

Farming in Protected Landscapes

North Wessex Downs AONB

Case Study

Project Name: Kingsclere Estate – Pasture Cropping Trial to Assess Landscape Scale Farming System Change

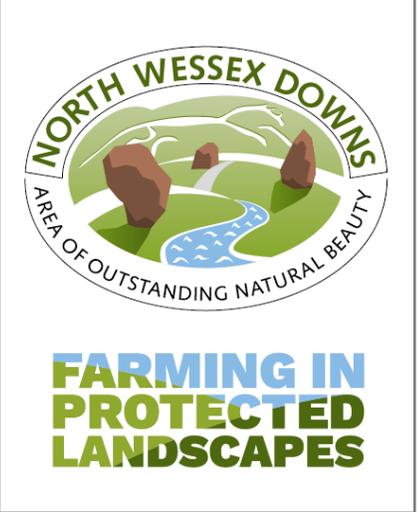
Applicant Name: Tim May with Ian Knight, Abacus Agri

Farm Name: Pit Hall Farm

Amount of grant: £107,696.19

% of total funding awarded: 80%

Year of Project: 2021/22 & 2022/23



Project Overview

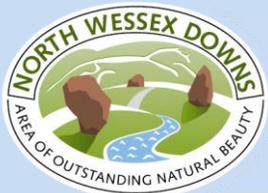
Farm description

Tim runs an organic farm that is built around **regenerative practices**, not just focussing on an agroecological approach to **soils** but also through **integrated economic and social sustainability**. Tim is helping push boundaries of how farming is practiced, integrated into the local rural economy and understood by the public. Kingsclere “stacks” multiple enterprises and the new entrants it farms in partnership with to **maximise soil fertility, diversity and integration**.

To learn more, check out the website here: [Our Story | Kingsclere Estates \(kingsclere-estates.co.uk\)](https://kingsclere-estates.co.uk)

Project description

Tim is hoping to push the boundaries further with this project which is focussed on an approach known as **pasture cropping**. This system employs **strips of permanent pasture inter-sown with strips of heritage grains**. Tim will gradually introduce this system across the farm as he works through his rotation, and is delivering **significant research and development** as he goes with the support of Ian Knight, Abacus Agri. FiPL supported the purchase of **bespoke equipment** needed to deliver this approach which offers significant public good such as for **water quality, soil health, carbon sequestration and biodiversity**. Tim will also be working **in partnership with local farmers** and wider afield to help **engage, inform and enable others** to take this system forward on their own farms by testing its feasibility at scale, **refining processes and machinery** and **demonstrating to others** why and how it is achievable.



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Objectives

Through managing the estate for farming they seek to:

- Sequester more carbon
- Improve soil health
- Increase knowledge and understanding of regenerative farm practices
- Provide more and better habitat in field
- Improve water quality

Management Plan Strategic Objectives

From the eight themes in the Management Plan, this project seeks to fulfil the following Strategic Objectives: **S02, S06, S07, S12, S14**

Thematic Programme Objectives

Nature	There is a greater area of wildlife rich habitat	X	People	There are more opportunities for people to explore, enjoy and understand the landscape	
	There is greater connectivity between habitats	X		There are increased opportunities for more diverse audiences to explore, enjoy and understand the landscape	
	Existing habitat is better managed for biodiversity	X		There is greater public engagement in land management, for example through volunteering	X
	There is an increase in biodiversity	X			
Climate	More carbon is stored and/or sequestered	X	Place	The quality and character of the landscape is reinforced or enhanced	X
	Flood risk has been reduced	X		Historic structures and features are conserved, enhanced or interpreted more effectively	
	Better understanding among farmers, land managers and the public as to what different habitats and land uses can deliver for carbon storage and reduced carbon emissions	X		There is an increase in the resilience of nature friendly sustainable farm businesses, which in turn contributes to a more thriving local economy	X
	The landscape is more resilient to climate change	X			



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Outputs

- Bespoke strip till cultivator
- Specialist inter-row mower
- GPS system
- Programme of knowledge exchange events

Outcomes

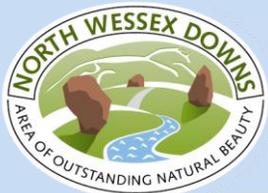
This project will **increase knowledge** of the practicalities of **pasture cropping** thereby increasing its uptake in the farming community. It will **inspire** other farmers to undertake **regenerative approaches** which at scale can have a huge impact on the public goods sought through the 25 Year Environment Plan. This **pioneer project** will support **increased carbon sequestration, improved water quality, improved soil health, increases in biodiversity** and more besides. It will also do so in a **food production setting** which will enable increased **stacking of enterprises** to produce more and better quality food.

Key Learnings

This project has demonstrated that by **embracing technology**, we can support **cutting edge farming** to not only increase food productivity but to **increase the production of public goods**.

This project has demonstrated that **linking knowledge exchange** with pioneering projects is fundamental to their success.

This project has demonstrated that **food production can align with agro-ecological approaches**.



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Photos credit – Kingsclere Estates working with Wild Farmed



Strip till cultivation

Inter-row mower



Example of pasture cropping dynamic in the fields of Wild Farmed



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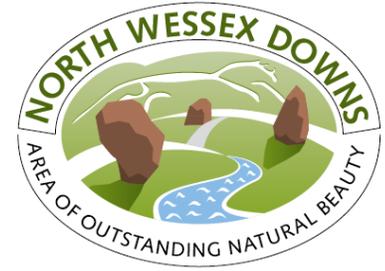
For More Information

Contact Rob West, Farming in Protected Landscapes Officer

RobertWest@northwessexdowns.org.uk

Refer to the North Wessex Downs AONB website for latest information

<https://www.northwessexdowns.org.uk/farming/farming-in-protected-landscapes/>



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