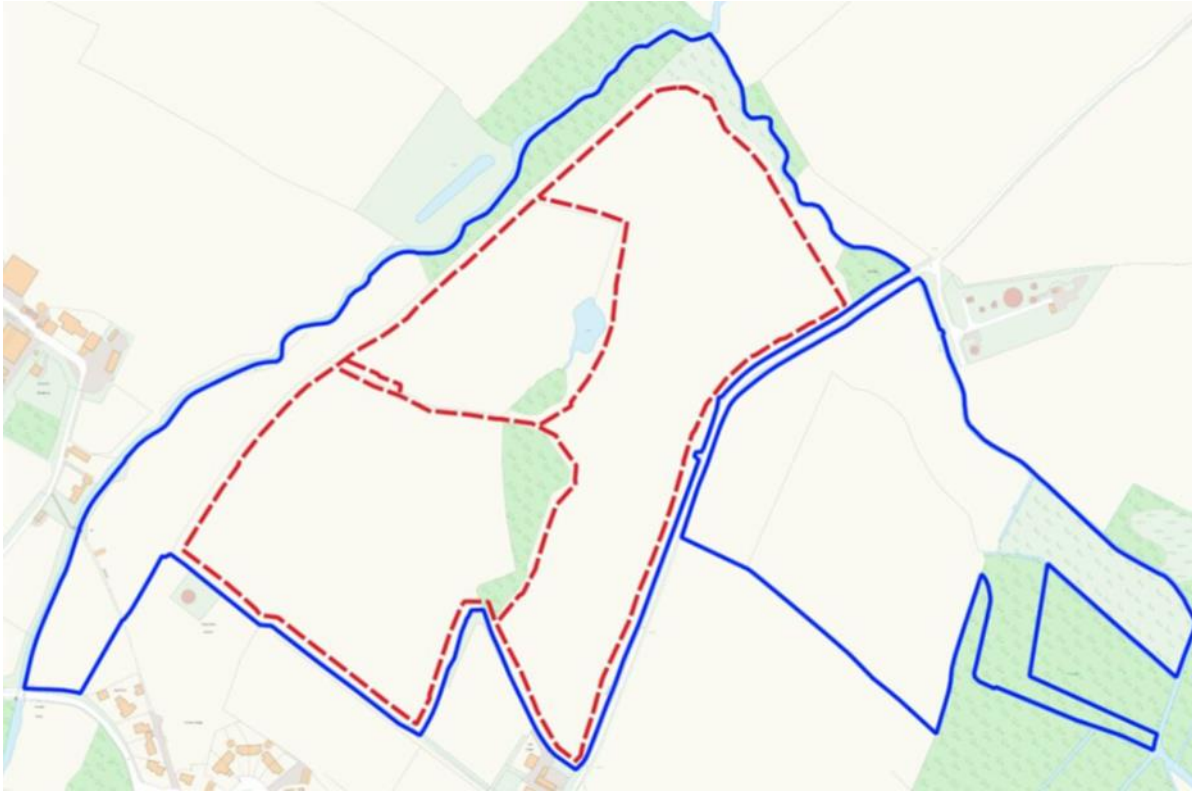


Welcome!

Richard Parmee
Biodiversity Manager



What land has been purchased?



- Approx. 25 hectares (62 acres)
- Mostly meadow
- Some woodland, wet woodland, reed beds and river frontage



Working Together

Why has MSDC purchased this land?

- Nature recovery – in response to biodiversity crisis
- Broader environmental benefits – including natural flood management, carbon storage
- Public access to nature – permissive paths not under threat!



Our Plans – First Steps: Understanding the Site

Ecology survey of the whole site

Desk study –

- Aerial photos
- Old maps
- Soil types
- Flood zones

Local Nature Recovery Strategy

Your input!



Ecology Survey

Six Priority Habitats:

- Deciduous woodland
- Veteran trees
- Coastal floodplain grazing marsh
- Reedbeds
- Alder woodland
- Semi-improved grassland

Also:

- Species-rich hedgerows
- Mature and notable trees
- Wet and coppiced woodland
- Pond
- Ditches
- Aquatic margins

Mosaic of habitats with potential for a wide range of species



Site History

Old map shows former field boundaries, three ponds and the farm



Aerial photo from 1940s shows the same, plus evidence that some fields were cultivated

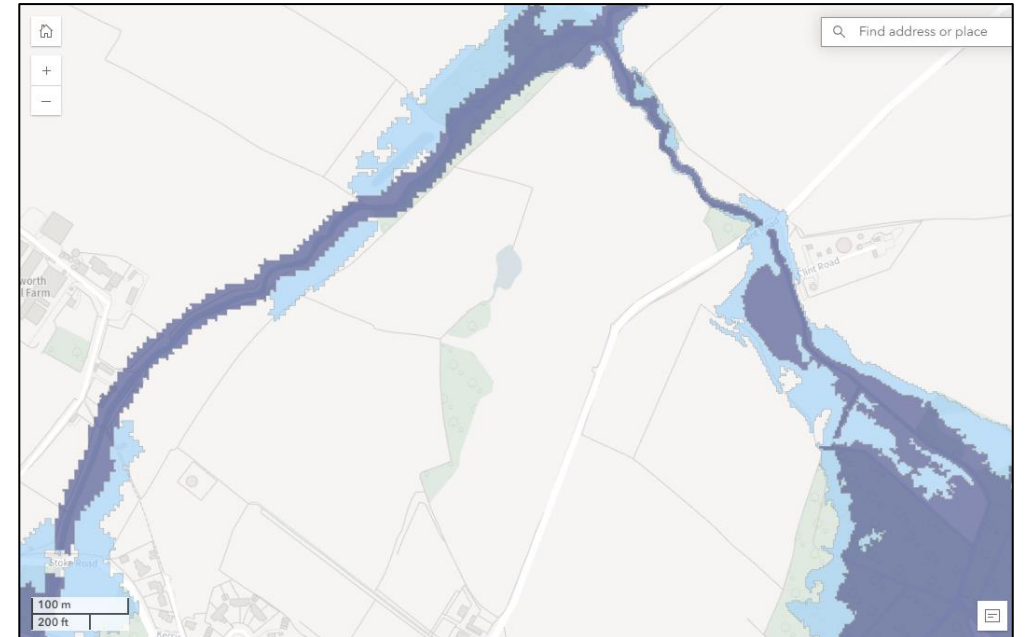
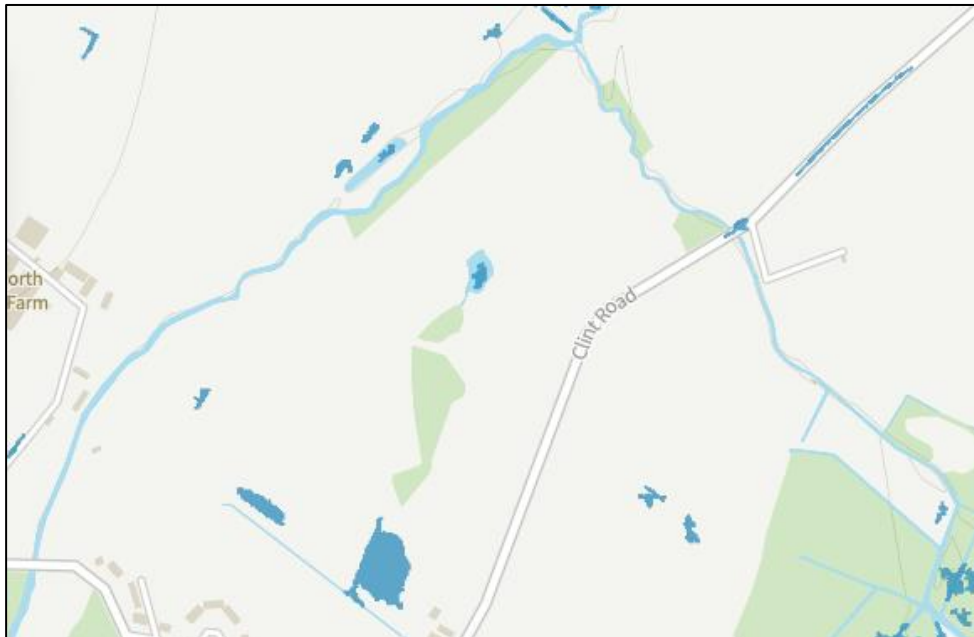
Soils and Flood Zones

Soils (right):

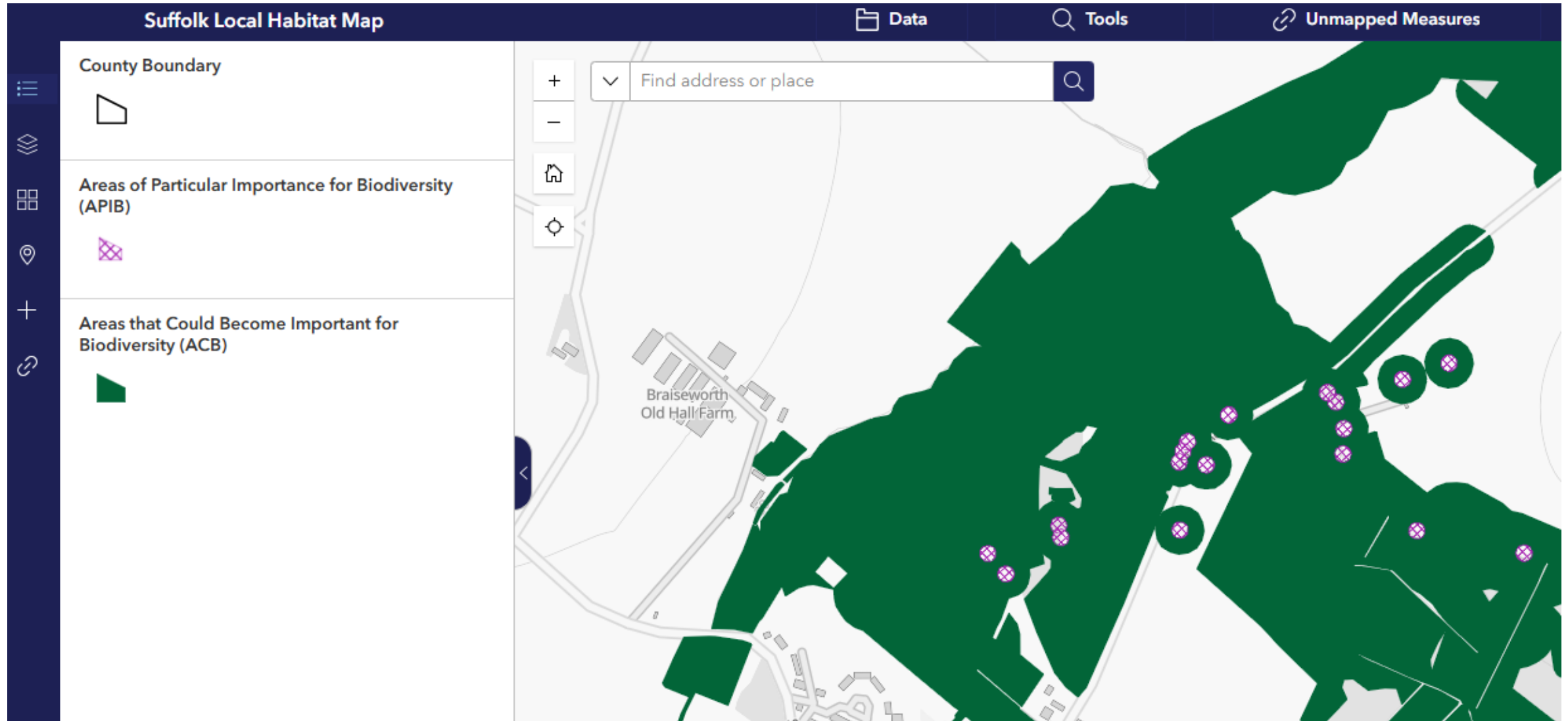
- Majority is Class 3 (green)
- Class 2 (blue) to south and east, including wetter area

Flooding:

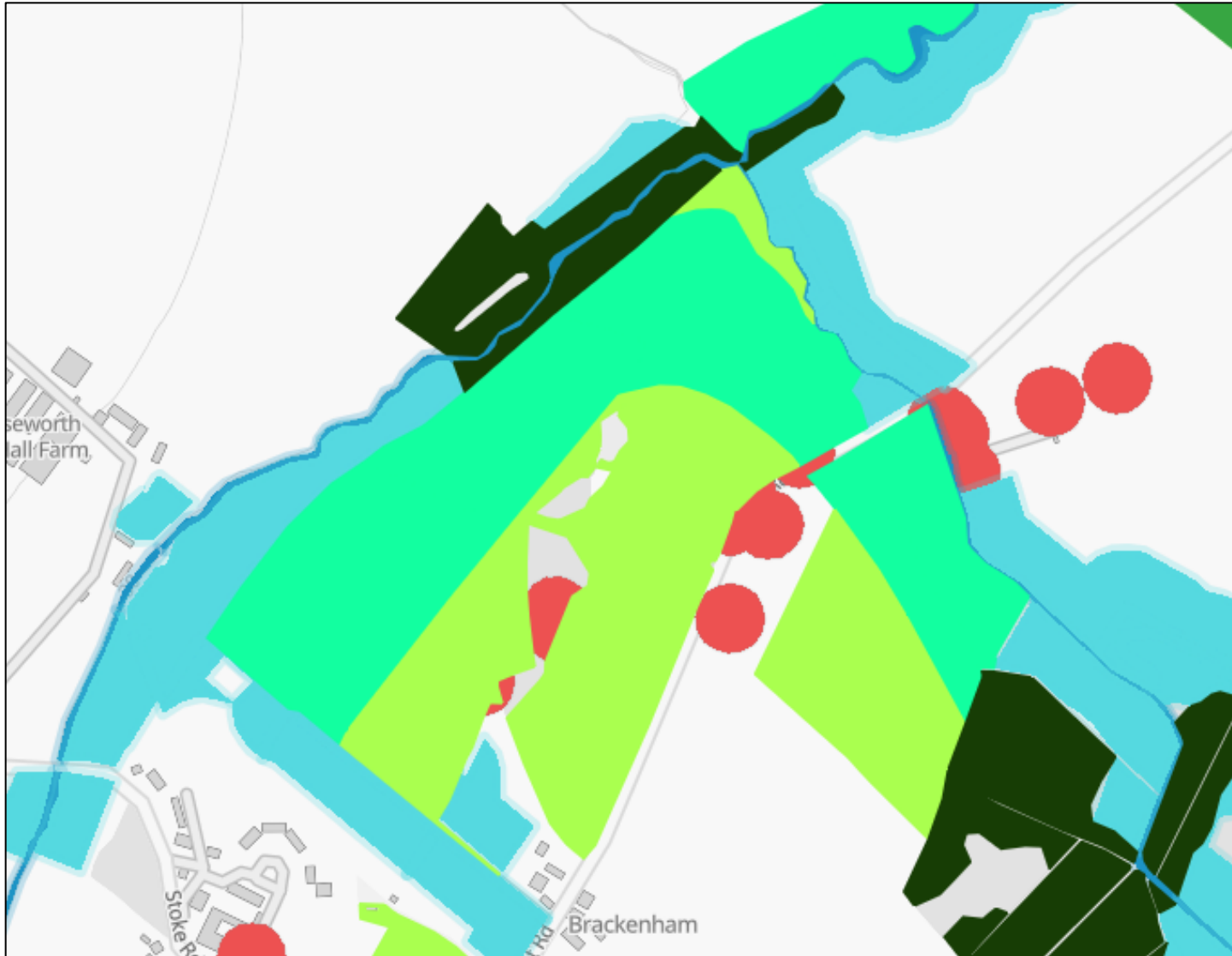
- Areas prone to flooding by surface water (below)
- Flood zones 2 and 3 – river flooding (bottom right)



Local Nature Recovery Strategy



Potential Habitat Measures



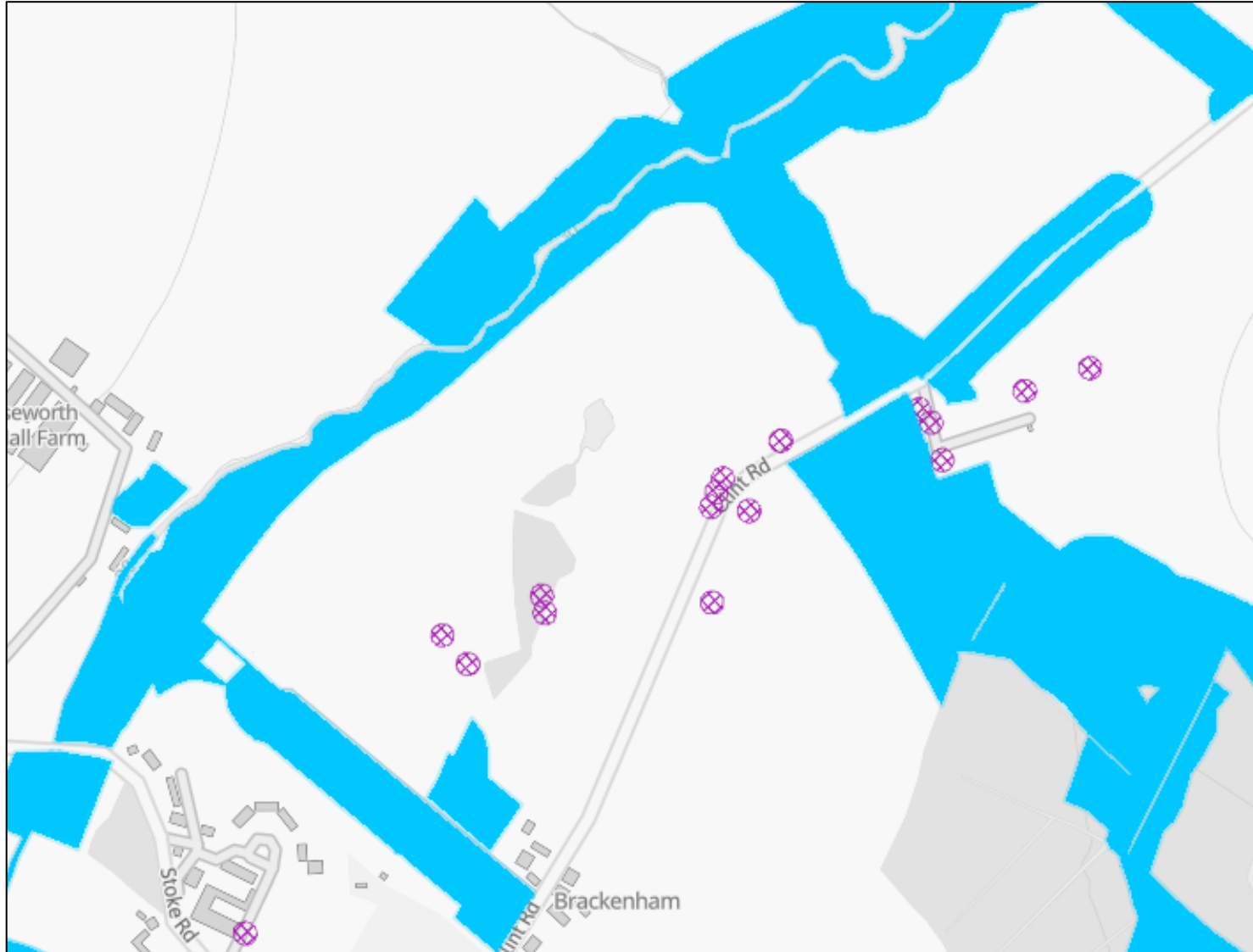
- Woodland restoration (dark green)
- Other neutral grassland restoration (light green)
- Wet grassland and grazing meadows restoration (mid green)
- River, riparian and floodplain habitat creation (blue)
- Veteran trees restoration (red)

Potential Species Measures



- Water vole
- Great crested newt
- Kingfisher

Wider Environmental Benefits



Opportunities for water
quality improvement and
flood mitigation

Your Input

- Feedback on options under consideration
- What do you want for the site?
- What is special to you?
- History – what can you tell us?



Options Under Consideration

- Grassland enhancement
- Hedgerow reinstatement
- Hedge management
- Wood pasture
- Veteran trees
- Pond restoration and creation
- Woodland
- Scrub
- Orchard
- Reedbed
- Flood plain – natural flood management
- Increased access and engagement
- Local Nature Reserve designation



Grassland Enhancement

- Mowing regime
- Livestock for grazing
- Management of problem plants (ragwort, thistles)
- Preventing scrub development
- Opportunity for food production alongside nature recovery



Hedgerow Reinstatement

- Potential for over 800m hedge reinstatement
- Signs of former hedge lines still visible on the ground – may be hedgerow plants that could return
- Increased connectivity
- More hedge habitat
- Include hedgerow trees



Hedge Management

- Some hedges have been managed to keep them short and narrow
- Broader, taller hedges better for wildlife – more food and habitat
- Scope for coppicing and hedge expansion



Wood Pasture

- An important, but scarce habitat
- Allows increased tree cover and grazing to coexist
- Helps perpetuate veteran tree habitat
- Can select saplings already growing to retain local tree stock



Veteran Trees



- Valuable habitat, supporting many species, often scarce
- Huge character
- Require careful management



Pond Restoration and Creation

- Only one of at least three ponds remain
- Scope to reinstate second, but third now woodland
- Could create new ponds elsewhere

Succession:

- Dredging halts this
- New ponds support
- Greater diversity

Woodland

- Planted woodland – straight lines, little understorey
- Wet woodland – uneven distribution with understorey
- Scope for expansion in right place – natural generation?



Scrub

- Transient habitat, often seen as neglect
- Valuable for many species, such as nightingale and turtle dove
- Will develop naturally if we simply stop mowing or grazing



Orchard

- Only one apple tree within the site!
- Potential to create a community orchard, providing fruit for the village
- Could include local heritage varieties e.g Lady Henniker
- Works well with grazing
- Opportunity for food production alongside nature recovery



Reedbed

- Areas already there
- Would benefit from improved management
- Would benefit from reconnection with water courses
- Benefits for wildlife, flood management and water quality



Flood Plain

- Water courses canalised – disconnection from flood plain
- Reconnection benefits biodiversity, water quality and flood management
- Meadows likely to have been wetter prior to canalisation
- Potential for native black poplar planting – UK's rarest timber tree. Suffolk is a stronghold



Access and Engagement



- Existing permissive access to continue
- Could expand this, depending on management
- Local value – not intending to create another Needham Lake!
- Need to consider access and grazing
- Would like to increase local involvement – scope for volunteering?

Next Steps

Tell us what you think:

- Leave comments on the maps
- You can email biodiversity@baberghmidsuffolk.gov.uk
- You can talk to me now or by 'phone: 01449 724 762

We need a site name – suggestions?

Management plan – ASAP

Start work – this winter

