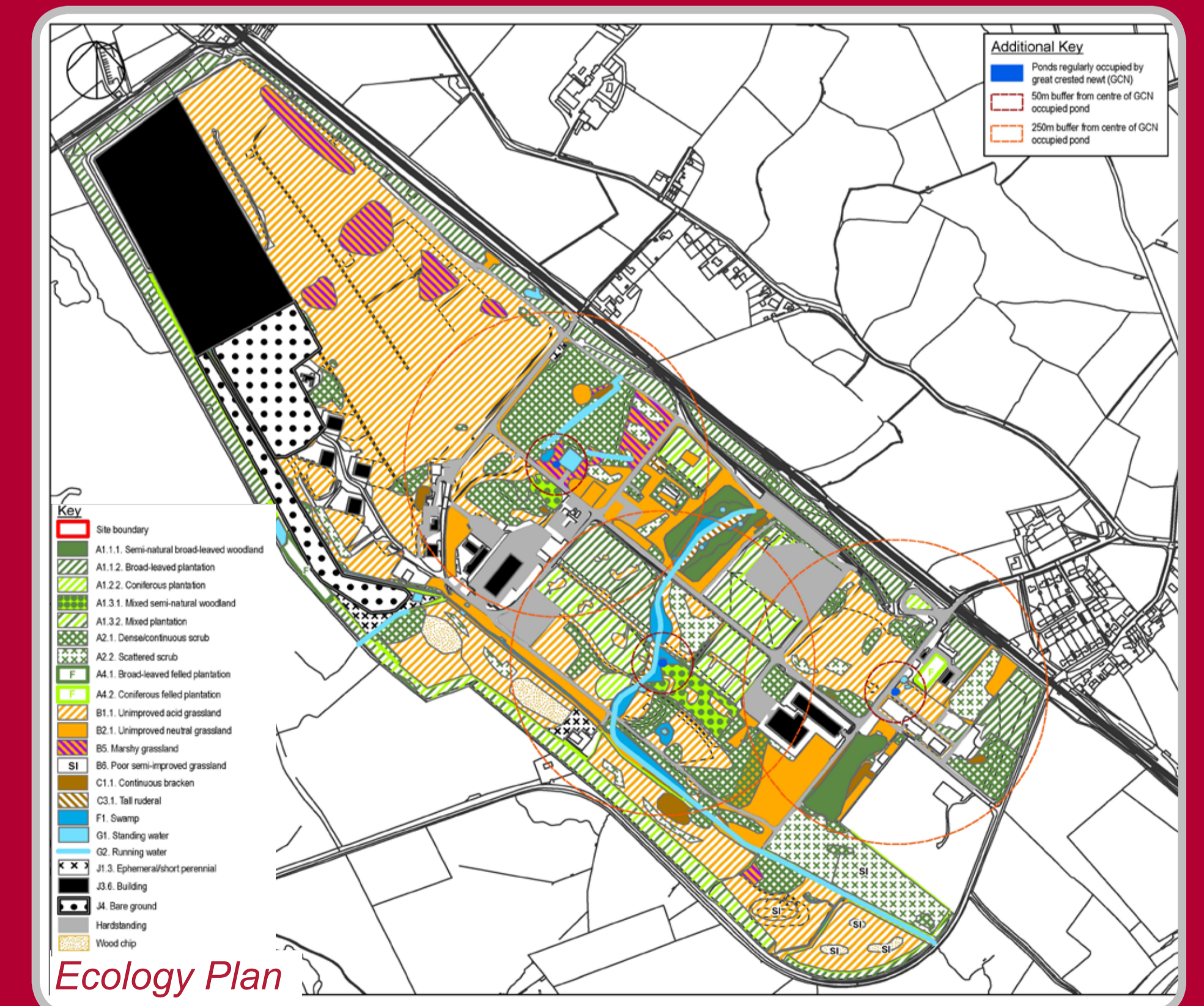
The restoration proposals, in particular the habitat reinstatement on the final trench and vault cap will secure a favourable nature conservation end-use and that will create permanent open grassland habitats of at least comparable nature conservation value to those existing.

In addition, biodiversity enhancement will be integrated into the restoration proposals to ensure a net biodiversity gain, specifically:

- Translocation of the colony of pennyroyal to a suitable location away from disturbed areas
- Great crested newts and natterjack toads will be moved from affected areas to suitable locations away from construction areas and habitat enhancement measures will ensure optimal habitats
- Reptiles will be translocated to a suitable area within the Repository which will be managed specifically for the benefit of reptiles. Artificial hibernacula will also be created in this area to provide overwintering habitat for reptiles.
- Breeding birds will be protected by not removing vegetation within the breeding season (approximately March to September). A range of different types of bird boxes will be erected on suitable mature trees within the LLWR site to maximise the diversity of the species attracted. Grassland associated with the final cap will ultimately result in a increase of approximately 28 ha of habitat suitable for ground nesting species such as skylark and meadow pipit
- Other opportunities for on-going enhancement of on-site habitats for barn owl, bats, badger and otter have been assessed



Restoration Masterplan



Ecology Plan