

Sutton Courtenay Quarry

Site Biodiversity Action Plan



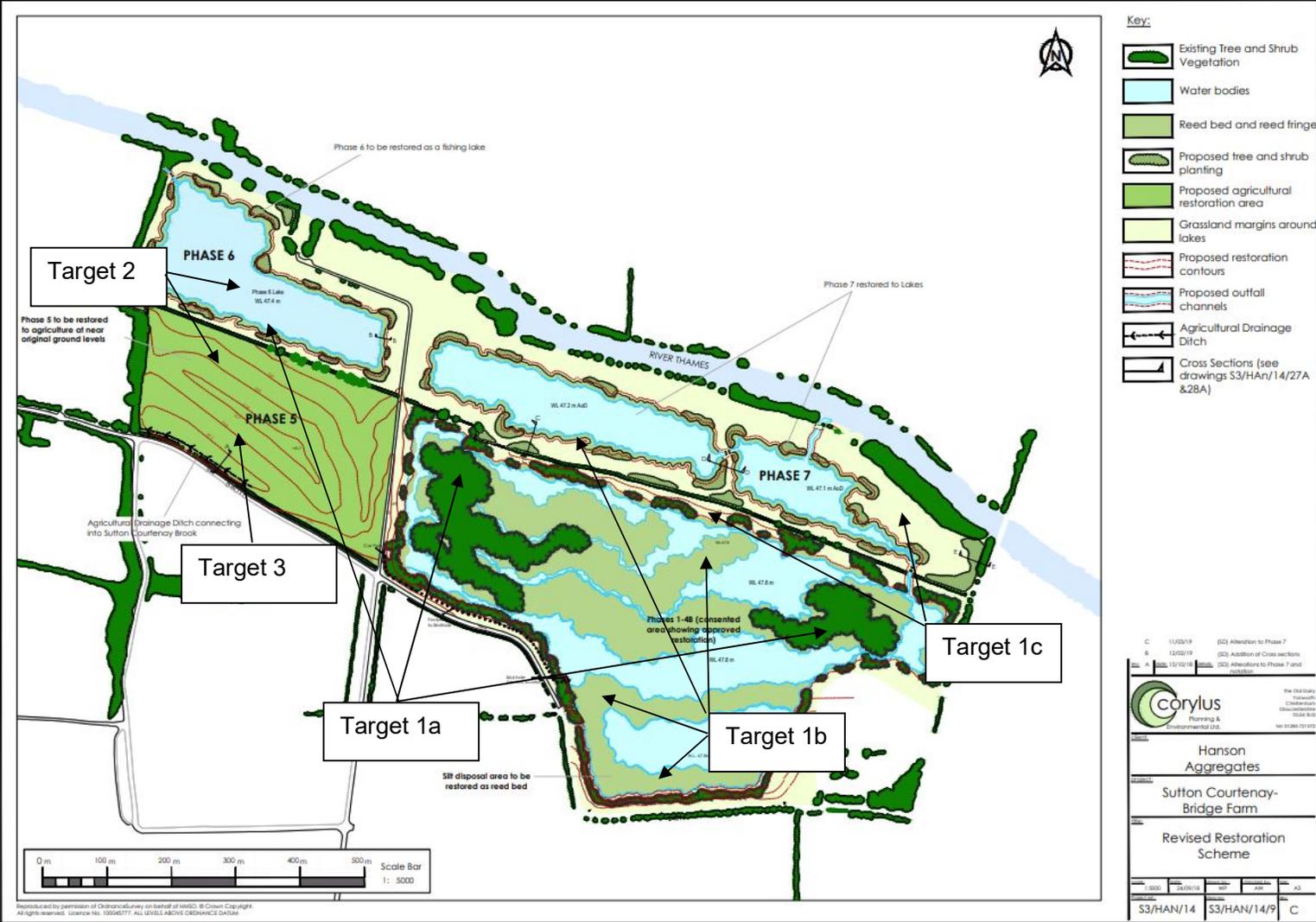
Prepared: 2010

Updated: Dec 2013
Jan 2023

Site Information- Sutton Courtenay

Site Name and Location (incl. Grid Ref.)	Bridge Farm, Sutton Courtenay, Oxon Site entrance SU 516 941 Weighbridge/office SU 513 936
Hanson Company	Hanson Aggregates
BAP(s) that will be targeted	UKBAP ONCF - Oxfordshire's Biodiversity Action Plan
Habitat(s) to be developed	Reedbed Wet Woodland Lowland meadow/Floodplain grazing marsh Eutrophic standing waters
BAP species to be encouraged	Water vole Otter
Designated Natural Area	Thames and Avon Vale
Background and site description	<p>Typical Thames valley floodplain terrace gravel pit to the north of the historic Sutton Courtenay pit complex much of which is now landfilled with pfa and domestic waste.</p> <p>31Ha Bridge Farm Phases 1-4 excavation commenced in 2009 and completed 2019; 27Ha River Fields Phases 5-7 commenced 2018 but awaiting completion of 5&6 subject to variation to Planning for road access and inert importation. Original land use of working areas and all surrounding land was productive arable cropping.</p> <p>Progressive restoration of freehold phases 1-4 comprised partial backfilling with overburden in a series of long fingers, avoiding a large open water body for bird strike mitigation, has created reedbed, wet woodland and lake margin grassland habitats.</p> <p>Phase 5 will be restored by inert importation to agricultural use, Phases 6&7 approved for amenity lakes and fishing.</p> <p>Major OCC Highways development of HIF road and new river crossing proposed for 2024-26 which will impact parts of the restored land</p>
National designation (SSSI etc) within 1km	n/a
Resource Requirements- comment on cost if appropriate	Restoration accruals sufficient to achieve approved restoration and aftercare schemes. 20 year extended aftercare scheme would benefit from local NGO partnerships and conservation volunteer input
Contribution to biodiversity	Habitat creation through ongoing site restoration and subsequent long term 20 year aftercare period to secure nature conservation benefits and high quality wetland habitat. Ephemeral bare ground habitats for nesting birds and invertebrates during operational period.
Partners and Local initiatives	Oxfordshire Nature Conservation Forum/Wild Oxfordshire. Partnership with RSPB/BBOWT/FHT desirable for long term 20-year extended aftercare period. Sutton Courtenay Millennium Common Committee
Other documents supporting the site BAP	Approved Restoration Plan S55m/87e 5-Year Outline Aftercare Scheme S106 Extended Aftercare Management Plan (required min. 1 year prior to completion of initial 5-year aftercare)

SITE PLAN – APPROVED RIVER FIELDS RESTORATION PLAN S3/HAN/14/9



Action Plan

Item No.	Objective	Biodiversity Feature	Targets	Tasks	Assessing Indicator	Responsible Person	Timescale (Completion)
1a	Habitat creation through ongoing quarry restoration	Wet woodland	Create and manage >4ha wet woodland and carr habitat on backfilled fingers and shoreline tree/scrub groups	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Complete re-grading of backfill fingers to correct levels above final water level on completion. 2. plant tree and shrub groups around lake margins 3. plant wet woodland if necessary depending on extent of natural regeneration and requirements of OCC HIF scheme 	<p>Area of wet woodland planted or regenerated</p> <p>Number of trees planted</p>	Site Manager	<p>Finger 3 regrading completed 2018 and tree planted, Fingers 1&2 completed 2019</p> <p>Phase 7 tree planting 2023</p> <p>Phase 6 lake margin planting 2027</p>
1b	Habitat creation through ongoing quarry restoration	Reedbed Fen Eutrophic standing water Water vole Otter Reedbed bird species	Create and manage >10ha reedbed and fen habitat on backfill fingers and lake shorelines in accordance with approved Restoration and Aftercare schemes and S106 Agreements	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Implement approved re-grading of backfill fingers to correct levels above final water level on completion 2. plant <i>Phragmites</i> reed on backfill fingers and shorelines as per aftercare scheme, and maintain to full establishment 3. Monitor site for presence of otters and water vole and reedbed birds 4. Maintain Phase 1-4 reedbeds for 20-year 	<p>Area of reedbed established</p> <p>“</p> <p>Monitoring records</p> <p>Annual Aftercare</p>	Site Manager Landscape manager/ local volunteers/ ecological consultants Landscape Manager	<p>Fingers 1,2 and most of 3 regraded 2016-2019 and reed planting completed 2021</p> <p>Finger 4 regrading and Phase 4&6 shorelines by Q3 2027</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing for duration of</p>

				Extended Aftercare period following initial statutory 5-years	reporting and S106 Extended Aftercare Management Plan	external consultants or NGO partners	S106 extended Aftercare period
1c	Habitat creation through ongoing quarry restoration	Grazing marsh or lowland meadow	Create and manage lake margin grassland as MG5 flower-rich meadow/pasture	<p>1. Seed lake margin grassland with appropriate locally sourced wildflower mix or green hay-strewing of local material</p> <p>2. Manage lake margin grassland by appropriate hay cutting or cut and removal of arisings, or by grazing</p>	<p>Area of MG5 meadow established and managed.</p> <p>Periodic species monitoring and assessment of sward content/quality</p>	<p>Site Manager</p> <p>Agricultural tenant</p> <p>Ecological consultant</p>	<p>Seeding to be completed within 12 months of completion of lake margin earthworks and bund removal.</p> <p>Phase 1/2/3/7 seeded summer 2022</p>
2	Manage ephemeral habitats for birds during operational phases	Breeding waders incl. Little Ringed Plover, Skylark, Lapwing	<p>Ensure sufficient bare ground habitats available for breeding waders</p> <p>Manage virgin un-stripped land and interim restored land to minimise conflict with breeding birds</p>	<p>1. Careful timing of stripping to avoid ground nesting birds.</p> <p>2. monitor stripping land, stripped ground and proposed restoration areas for ground nesting waders and ensure any necessary standoffs retained during earthworks</p> <p>3. seek and develop relationship with local bird watchers</p>	<p>Routine bird surveys</p> <p>Breeding bird records</p>	<p>Site Manager</p> <p>Landscape manager, volunteer bird watchers?</p>	Ongoing during remaining operational life 2023-2026
3	Sensitive management of agricultural aftercare areas	Farmland birds Lowland meadow flora and fauna	<p>Negotiate with surface landowner of Phase 5 to implement appropriate management of restored agricultural land to benefit birds and invertebrates.</p> <p>Include measures in any subsequent tenancy</p>	<p>1. Retain and manage un-cropped field margins etc. in accordance with Environmental Stewardship best practice guidance.</p> <p>2. Seek to implement low input agricultural systems</p>	<p>Area of arable farmland managed as conservation headlands/ game cover strips/beetle banks/skylark squares etc.</p>	<p>Landscape manager, Surface landowner, volunteer bird watchers?</p>	During 7-year statutory Aftercare period (c. 2026-2033) or subject to handback to landowner

			agreements during aftercare period	and grassland rather than arable husbandry within restored land, subject to NE and landowner Aftercare requirements.	Farmland bird survey records.		
4	Partnership working	All wetland features	Develop links with likely partner organisations to secure long term future of site, during and potentially after S106 extended aftercare period	<p>1. Make contact with possible partner organisations RSPB, BBOWT, Land Trust , Freshwater Habitats Trust etc.</p> <p>2. Agree extent of partner involvement</p>	Regular meetings and agreements drawn up	Lands and Planning Manager, Landscape Manager	Agreement in place before end of statutory Aftercare period