The 20ha Greenfield site is a ‘Wildlife Network Site’ as designated by Bristol City Council. The site also houses several locally designated sites including Kings Weston Rhine Site of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCI) and a regionally significant water vole population.

The key issue of the ELMP over the 10 year plan period was developing a management/maintenance regime to promote biodiversity within the proposed site and ultimately enhance the qualities of the Wildlife Network Site through safeguarding the key ecological and landscape features and developing a 5.7ha Ecological Enhancement Area within the plan period.

A range of notable species and habitats are present at the site which required the completion of a number of monitoring surveys for breeding/overwintering birds, water vole, water shrew, reptiles, bats, badgers and important grassland communities. The survey data have led to changes in maintenance regimes and more informed approaches to the management and enhancement of key habitats at the site.

### Purpose of the project

The project initially sought to obtain detailed planning permission for the provision of a new access road (referred to as the ‘Eastern Access Road’) into the 55 acre Access 18 development site from Avonmouth Way on the fringes of Bristol. On the granting of planning permission for the construction of the new access road by Bristol City Council a subsequent Section 106 legal agreement was imposed to produce a 10 year Ecological and Landscape Management Plan (ELMP) commencing from June 2010 to 2020.

### Description of the project

The new road was needed to facilitate access between existing commercial properties along Avonmouth Way and those present on the Access 18 development site. In addition, the Section 106 Agreement required a management plan to be prepared and implemented to cover a ten year period specifying a strategy to promote biodiversity conservation at the 20ha site including details of safeguarding and enhancing key ecological & landscape features at the site.
Lessons learnt
Extensive consultations were undertaken with statutory consultees including Bristol City Council Biodiversity and Landscape Officers, Natural England and the Avon Wildlife Trust in the production of the original ELMP.

Through this iterative consultation process it was established that the production of Annual Action Plans at the start of each year of the ELMP and the production of year end monitoring reports would allow the key tasks to be delivered in a given year with the attainment of these actions documented in the year end monitoring report. This placed emphasis on continuous monitoring allowing the client’s Estates Management Team to improve and amend maintenance regimes in order to enhance the Wildlife Network Site.

A need was identified to move forward with the ELMP to balance the client’s long term aspirations for potentially developing parts of the greenfield ELMP site versus delivering the ELMP objectives themselves. However, overall whatever the client’s aspirations are for the future development of the site the key ecological and landscape interests will ultimately need to be safeguarded in any subsequent master planning proposals.

In addition, close liaison with Bristol City Council’s Biodiversity Officer has resulted in clear benefits in the provision of monitoring data gathered to date as part of the ELMP for breeding/over wintering birds, water vole and water shrew populations. This has contributed to local and regional data sets provided to the local biological records centre and local wildlife trust.

Overall, the client is aware of their continued obligation under the Section 106 legal agreement with five years remaining on the ELMP implementation. During the remainder of the plan period, a key task will be to transfer ELMP commitments across to the client’s Estates Management Team thereby gradually reducing the supervision / consultancy costs, where applicable and appropriate, leading to a more sustainable long-term maintenance strategy.

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