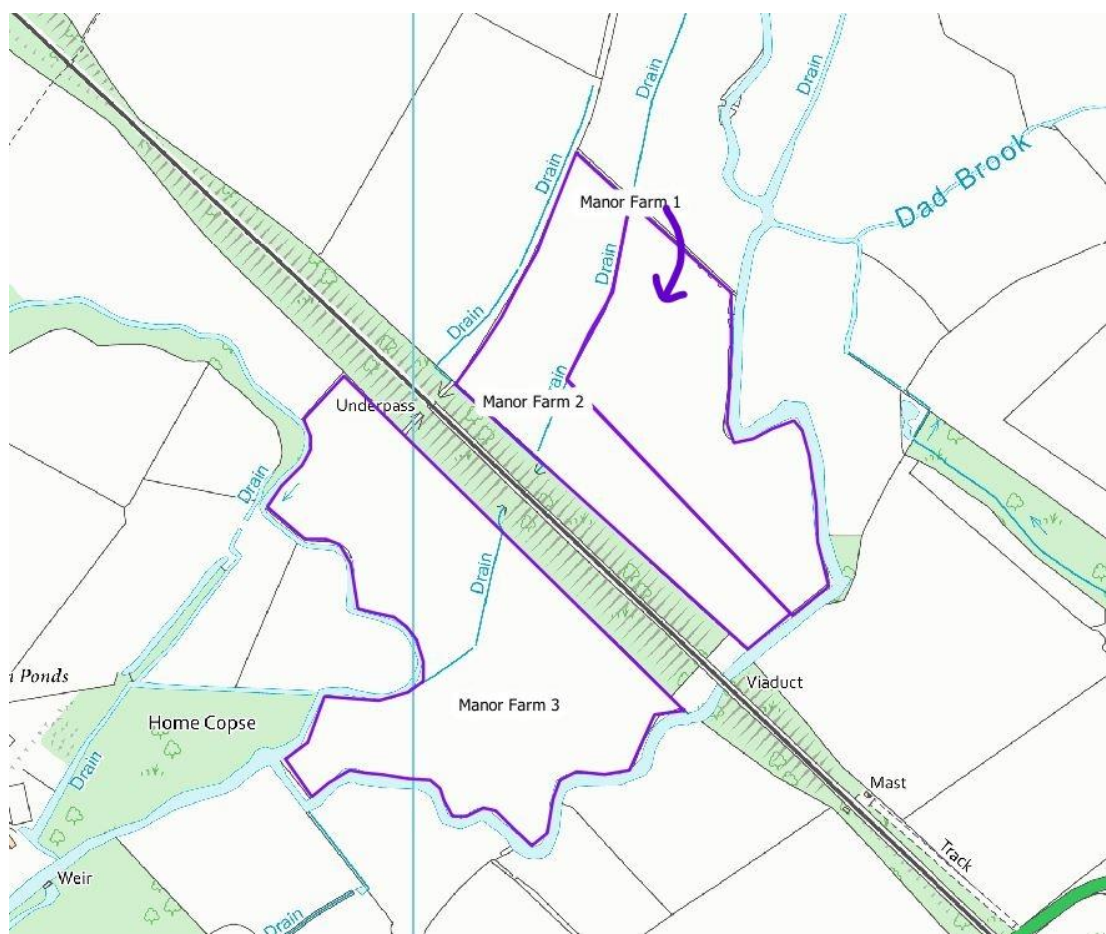


## Site Visit Assessment Form Manor Farm, Chearsley



<b>Site Name</b> Manor Farm	<b>Grid Ref</b> SP721096	<b>County</b> Buckinghamshire	
<b>River</b> Thame	<b>Ownership</b> Private	<b>Designation</b> None	<b>Size (ha)</b> MF 1 = 4.1 MF 2 = 3.9 MF 3 = 7.8
<b>Date</b> 28 <sup>th</sup> June 2021	<b>Meeting with</b> Owner, Emma Rothero, Irina Tatarenko, Olivia Nelson	<b>Managed by</b> Private	
<b>Management and History</b>			
Owned since 1967 when the landowner's father bought the farm. The farm has not been fertilised since 1970's, they stopped for conservation reasons. The grassland had been grazed permanently.			
The owner has now taken over the farm which was sheep and arable. She has stopped the arable however and is going organic. The river meadows were fertilised			

in the past and there has also been some sewage issues. She is interested in sustainable food production and is applying for membership of the PFLA.

Field 1 and 2- the hay has been cut for the past 2 years and was probably cut for hay historically.

Field 3. Extensively grazed permanent pasture, fertilised historically.

**Agri environment agreement**

The farm was in a CS agreement which finished in March 2021. This was the end of a 10-year agreement. The farm has always been conservation minded. Are applying for a new scheme to start in Jan 2022, which therefore leaves a gap of 9 months, resulting in some financial pressure. The start and end dates are set by the scheme and are inflexible.

**Restoration**

Technique used/Dates

Fields 1 and 2 have been treated differently, although field 1 actually covers part of the area marked 2, Field 2 has been treated the same all the way across. Field 1 has not undergone any green hay application, although it has been hay cut for the past 2 years, whereas before it was grazed.

Field 2 has had a change of management, as for Field 1, but also had green hay applied in 2019. The area was prepared by disc harrowing to create bare earth. Green hay was collected from Meadow Farm (BBOWT) by a contractor and spread on the same day in field 2. Concerned that some of the seed might have been washed away, as the site did flood not long afterwards.

Subsequently, both fields have had a hay cut.

Field 3 – Green hay was spread in July 2019 as for field 2, but does not have a hay cut and was left a bit rank (undergrazed) in 2019. In 2020, more grazing was applied.

<b>Hydrology</b>	The meadows flood most years.
Flooding regime Water management Soil-water levels (indicated by auger hole/any other data)	

**Current site interest** Attach excel spreadsheet for botanical data

Restoration efforts (2019) are very recent, so substantial changes in vegetation are not expected yet. The fields were cut by the time of the site visit, apart from Field 3. Field 3 is grazed only. It accommodates a good population of tubular water dropwort *Oenanthe fistulosa*; it looks healthy and will improve further if a hay cut regime is

implemented on the site. Field 3 has high abundance of curled dock *Rumex crispus*, which will decrease if an annual hay cut is consistent in the future.

Quadrat data were not collected from any of the fields, so Ellenberg's indicator scores were not calculated. A species list was recorded from Field 3, where the high abundance of marsh foxtail *Alopecurus geniculatus* and creeping buttercup *Ranunculus repens* as well as the presence of such wetland specialists as floating sweet-grass *Glyceria fluitans* and reed canary grass *Phalaris arundinaceae*, point towards a high moisture content in the soil and/or high ground water table. Peppersaxifrage *Silaum silaus* and Meadowsweet *Filipendula ulmaria* would be valuable additions to the species diversity in this type of habitat.

No botanical data of any sort were collected in 2021 from Fields 1 and 2.

<b>Phosphorus levels</b>	
--------------------------	--

<b>Soil profiles</b>
----------------------

These were not taken in 2021.
-------------------------------

<b>Landowner objectives</b>
-----------------------------

Increase biodiversity, sustainable food production.
---

<b>Management recommendations</b>
-----------------------------------

A consistent annual hay cut on these regularly flooded fields is a tool which helps to balance the nutrient levels in the soil, keeping vegetation both diverse and productive. The timing of the hay cut is also important in managing nutrients and species. For example, the reduction of unwanted species like docks can be achieved by early cuts, before they produce and drop seeds. High soil nutrients can be reduced by cutting in June, and if feasible, again in September, ensuring all arisings are removed from the site.
--

If a hay cut is an option in Field 3, the timing should be carefully considered as it is wetter than the other two fields. The field should be cut under the driest conditions of the soil, to avoid soil compaction issues.
--