

Little Reeds

Hickstead, Haywards Heath RH17 5LY

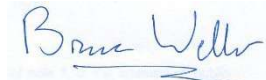
Engineering work. Creation of a five metre high earth acoustic bund to west of Little Reed with associated soft landscaping.

ADDENDUM

ADDENDUM TO LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACT APPRAISAL

**5th Nov 2025 V2
Weller Designs Ltd
Compiled by Gareth Weeks BA Dip LA**

Weller Designs Ltd

Prepared by:	Gareth Weeks BA Dip LA	
Reviewed by:	Bruce Weller HN Dip LD	
Authorised by:	David Weller BA Hons	
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1 Introduction

Following comments from Place Services (Mid Sussex District Council) 7th May 2025 to the findings of the LVIA (dated 21st February 2025) this Addendum provides a response to their comments as well as additional landscape plan information in support of suggestions and recommendations made by Place Services.

1.1 Response to Comments by Place Services

1.1.2 Impact Methodology

We acknowledge that the assessment criteria could have been broken down further but note the LVA has still been considered as appropriate in principal and the findings broadly in line with our conclusions.

We acknowledge that certain visual receptors could have been included by way of more robust evidence, but it is noted Place Services still agreed with the fact that visual access to the site very limited.

We have therefore included in **Appendix A** to this addendum further views to the west / south west as recommended by Place Services. These additional visual receptor points show the lack of visual access there is to the site.

1.1.3 Assessment Conclusions

Places Services commented :-

“Appendix A judges a high sensitivity to LCA 4 Hickstead Low Weald, with ‘no change’ magnitude of change. We would not consider that 5m mounding is in-keeping with the local character and is an unnatural landform. Although the site is small in scale, we judge that the LVA has underassessed the effects on the local character owed to the extent of land which has been raised by 5m and therefore disagree that there is no change to the character. We would also have appreciated the inclusion of the Site and Immediate Context as a separate landscape receptor, which would have highlighted that the proposals adversely impact upon the local landscape character.”

Weller Comment :-

No Change within the usual definition (and as stated in our Section 2) states “ *Very minor loss or change to the landscape characteristics or features of the area, compensated by landscape improvements or enhancements.*” ...

Whilst we did conclude that “minor loss” (in the context of the above definition) was reasonably appropriate given the bund was adjacent to engineered features associated with the A23, we do concede that the assessment is perhaps underassessed even allowing for mitigation. The gradual bleeding off of the contours to the east will, from most zones of influence, be acceptable

in the landscape, but it is accepted that the 5m bank, though adjacent to the road, is unnatural as identified by Place Services.

We therefore have amended our impact assessment to (see assessment definition tables in LVIA) :-

Landscape Character

Medium Adverse – “Partial loss of or alteration to the key characteristics or features of the landscape area.”

But with mitigation (planting) :-

Low Adverse - “Minor loss of, or alteration to the key characteristics or features of the landscape area. “

Visual Impact

Low Adverse - “Where the scheme would cause a minor deterioration in the view. “

With mitigation (planting) :-

No Change – “Where the scheme overall would not form a noticeable deterioration or improvement in the view. “

Place Services feel five meters is too high to be appropriate.

The acoustic benefit of the bund is set out in Anderson Acoustics Report Ref: 5549_001R_2-0_JE. for a 5m high bank.

It should be noted that the Consultee Report Ref DM/25/0590 to the Case officer alluded to the fact that the bund did not go far enough in terms of desirable noise abatement. However, through an iterative process with the acoustic consultant an agreed “sweet spot” was determined that met the needs of acoustic noise abatement, landscape and visual sensitivities and the protection of tree root zones.

Place Services point out the bund will be seen over the hedgerow but this is marginal and not all along the whole bund. Given the current height of the boundary trees / hedgerow (circa 4m to 5m) this occasional glimpse of the acoustic screen will be minimal and assimilated by the proposed native planting on the western bank only as it matures.

The bund is so close to the road, that cumulative effect is not really an argument. Agreed if such a feature was away / separated from the road edge then we would likely come to a different conclusion.

We would also argue that the LPA / National character assessments describe this area (especially to the east as “tranquil”). The proposed bund only serves to benefit this tranquillity further east.

It’s important to note that the bund, whilst possessing more intense contours, is lower (23 AOD) than the field opposite which is at 25 AOD, even at its highest point. The majority of it is much

lower than this field. Yes, it is accepted the contours are more unnatural on its western edge (steeper for max acoustic benefit) but this is, as stated before, adjacent to the engineered highway and abutting the thick existing tree line / hedgerow. NB The banking is tapered out intentionally on the eastern side to key in naturally, so whilst this means it takes up a greater landform this is more appropriate than a thin high steep banked bund on both sides appearing as a “sausage roll” along the boundary. Making it smaller would simply create more of this effect.

In terms of mitigation and landscape enhancement, to contribute to the “No Change” / Low Adverse (with mitigation) assessment we have undertaken the following :-

We have added a number of Hibernacula's along the bund faces as ecology enhancement. See Ecological Enhancement Measures Plan 1234.13 dated 05112025

Also added to the proposal are a number of bird / Bat boxes see plan 1234.13 Little Reeds Ecological Enhancement Measures Plan dated 05112025

We have also included an Ecological Enhancement Scheme document dated 05112025 to go with the proposals

The woodland at the southern tip of the site will be subject to an enhancement management plan (HMMP under BNG)

1.1.2 Other Matters

Place Services Comments

“Other Matters

The proposed mounding is justified within the Planning Statement by its purpose as an acoustic bund from the neighbouring A23. Whilst we recognise that a 5m mound will reduce the noise disturbance from the adjacent road, we question the scale of the proposed mounding which extends across the entirety of the adjacent paddocks and extends far beyond the existing house. We therefore judge that the extent of the site proposed for ground level changes is excessive. “

Weller Comment :-

Mention is made by Place Services of unnecessary mounding to the North. Whilst it is accepted that the grading to the North has less relevance to noise abatement for the residential building it will provide visual screening of traffic movements and headlights in the winter months particularly (no leaves) and noise abatement in the field and beyond to the east.

Whilst it appears to extend further North than necessary, we go back to the strong rationale of needing to slowly key in the contours to the east and avoid the “sausage roll” type bund with steep banking both sides.

That said we recognise Place Services have concerns on the banking to the North and have therefore adjusted the planting so that native planting is shown on the Northern face (lower slopes) of the grading works to assimilate this slope into the landscape more effectively. See plan ref 1234.04s Rev D Proposed Landscape Plan

Place Services Comment :-

"The proposed tree protection barrier (TPB) is located very close to the RPA of the protected west boundary and is also located inside the RPA in some instances. To ensure that the soil importation does not impact upon the retained hedgerow and tree belt to the A23, which is integral to the visual impact of the scheme, we advise that the mounding is moved away from this west edge to reduce construction impacts on this boundary."

Weller Comment :-

We have adjusted the contour plan slightly to avoid all Root Protection Zones as requested. See updated Grading Plan 1234.02 Rev B 13102025 and accompanying Landscape Planting and Management Plan dated 5th Nov 2025 V2 , which also details tree protection measures.

Place Services Comment :-

"We also question if it is necessary for the southern arm of G16 trees to be removed to facilitate the scheme. The proposed mounding could be located adjacent to the G16 mounding, whilst still removing the southern arm of G16."

Weller Comment :-

This tree is a non-native and not appropriate in the general native hedgerow / tree line or broader area. We would rather remove and plant native species more associated with the above

Place Services Comment :-

"No information is provided on what imported material is to be used to form the bunding. Clarification is therefore required on the materials used to form the bunding. We also question whether the topsoil from on site will be taken and reused on top of the proposed bunding."

Weller Comment :-

The material used to build the acoustic screen will be naturally occurring materials approved by the EA via a regularised permit from the EA.

See accompanying Management Plan dated 5th Nov 2025 V2 which covers imported material and the re use of existing stripped topsoil from on site.

1.1.2 Recommendations

Place Services suggested the following recommendations :-

Place Services :-

"We would also advise planting only on the lower banks of the mounding, to reduce the unnatural appearance of elevated tree planting. "

Weller Comment :-

We note Place Services request trees to be kept off the top of the mounding, the landscape plan 1234.04s Rev D has been adjusted showing the tree planting on the lower slopes (also see cross sections).

It should be noted that there is a fair amount of Ash in the linear copse / hedgerow so planting on this western bund face will mitigate loss to Ash dieback.

Place Services :-

“Tree planting should also be proposed on the eastern site boundary, to reduce the visual impact of the unnatural 5m mounding from Stairbridge Lane.”

Weller Comment :-

We have updated the landscape plan 1234.04s Rev D to show some additional planting which is in addition to the already proposed new hedgerow.

Place Services comment :-

“Maintenance procedures should also be included alongside the submitted Landscape Plan. These should include management and maintenance for all proposed features on site for 5 years. Details of rabbit guards should be included, as well as their removal after 5 years or once vegetation has established.”

Weller Comment

We have drawn up a planting and maintenance management plan for the new planting and existing site landscape features (see Landscape Planting and Management Plan Dated 5th November 2025 V2).

Place Services comment :-

“Large areas of the bunding, notably to the north, will provide little noise reduction when located away from the house. We therefore question whether the bunding should be located closer to the house.”

Weller Comment :-

See previous response to Northern grading above.

Place Services comment :-

“Two swales are proposed within the centre of the site, to “intercept Greenfield overland flows impounded by acoustic bund”. We advise that some soft planting or grassland is proposed on the landscape plan within these swales.”

Weller Comment :-

We have updated the landscape plan 1234.04s Rev D to show some additional planting on swale area.

Place Services comment :-

“We note the presence of the Flood Zone 3 on the northern site boundary. We therefore question whether any additional drainage should be proposed on the northern edge of the bunding.”

Weller Comment :-

Refer to Hydrological consultant report

1.2 Conclusion

We acknowledge that certain items in the LVIA on reflection could have been more robust but intrinsically Place Services have come to the same broad conclusions as we do. In response to requests made by Place Services two additional visual receptors have been added to the west / southwest. See appendix A

We acknowledge the impact is “underassessed”, and have adjusted the assessment to recognise this. The latest additional landscape proposals also seek to mitigate the impact of the bund, namely :-

Additional planting to the East as requested by Place Services

Additional planting on and around the surface water swales as requested by Place Services

The addition of a number of Hibernacula's

The addition new Bird / Bat boxes

The inclusion of an Ecological Enhancement Measures Plan Ref 1234.13 to go with the proposals set out in Ecological Enhancement Measures document dated 5th Nov 2025

The woodland at the southern tip of the site is to be subject to an enhancement management plan (HMMP under BNG). Also see separate Landscape Planting and Management Plan V2 05112025

We have also updated the grading plan slightly to address the comment on Root Protection Zones, keeping new tree planting away from the higher slopes and addressing the need for a landscape planting and management plan.

In conclusion therefore we feel the current grading proposal does not need to be amended (apart from the RPZ issue above) and if combined with the landscape and ecological recommendations put forward by Place Service email 7th May 2025, (and as actioned on the latest plans and documents) will allow the proposal to be acceptable in landscape policy terms and should be supported.

Appendix A- Additional Visual Receptor Locations and Montages

Little Reeds Additional Viewpoints FIGURE 1 - REVISED VIEWPOINT LOCATION MAP





Winter View Recommended Viewing Distance of 300mm @ A3

VIEWPOINT A: EXISTING VIEW FROM HICKSTEAD LANE

Distance From Site Boundary:	440m	Lens:	FFS 50mm	Weather Conditions:	Clear
Direction of View	NE	Camera HeightAbove AOD:	1.6m		
OS Grid Reference:	X 526088 Y 120181	AOD:	18m	Conservation View Receptors.	



Winter View Recommended Viewing Distance of 300mm @ A3

VIEWPOINT B: EXISTING VIEW FROM HICKSTEAD LANE

Distance From Site Boundary:	930m	Lens:	FFS 50mm	Weather Conditions:	Clear
Direction of View	NE	Camera Height Above AOD:	1.6m		
OS Grid Reference:	X 52663 Y 120283	AOD:	26m	Conservation View Receptors.	

APPENDIX B- LANDSCAPE PLAN



Appendix C- Proposed Ecological Enhancement Plan



Appendix D- Grading Plan



Drawn By: RW	Checked By: RW	Rev
Project Name: Little Reeds Acoustic & Visual Screen	Scale: 1:1000 @ A1	Rev 1: 13/10/2021 - Initial Layout
Project No.: 1234	Date: 13/10/2021	Rev 2: 13/10/2021 - Contour Adjustments
Drawing Name: Layout & Grading	Client: Little Reeds Farm	
Drawing No: 1234-02 Rev B		

Proposed Contours (1m Intervals)	Existing Contours (1m Intervals)
Retained Mature Trees / Hedgerow	