



**Environmental Stewardship  
East Midlands Region**

## **Environmental Stewardship Agreement – Reedbed Only**

**Mr. J. Skinner, Pastures Farm, Station Road, Grendon,  
Northampton, NN71JD**

**Agreement Reference : AG00533552**



## ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

### Entry Level and Higher Level Stewardship Agreement

Agreement number AG00533552

This Agreement is between Mr J Skinner

of

Pastures Farm  
Station Road  
Grendon  
Northampton  
Northamptonshire  
NN7 1JD

and Natural England

of

Natural England  
Customer Services  
PO Box 10276  
Nottingham  
Nottinghamshire  
NG2 9PD

This Agreement covers all of the land parcels listed on the table entitled 'Parcel based options summary' at Part 2A.

This Agreement will run from 01/11/2013 to 31/10/2023.

Natural England agrees to pay you according to the schedules in Part 1 and 4.

This Agreement is made up of the following parts:

- Part 1A ELS annual payments
- Part 1B Annual payment schedule for HLS options (excluding capital works)
- Part 1C Annual payment schedule for all options (excluding capital items)
- Part 2A Parcel based options summary
- Part 2B Whole farm, rotational, farm buildings and access base payment options
- Part 3 HLS Management of Environmental Features - Specific options, prescriptions and Indicators of Success
- Part 4 HLS Capital Works Plan and payments (if applicable)
- Part 5 Capital works specifications (if applicable)
- Part 6 Grassland Management
- Part 7 Maps, including Historic Environment Features map

## PART 3

### HLS - Management of environmental features

#### General conditions on all HLS agreement land

On your HLS agreement land you must follow the general management conditions set out below, unless specifically stated otherwise in a subsequent section of this agreement. HLS agreement land is all land on which Higher Level Stewardship management prescriptions apply, including items within a Capital Works Plan

- Do not apply lime.
- On the conventional land that you manage: do not apply pesticides, except for the control of spear thistle, creeping thistle, curled dock, broad-leaved dock, common ragwort, nettles or other undesirable species named in your agreement. Herbicides may only be applied to these species by weedwiper or by spot treatment.
- Do not allow your agreement land to be levelled, infilled, used for the storage or dumping of materials or used by motor vehicles or machinery (except where necessary for the management of the land), if this is likely to cause long-term damage from rutting or compaction of the soil, or otherwise damage areas being managed under the scheme.
- Do not light fires (including burning brash or cuttings) where they could cause damage to features of archaeological or historic interest, or within ten metres of tree canopies or on any areas managed for their wildlife habitat interest. (This does not restrict your ability to manage heathland vegetation by controlled burning in compliance with the Heather and Grass Burning Regulations 1986 and accompanying Code.)
- Do not allow your agreement land to be used for organised games or sports, rallies, camping or caravanning, shows or sales where this is likely to damage areas being managed for their wildlife habitat interest or features of archaeological or historic interest; where this is likely to cause excessive or unreasonable disturbance to wildlife being encouraged under your agreement; or where this would cause unreasonable restriction to Public Rights of Way or "access land" as designated under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000.
- Do not carry out or permit metal detecting or archaeological fieldwork on any of the archaeological sites on your holding identified in your Farm Environment Plan, unless agreed with your Natural England adviser in writing. In some cases a derogation will also be required.

## HQ4 - Restoration of reedbeds

### Land parcels and associated features managed under this option:

RLR Field Number: SP86616580

Features: SB10 Reed Bunting, SB12 Snipe, SB19 Uncommon Birds, W08 Reedbeds - BAP habitat

### General description of the management required:

This option is targeted at the restoration of areas of wetland that are dominated by reeds. Many sites have been degraded through water extraction, drainage, lack of management and pollution. By re-introducing appropriate management techniques and ceasing damaging practices this option restores degraded reedbeds and associated fauna. Reedbeds are an important part of the characteristic vegetation mosaic of wetland landscapes. In addition they may, in the right situation, provide an area of flood storage and benefits to flood risk management. Where cutting is appropriate, supplement HQ11 is available. Where grazing is appropriate (consult a specialist) the grazing supplement HQ12 is available.

### Indicators of Success

- By year 10, the vegetation should include at least 90% Common Reed.
- By year 7, there should be at least 50 Common Reed stems per square metre within the reedbed.
- By year 5, the height of the Common Reed prior to cutting should be at least 100cm.
- By year 10, cover of scrub within the reedbed should be less than 10%. This will be achieved by clearing a percentage of the willow scrub year on year. This clearance of the willow scrub will be undertaken by a yearly Wetland Scrub Capital item payment, paid for at 100% by Natural England.
- The woody scrub should be no more than scattered across the site. It should be less than 1.5 metres high.
- By year 5, cover of undesirable species Blackthorn, Hawthorn and Bramble should be less than 10%.
- By year 3, there should be between 30% and 65% of the reedbed covered by surface water between April and October. The water should be between 10cm and 50cm deep. Between 10% and 20% of the area should be allowed to remain dry, apart from in exceptionally dry/wet years when this figure may vary.
- By year 3, there should be between 30% and 65% of the reedbed covered by surface water, between November and March. The water should be between 30cm and 100cm deep. Between 5% and 10% of the area should be allowed to remain dry, apart from in exceptionally dry/wet years when this figure may vary.
- By year 5, area of open water should be between 10% and 40% of the entire site.
- All SSSI land should be in favourable or recovering condition.

### Management Prescriptions; the dos and don'ts of management

The following rules apply across the whole area being managed under this option.

- Manage the reedbed to ensure that the cover of scrub is less than 10% by year



10. This will be achieved by appointing contractors to clear approximately one third of the scrub area every year. This will be paid for at 100% of costs by Natural England under the SW capital item option.

- The Agreement holder must keep NE informed on a regular basis of the amount of scrub on the reedbed and where needed, carry out on site maintenance, and that open water covers up to 30% of the entire area of the reedbed.
- The open water water level, will be managed by agreeing with NE the height that the drop board sluices will be set to for the summer and winter.
- Allow movement of water in the system to prevent stagnation in the ditches.
- Do not use poor quality water with high nutrient, salt or pollution concentrations to top up water levels.
- Maintain all culverts, board sluices and other water control features in good working order.
- Cleaning of existing ditches and foot drains should be done no more than once every 5 years, between 15 September and 31 January, with any spoil to be spread thinly away from the bank. Any work to re-profile ditches should be agreed in writing with your Natural England adviser, the local drainage authority, Environment Agency. Re-profile to create very gradual sloping sides, with a submerged berm, no steeper than 45 degrees and preferably shallower.
- To protect aquatic and marginal vegetation, cut ditch banks on rotation between 15 September and 28 February, so that each bank is not cut more than once in two years. Do not introduce cutting on previously uncut ditches and natural creeks without prior consultation with your Natural England adviser.
- There must be no application of nutrients such as fertilisers, organic manures or waste materials (including sewage sludge).

## PART 5

### Capital works specifications

#### Introduction

The specifications set out below describe the minimum standard of work for the capital items set out in Part 4 of your Environmental Stewardship Agreement. If you do not follow these specifications we cannot pay you for the work.

All capital works must be completed and maintained to the standard required to perform their intended function for the duration of the agreement.

If this agreement replaces an existing or expired CSS, ESA or ES agreement, you must take all reasonable care to protect, for the duration of this new agreement, any capital works which you have completed and for which you have been paid under that agreement.

#### Health and Safety

The requirements of health and safety and other current legislation and codes of practice must be observed in all work undertaken, in particular in all cases where pesticides are used.

#### Permissions

The offer of a Stewardship agreement is a permission from Natural England to undertake the work on SSSI land under Section 28E of The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). However, additional permissions from other organisations may be required. The following are examples of permissions that may be necessary:

- On a Scheduled Ancient Monument - Scheduled Ancient Monument Consent, from English Heritage.
- Pond creation, restoration, scrape creation, restoration, and ditch work - may require an Impoundment Licence or Abstraction Licence from the Environment Agency, Planning Permission from the planning authority, and permission from the Internal Drainage Board where these are present.
- Obstructions to water courses or in the floodplain. This includes disposal of spoil from ditches, scrapes and ponds, tree planting, otter holts, car parking, erecting sluices and river gates and fencing - permission from the Environment Agency.
- Works in a Conservation Area - consent from the Planning Authority
- Tree Preservation Order - consent from the local authority
- Tree felling, pollarding, hedgerow works, coppicing bankside trees - may require a felling licence from the Forestry Commission.
- Chemical bracken control - near water course will require permission from the Environment Agency
- Areas for parking cars, hard standing, earthworks - may require planning permission from the Planning Authority

- Proposed changes to the existing type of stile or gate on a right of way - consent from the Highway Authority

## MANAGEMENT OF SCRUB ON WET SITES

Please refer to your management plan.

The required management is to cut / mow / stump grind at least a third of the scrub on the reedbed every year. This roughly equates to 26,000m<sup>2</sup> per year.

The contractors must be sourced by the agreement holder, but need to be agreed by Natural England.

NE require 3 full and completed quotes, before we can decide which contractor to use.

We will need to commission the contractors to base their quotes for 2 year contract. However, we will need a yearly amount for all quotes.

NE will pay the contractors at 100% of their agreed costs. NE, will after 2 years of the agreement being live, re-agree the next 2 years SW funding.

The contractors will need to come every year and clear 26,000m<sup>2</sup> of the reedbed from all scrub.

The scrub generally consists of willow regrowth, some other non target species are here also, all will need to be cleared.

When clearing the scrub, no extraneous damage should occur to the reedbed, it's reeds or it's other beneficial habitats. Therefore considerate scrub removal will be needed.

No tracking, ridging, rutting, (over 5%) of the area is allowed. Any large tracks must be in filled with wet spoil from the reedbed.

Contractors can burn the cut scrub, however all burn sites must be on tin and the ash must be spread off the reedbed and not left on the reedbed. All burning must be carried out in compliance with all safety regulations and follow UK laws.

If any contractors want to "Mulch" the scrub, all mulching's must be removed, as they will cause excessive drying of the reedbed.

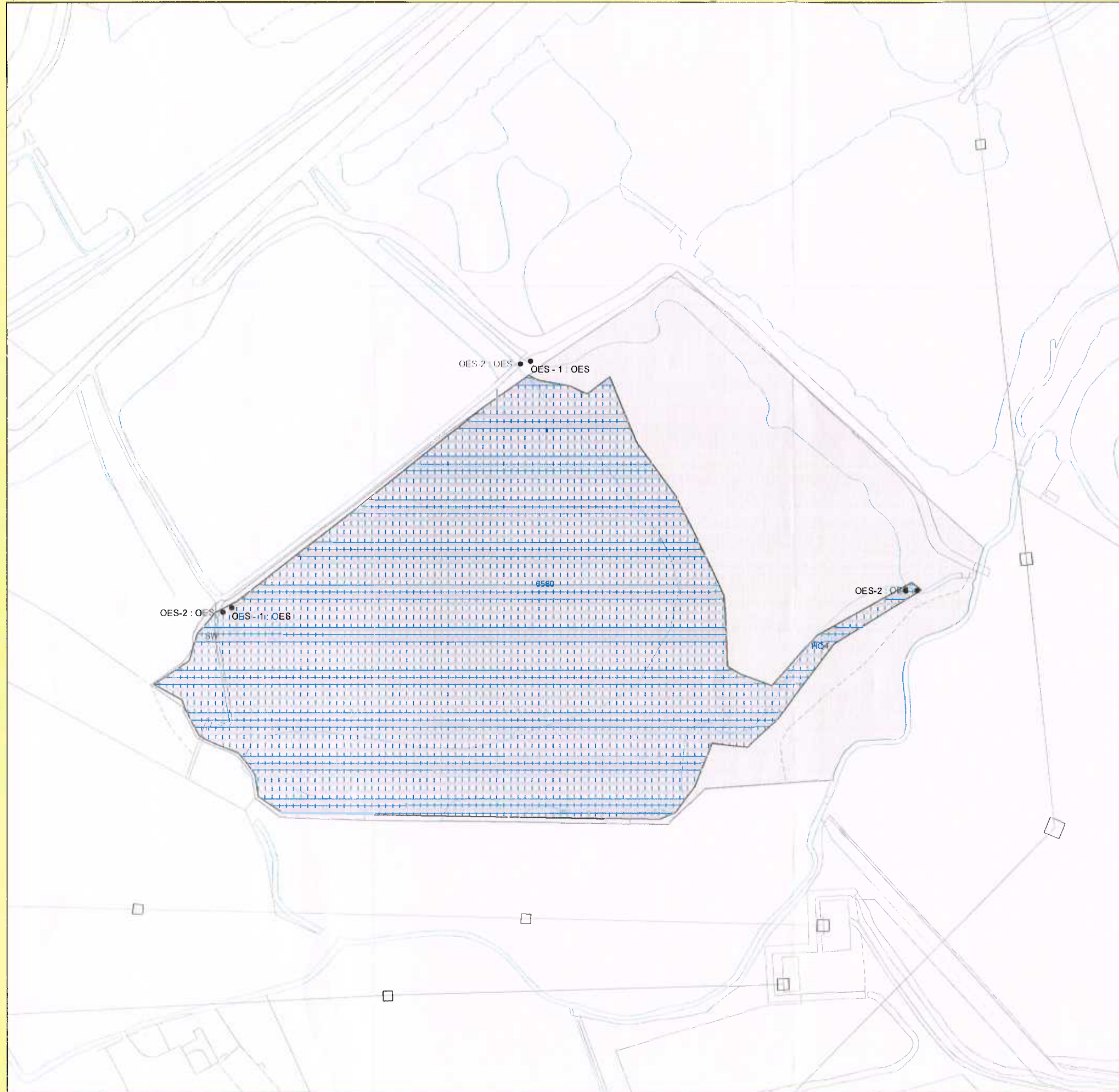
Before any approved contractor can carry out work on the site, NE must have copies of the following :

Health and Safety Risk Assessments.

Operating licenses for the machinery being used.

All liability insurance documents.





### HIGHER LEVEL STEWARDSHIP AGREEMENT MAP

- Options**
- HB Maintenance of hedgerows/ditches of very high environmental value
  - HC/OHC Management of woodland edges/hedgerow buffer strips
  - HC/OHC Protection of trees  
\*Number within circle represents number of trees in parcel
  - HC/UHC/UOHC Woodland and orchards
  - UHD/UOHD Visibility of archaeological features on moorland
  - HD/OHD Historic and landscape
  - HE/OHE Buffer strips and grass margins
  - HF/OHF Arable land
  - HG/OHG Encourage a range of crop type
  - HJ/OHJ Maintenance of watercourse fencing
  - HJ/OHJ/UHJ/UOHJ Resource protection
  - HK/OHK Grassland
  - HL/OHL/UHL/UOHL Upland grassland and moorland
  - HN Linear access (agreements to October 2010 only)
  - HN Permissive open access (agreements to October 2010 only)
  - HO Lowland heathland
  - HP Inter-tidal and coastal
  - HQ Wetland

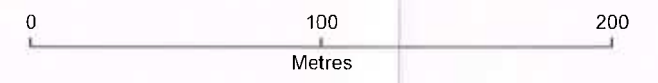
Option codes are annotated on the map. Please see scheme handbooks for detailed explanation of each option code.

Supplement options are annotated where present e.g. HL13, HR4

CA1:PC CP1:GF CL1:WS Capital item

Positions of capital items are indicative and for identification purposes only

1234 RLR field number  
 Remaining land comprising agreement area



Map provided for the sole purpose of supporting ES Scheme Applications and Agreements.  
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