

**PRELIMINARY ECOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT AND
BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN REPORT ROCKY LANE
HAYWARDS HEATH RH16 4TW**

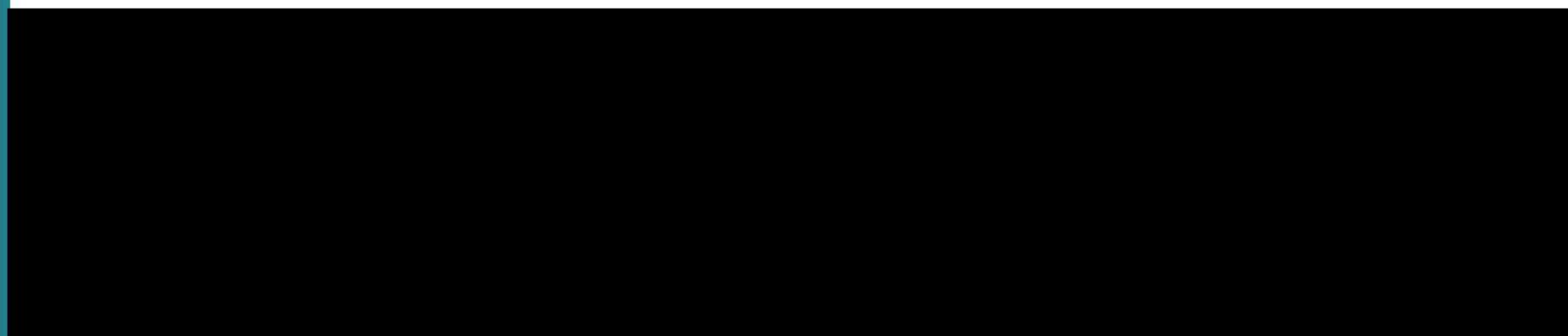
Grid Ref 532514122168 NGR 3251422168

19th May 2025: Version 4



By

Adapt Environment Ltd
Shea O' Neill Ba Hons Dip La CMLI MCIEEM
Director Adapt Environment Ltd



Prepared By –



May 2025

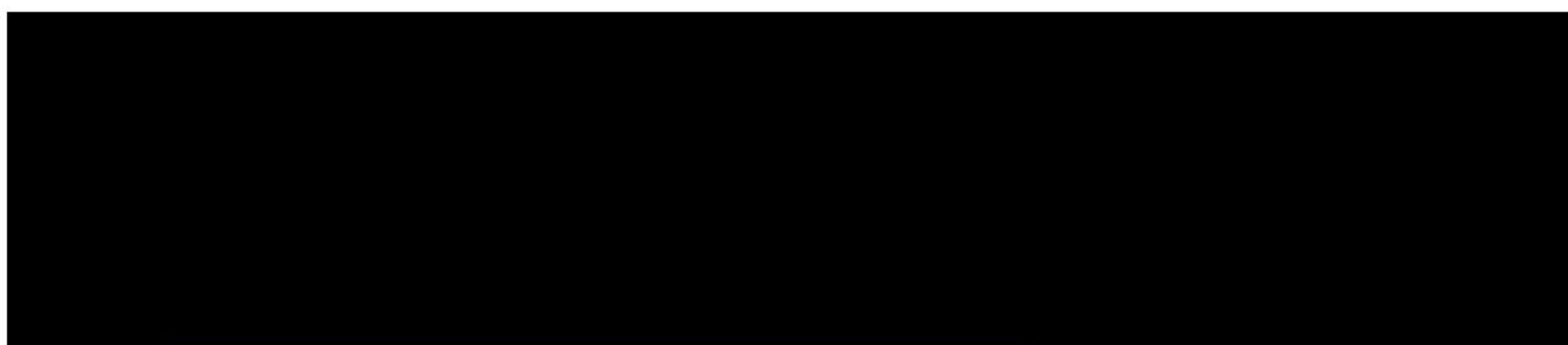
Contact

Adapt Environment Ltd

Omagh Business Centre

Great Northern Road

Omagh Co Tyrone Northern Ireland



Prepared For
Client Circet
Prepared By: Adapt Environment Ltd



Project No.:Title: 9046 (00)

Client: On behalf of Circet

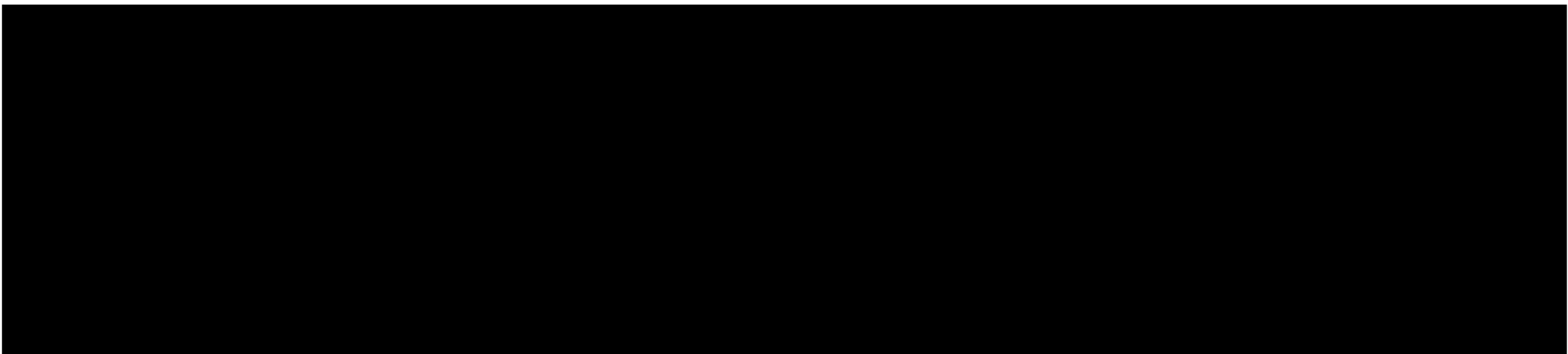
Date: 19th May 2025

Office: Omagh Enterprise Centre

Status: FINAL

Author Shea O’ Neill **Technical reviewer** S Richardson

Signature
Date:



Adapt Environment Ltd (ADAPT) has prepared this report for the sole use of the client, showing reasonable skill and care, for the intended purposes as stated in the agreement under which this work was completed. The report may not be relied upon by any other party without the express agreement of the client and ADAPT. No other warranty, expressed or implied, is made as to the professional advice included in this report.

Where any data supplied by the client or from other sources have been used, it has been assumed that the information is correct. No responsibility can be accepted by Adapt Environment Ltd for inaccuracies in the data supplied by any other party. The conclusions and recommendations in this report are based on the assumption that all relevant information has been supplied by those bodies from whom it was requested.

No part of this report may be copied or duplicated without the express permission of ADAPT and the party for whom it was prepared. Where field investigations have been carried out, these have been restricted to a level of detail required to achieve the stated objectives of the work.

This work has been undertaken in accordance with the quality management system of Adapt Environment Ltd.

Control Sheet

	Name	Position
Author:	Shea O’ Neill CMLI MCIEEM	Ecologist/ Director
Checked and Approved by:	Sharon Richardson	Principal Ecologist

Version History

Version	Date	Modified by	Approved by	Comment/Reason(s)
1	2/12/2024	N/A	SR	First Issue
2	14-1-25	N/A	SR	Second issue
4	19-5-25	N/A	SR	Fourth issue

Disclaimer

This report has been prepared by Adapt Environment Limited with all reasonable skill, care and diligence, within the terms of the Contract with the Client. The actions of the surveyor on site and during the production of the report were undertaken in accordance with the Code of Professional Conduct for the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management. (www.cieem.org.uk).

This report has been prepared by Adapt Environment Limited for the sole use of the client and in connection with the development project described – this report cannot be relied upon by any third party without express written consent by both Adapt Environment Limited and the client.

This is a technical report and **does not** represent legal advice/ opinion.

This report remains Adapt Environment Limited property and cannot be relied upon until full payment has been made.

Adapt Environment Limited retain the right to re-publish data obtained and submit those species records produced during all ecological studies to the local recording centre.

Copyright ©

This report is the copyright of Adapt Environment Limited. Any unauthorised reproduction or usage of material from this report is prohibited

CONTENTS

- 1 Introduction and background**
- 2 Methodology- Desk Study**
- 3 Results – Desk-top Study**
 - 3.1 Baseline- Designated (protected) sites.
 - 3.2 Priority habitats.
- Enhancements**
- 4 Summary and Recommendations**

TECHNICAL NOTE: BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN (BNG) STRATEGY	
SITE NAME & ADDRESS	Land adjacent to Rocky Lane, Sandrocks, Ansty and Staplefield RH16 4TW OS 532514122168 NGR 3251422168
DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL	Construction of 4G Telecoms Mast, Compound and access route
PLANNING REFERENCE	Not known
DATE	19th May 2025
AUTHOR	Shea O’ Neill Ba (Hons) Dip LA CMLI MCIEEM – Principal Landscape Architect and Principal Ecologist

INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

Adapt Environment Ltd was commissioned to provide a Statutory Biodiversity Metric calculation tool (hereafter referred to as ‘the metric tool’) for the proposed development on land adjacent to Rocky Lane OS Grid Reference 532514 122168. This technical note/PEA has been produced to accompany the metric tool and provide an overview of the results. This report should be read in conjunction with the Tree Survey and Constraints Plan including drawing no 11353-D-CP completed by Haydens Arboricultural Consultants. This report maps the boundary woodland W1, two Oak Trees T1 and T2 and a dead Alder.

In England, the primary legislation for the statutory framework for biodiversity net gain (BNG) is principally set out under Schedule 7A (Biodiversity Gain in England) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. This legislation was inserted into the 1990 Act by Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021 and was amended by the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023. Under the statutory framework for BNG, subject to some exceptions, every planning permission is subject to a condition that the biodiversity gain objective is met (“the biodiversity gain condition”). This objective is for development to deliver at least a 10% increase in biodiversity value relative to the pre-development biodiversity value of the on-site habitat. This increase can be achieved through on-site biodiversity gains, registered off-site biodiversity gains or through statutory biodiversity credits.

METHODS

The latest version of the metric tool and User Guide (23 July 2024) have been accessed from: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/statutory-biodiversity-metric-tools-and-guides>

Desk Study

The Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) mapping tool (Available from: <https://magic.defra.gov.uk/>) was used to search for ecological information contained within the following datasets:

- Statutory designated sites for nature conservation within a 500m radius.
- Priority habitats (including Irreplaceable habitats) as listed within Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 within a 500m radius.

A site walkover was undertaken on **25th November 2024** by Shea O' Neill CMLI MCIEEM (Full member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management and Chartered Landscape Architect Member of Landscape Institute). Shea has extensive experience in survey and site assessment for habitats and protected species.

All habitats within the site were described and mapped using UK Habitat Classification (UKHab) Version 2 definitions (UKHab Ltd, 2023).

RESULTS

BASELINE

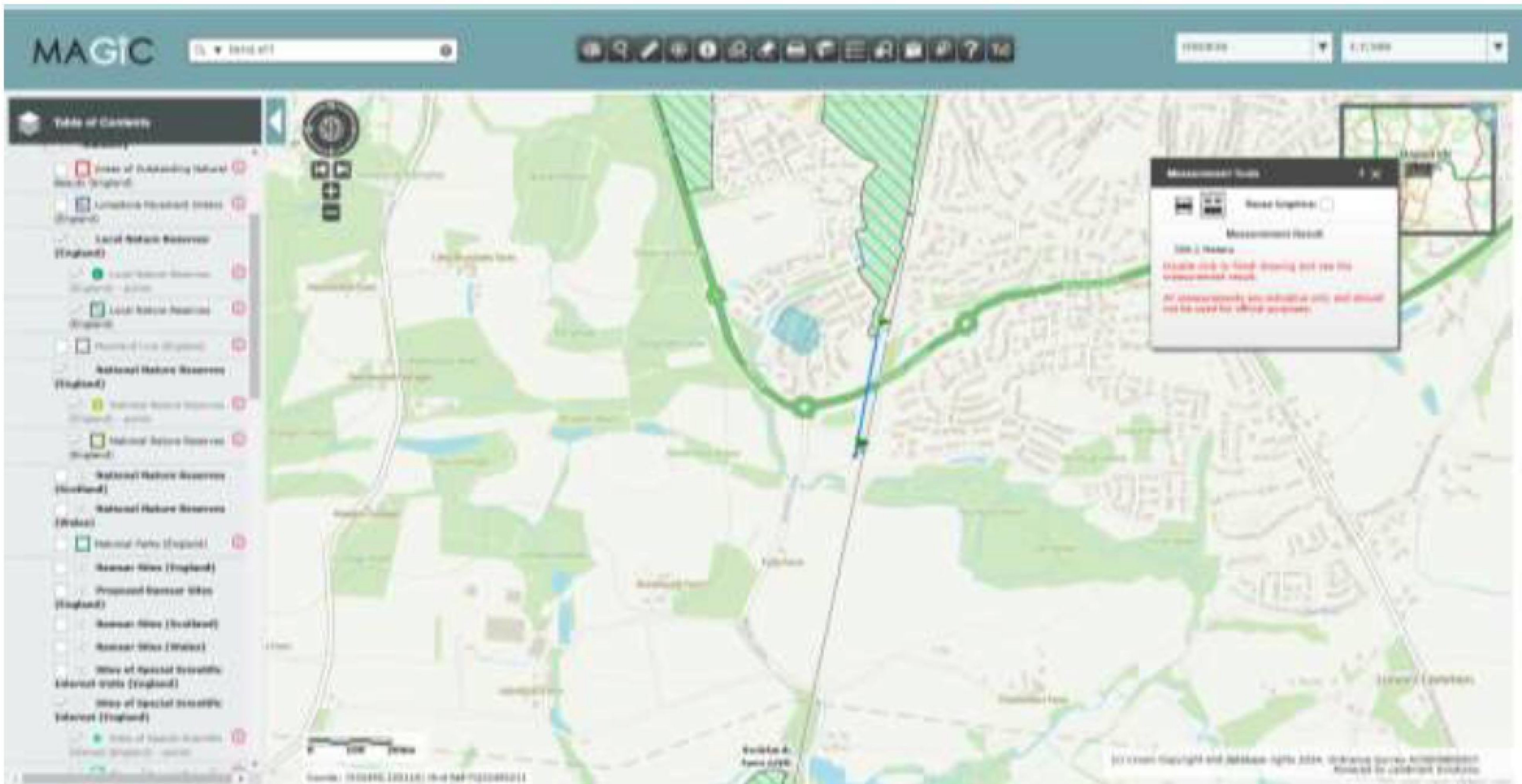
Designated Sites

The proposed development is located within 309m of a statutory designated site. The site is Ashenground and Bolmore Woods Local Nature Reserve LNR which is located north of the site. The LNR is separated from the site by an A class Road (A272) and Highbank Housing area. In addition, there is a LNR Bedelands Farm sites within 790 m to the south. Ditchling Common SSSI is located 2.6km to the southeast.

Irreplaceable & Priority Habitats

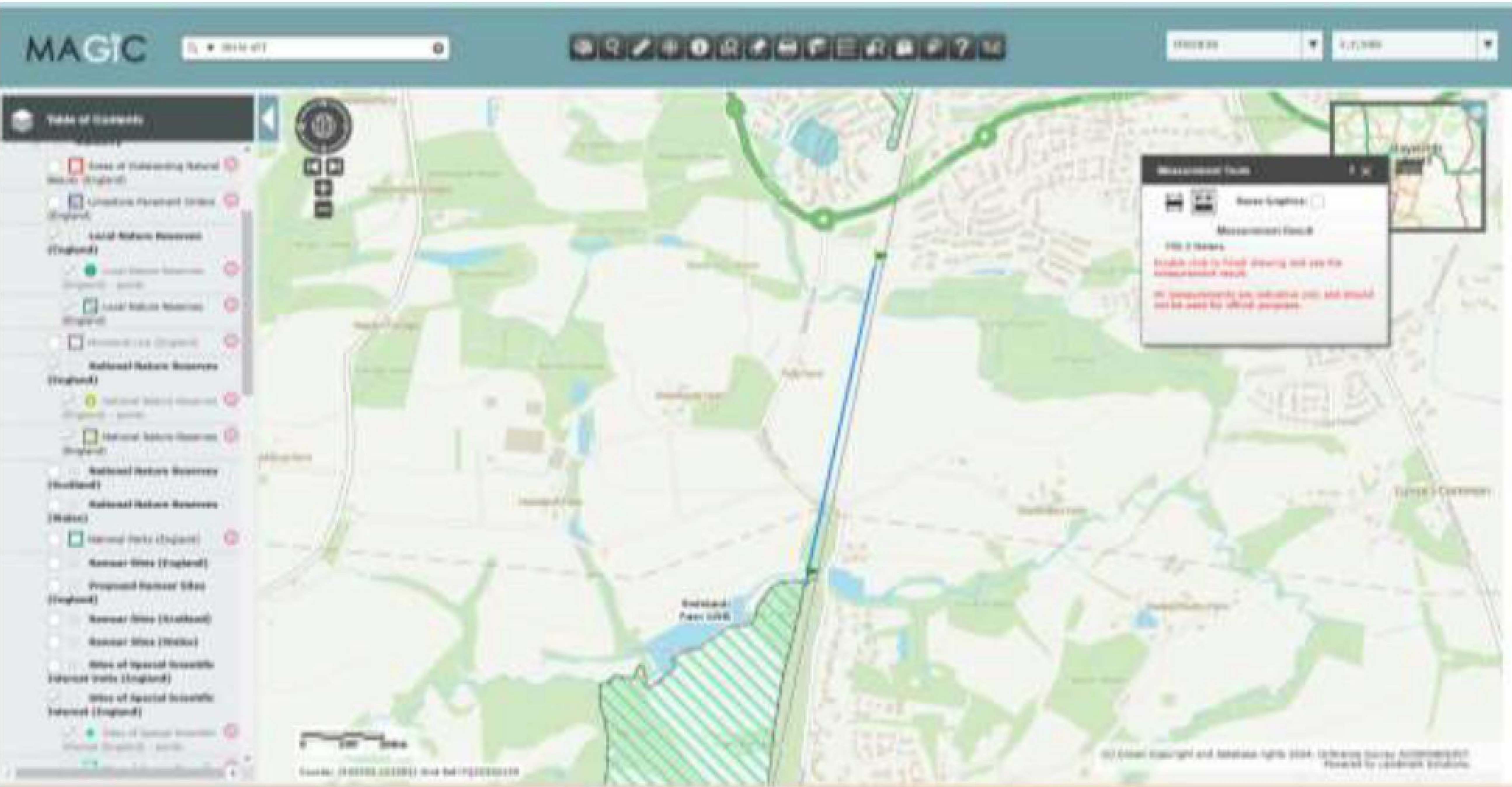
There are no irreplaceable or priority habitats on the site. A large area of woodland LNR is located across High bank and A272 to the north of the site. This is a priority habitat as listed on Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006. This area may also contain ancient woodland (irreplaceable & priority habitat). The proposed development does not pose any risk of adverse impacts to such habitats.

Figure 1: Location of Ashenground and Bolmore Woods Local Nature Reserve -309m north.
Extract DEFRA Magic Maps.



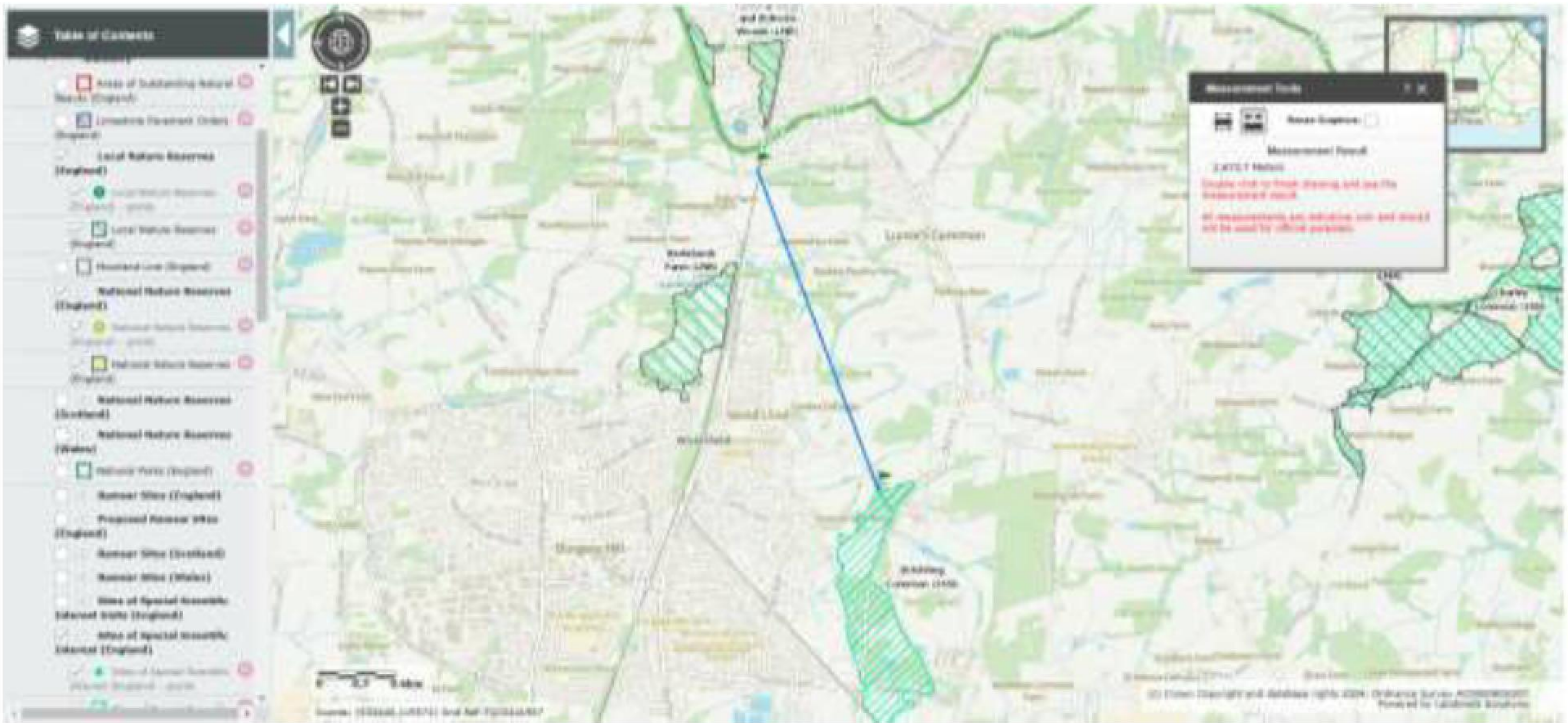
A further area of woodland Bedelands Farm LNR is located across agricultural land to the south of the site. This is a priority habitat as listed on Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006. This area may also contain ancient woodland (irreplaceable & priority habitat). The proposed development does not pose any risk of adverse impacts to such habitats.

Figure 2: Location of Bedelands Farm Local Nature Reserve -790m south. Extract DEFRA Magic Maps.



Ditchling Common is a 65 hectare SSSI managed by East Sussex Council and commoners. It is a biologically important area of acidic heath grassland with rare plants and notable populations of Butterflies and Moths. The SSSI is located across agricultural land to the southeast of the site. This is a priority habitat as listed on Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006. This area may also contain acid grassland heath (irreplaceable & priority habitat). The proposed development does not pose any risk of adverse impacts to such habitats.

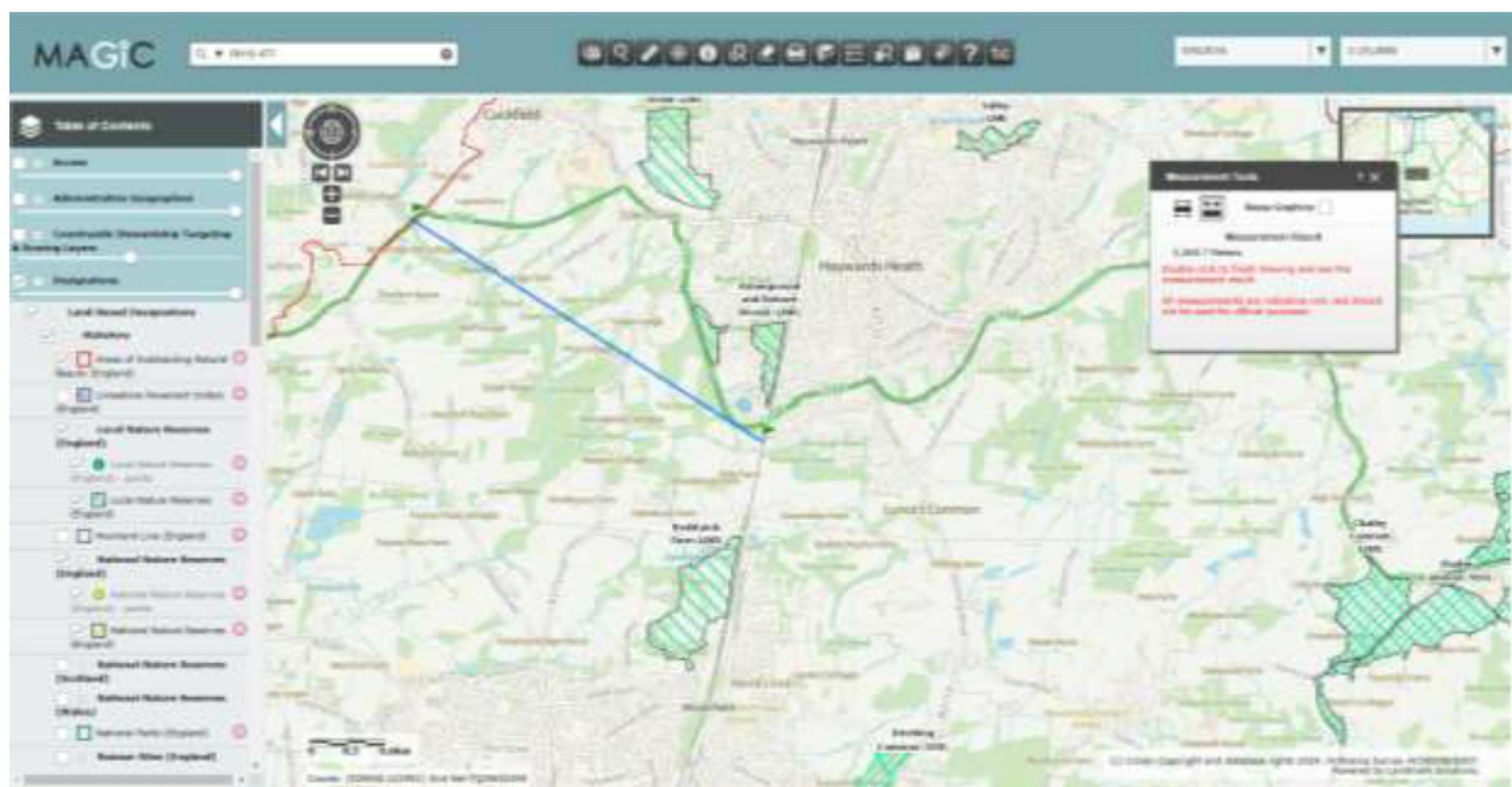
Figure 3: Location of Ditchling Common SSSI -2673m southeast. Extract DEFRA Magic Maps.



High Weald Ecological Network/Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty/National Landscape

The site is not within High Weald Ecological Network or the High Weald AONB or National Landscape Area. The boundary of the High Weald AONB is 3.3km to the Northwest as shown by Figure 4.

Figure 4: Location of boundary of High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty AONB 3.36km to the northwest. Extract DEFRA Magic Maps.



Habitats

Photographs which provide a general overview of the site and supporting data for the metric tool are provided in Appendix 1. Figure 5 and 6 in Appendix 2 provides an overview of the habitat baseline as existing on the 25th of November 2024. There is a priority habitat woodland (W1) adjacent outside the 10m site buffer refer to Tree Survey and Constraints Plan including Drawing No 11353-D-CP completed by Haydens Arboricultural Consultants surveyed December 2024. There is priority habitat hedgerow including bramble within the 10m buffer along the access track. There are two trees within the 10m buffer labelled T1 (Oak) and T2 (Oak) in the Arboricultural Impact Assessment. This is a dead un-labelled Alder located adjacent to T2. These are outside the red line boundary.

There was no habitat degradation and the site was ungrazed. The pre-development biodiversity value of onsite habitat should be either the date of the application submission or the date of the BNG site survey 25th November 2024. The grassland extends across the existing large pasture field to the north and west. It is a biodiversity gain; however, it cannot and is not included retrospectively in the metric tool.

The site area measures 993m² or 0.0993 of a hectare and includes the existing access from Rocky Lane and areas of g4 modified grassland (existing). The grassland is species poor and in poor condition (see attached habitat condition assessment).

The combined biodiversity value of the existing habitats is **0.18 habitat units**. A section of the g4 modified grassland is to be lost as a result of the proposals including the hard-cored access track and crane operational area.

Hedgerows

A mixed species hedgerow including Bramble was previously planted along the side of the railway line fence at the time of the assessment. This has not been included in the metric tool because it is outside the red line boundary, but it is inside the 10m buffer as a priority habitat.

Watercourses

There are no watercourses within the red line planning boundary. This watercourse is not within the ownership of the client.

ENHANCEMENTS

No habitat enhancements are proposed. Habitat units will be purchased offsite.

CREATION

Habitats

Figure 7 in Appendix 2 provides a UK Habitat Classification map of the site as proposed. The development layout includes the installation of the 23m 4G Telecom mast and hard-standing areas to facilitate the crane required for construction and access to the mast for maintenance. All remaining field areas are to remain as existing.

The most feasible solution to achieve net gain is to buy units offsite to achieve at least a 10% net gain in biodiversity value. It is proposed to purchase 0.019 units offsite.

This is a 10% net gain.

Hedgerows

There is no mandatory requirement for net gain in respect of linear hedgerows because hedgerows are outside the red line boundary but within the 10m buffer. All hedgerows are to be retained.

Watercourses

There is no net gain in respect of a watercourse. There is no proposed work to the watercourse outside the red line and it is not within the ownership of the client. A CEMP is recommended to ensure protection from pollution.

SUMMARY

The development proposals will result in:

- a net gain of biodiversity value for habitats comprising **0.19 habitat units > 10%** offsite.

In accordance with the habitat conditions and value in November 2024, all habitats to be affected are of low distinctiveness only (i.e. g4 modified grassland). No designated sites, irreplaceable habitats, priority habitats or habitats of high or medium distinctness will be affected.

The development will therefore meet the biodiversity net gain condition for habitats as the 10% net gain would be achieved offsite.

The information within this document and the metric tool demonstrates that the mandatory BNG condition is more than capable of being discharged successfully at the site.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Post-consent Requirements & Recommendations

The statutory framework for biodiversity net gain requires a Biodiversity Gain Plan (BGP) to be submitted and approved by the planning authority to discharge the biodiversity gain condition prior to the commencement of development. The BGP should detail the measures undertaken to achieve the required 10% net gain as stated in the metric tool. Local planning authorities have and are integrating their own approaches to detailing planning conditions since the government issued further legislation and guidance on BNG planning requirements.

APPENDIX 1: PHOTOGRAPHS

Photograph 1.
View north-east
overlooking
proposed
development
area.



Photograph 2.
View south over
proposed
construction
area of the track



Photograph 3.
View east towards
the boundary of
railway line.



Photograph 4.
View south over
proposed
crane hard-
standing and
access track



Photograph 5.
View west of rest
of agricultural
field including
modified
grassland.



Photograph 6.
View southeast of
boundary
hedgerow along
access track
inside 10m buffer.



Photograph 7.
Entrance from
Rocky Lane and
starting point of
hardcore access
route.



Photograph 8
Entrance from
Rocky Lane and
starting point of
hardcore access
route. Mature
Oak is detailed in
tree constraints
drawing.



APPENDIX 2: FIGURES

- **FIGURE 5. AERIAL PLAN OF SITE**
- **FIGURE 6. UK HABITAT CLASSIFICATION MAP (BASELINE)**
- **FIGURE 7. PROPOSED OFFSITE PROVIDERS**

**Figure 5 Aerial Plan
of site and access
route.**



FIGURE 6. UK HABITAT CLASSIFICATION MAP (BASELINE)

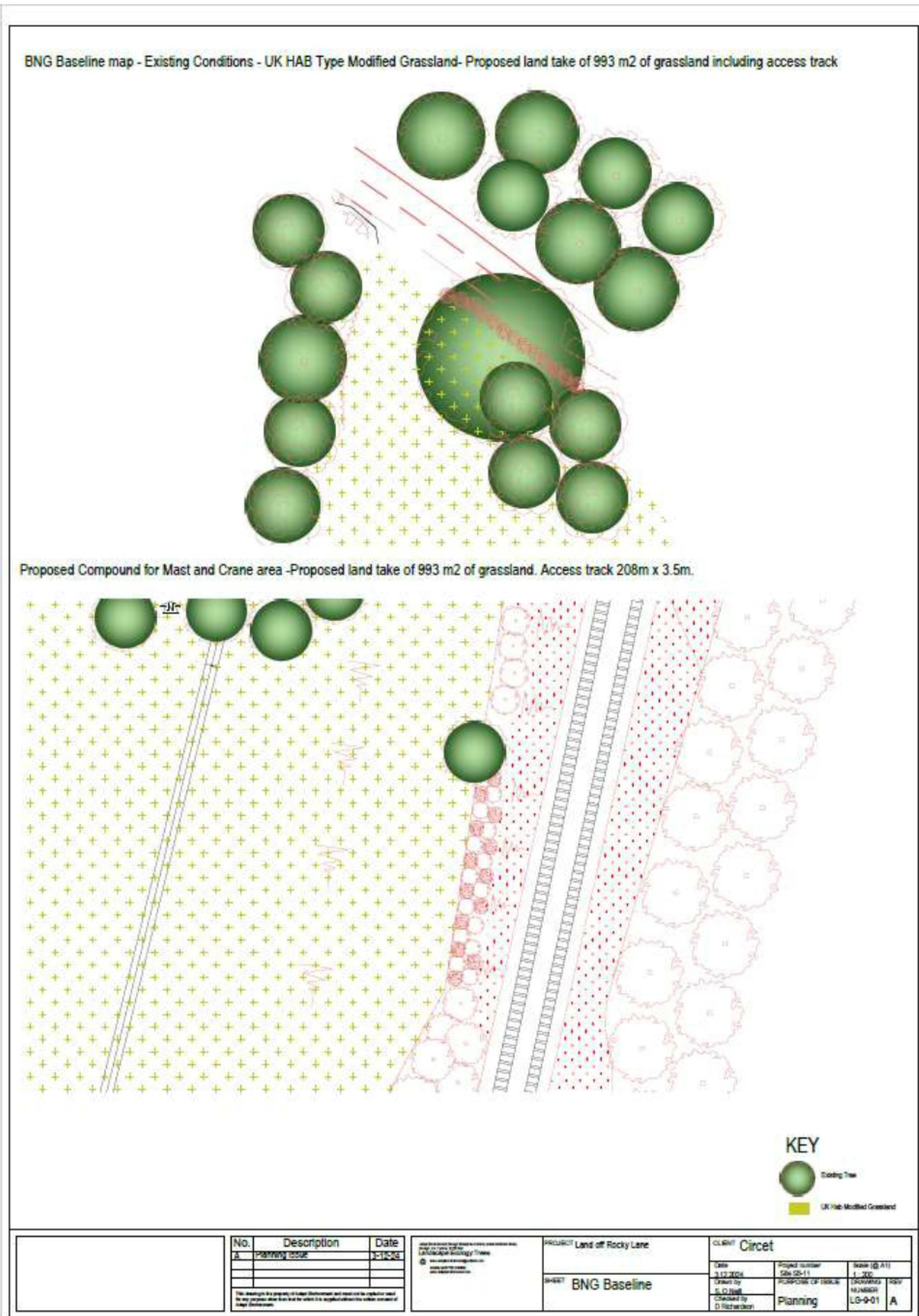
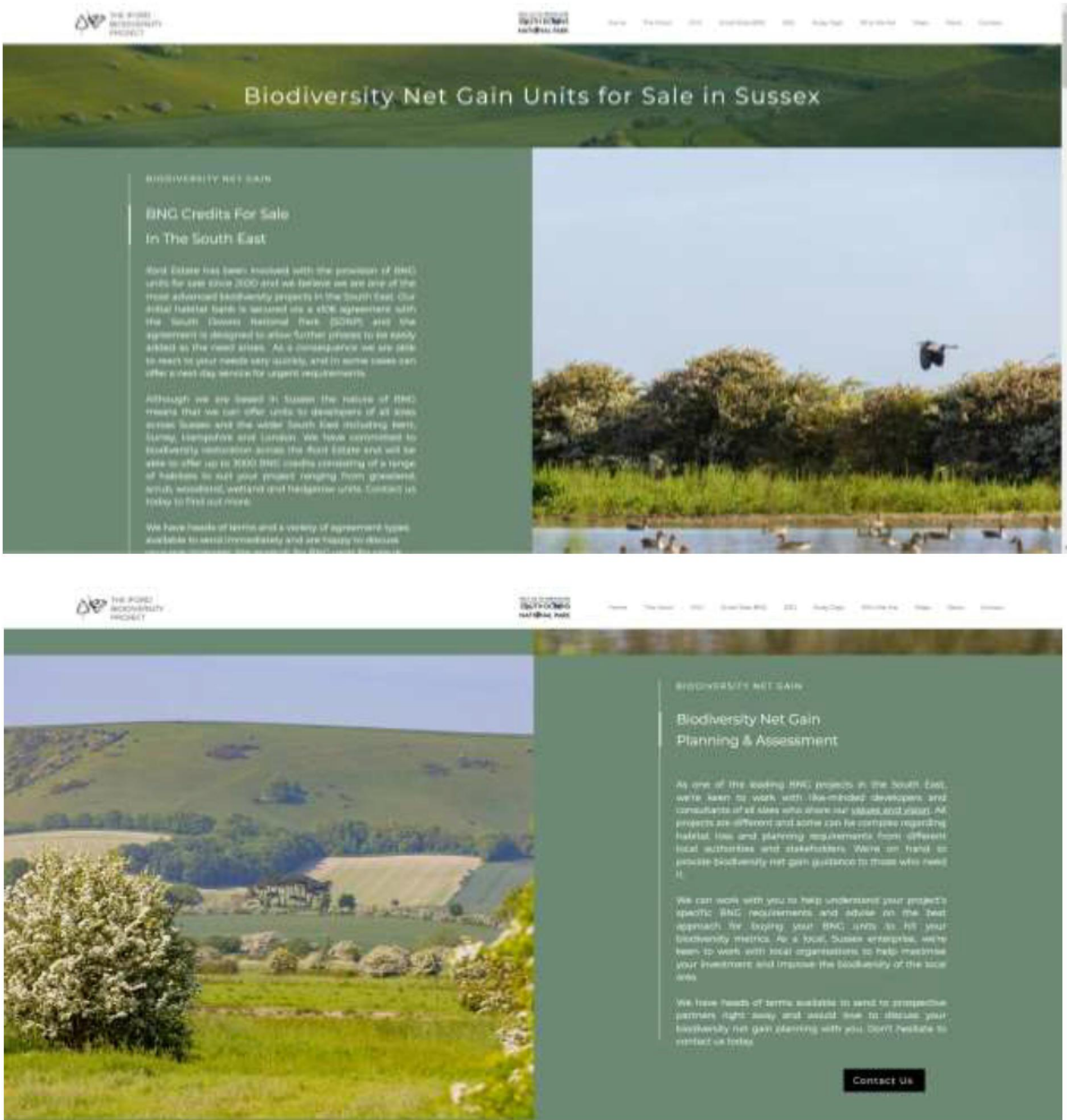
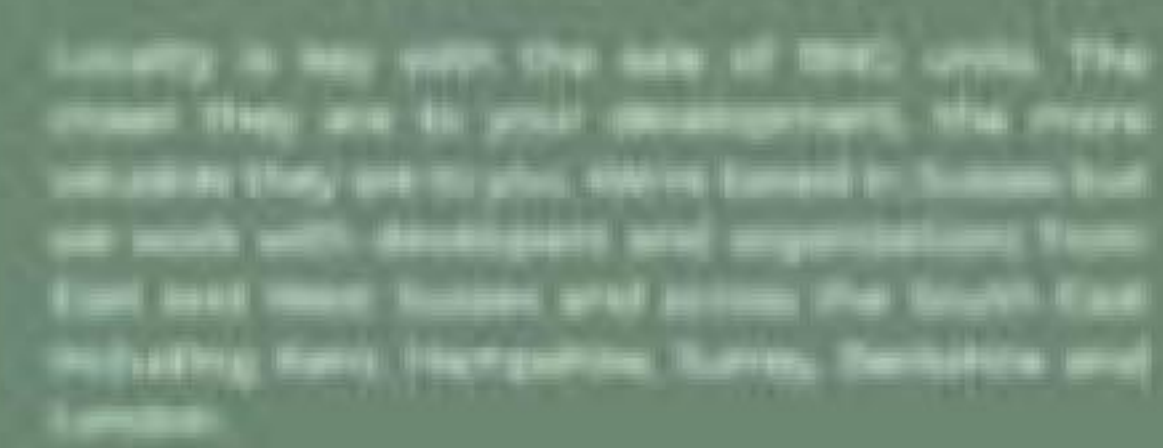


FIGURE 7. Proposed Offsite Providers

Proposed Site Iford Estate in partnership with South Downs National Park in Sussex. The site is 13 miles to the south of the proposed SRN site.



If you're a publisher or advertiser in the South East, we'd perfectly placed in the heart of Google's work with you. Choosing a BNG, you appear close to your development but only makes it more convenient to work strategically, but it's also easier to match better types and fit for various BNG markets. What's more, developers are incentivised to use BNG tools as close as possible to the site of their project, with prices increasing with distance.



different clients have a range of requirements, and we're happy to tailor the approach to suit those requirements. In general the earlier you involve us in the tender, the better it could be for you. We have years of experience working with the NHS, private and we are able to offer fully advice to minimise total cost requirements. Starting your RBC in-house (2010) is a good starting point, we can then consolidate the






[Home](#)
[Why Flood?](#)
[FAQ](#)
[About Flood](#)
[Biodiversity](#)
[Contact](#)
[Partners](#)
[Media](#)
[Privacy](#)

Contact

Get in touch to discuss your business' biodiversity requirements



Ben@floodestate.com



07974 267780



Iford Estate
 Nr Lewes
 E Sussex
 BN7 3EU

what3words
 //hurricane.lovely.whimpored

CONTACT FLOOD

First Name
 Last Name

Email *

Message

Submit

SUBSCRIBE

Sign up to receive news and updates.

Email *

SUBSCRIBE

Sign up to receive news and updates.

Email *



Phone: 07974 267780

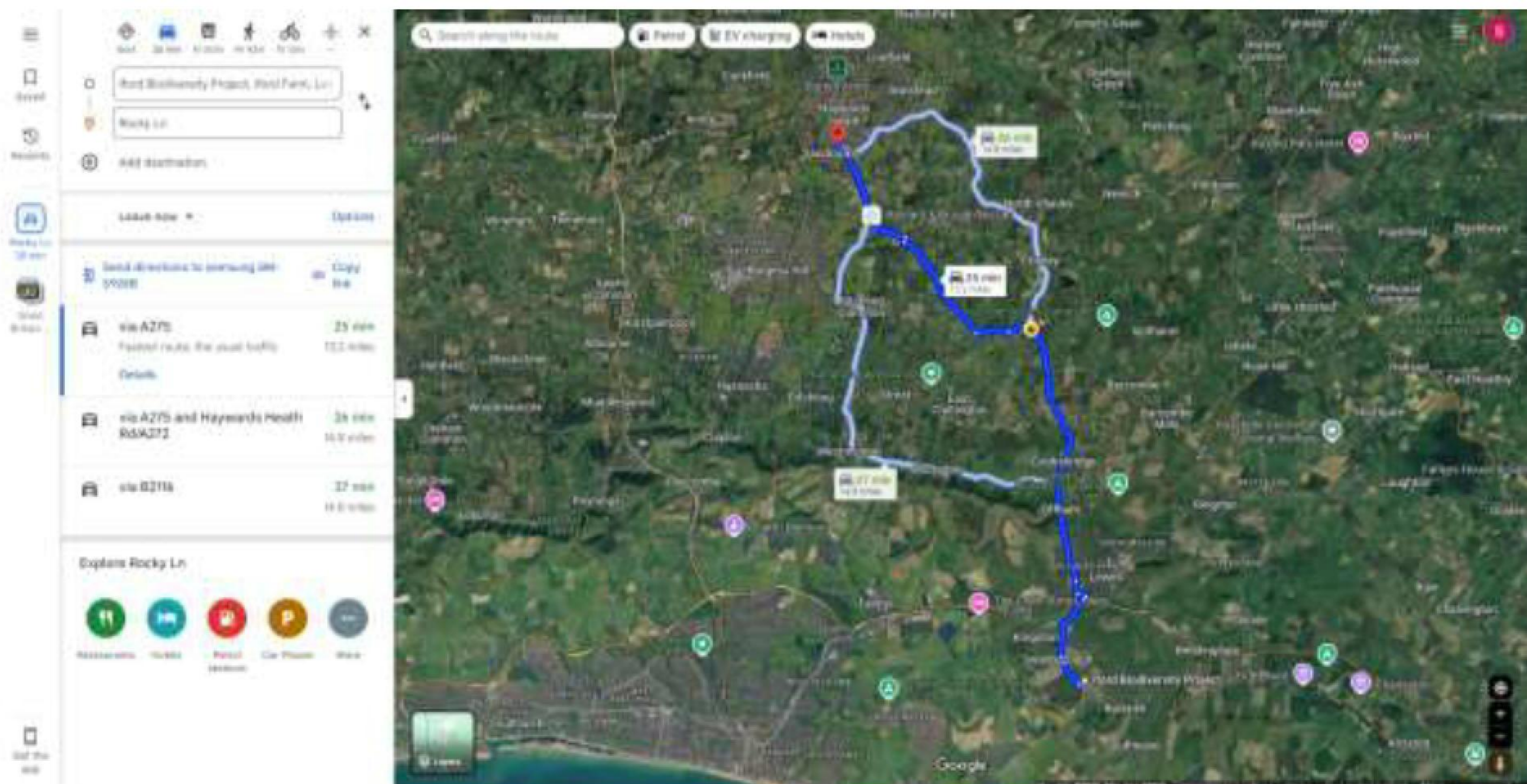
Email: Ben@floodestate.com

Location: Iford Estate
Nr Lewes
E Sussex
BN7 3EU

Social Media: [in](#) [f](#) [@](#)




The Flood Biodiversity project is proud to be working in partnership with The South Downs National Park.



APPENDIX 3: QUALIFICATIONS OF ECOLOGIST

QUALIFICATION AND EXPERIENCE OF THE ECOLOGIST/ DIRECTOR OF ADAPT ENVIRONMENT LTD.

A suitably qualified and experienced Ecologist carried out the surveys of the site, Shea O' Neill CMLI MCIEEM. The qualifications and experience of the Ecologist are outlined in the CV below.

The Ecologist insured to work on behalf of Adapt Environment Ltd is:

Mrs Shea O' Neill Director of Adapt Environment Ltd.

Qualifications Bachelor of Arts Honours Degree (BA Hons) in Landscape Architecture from Manchester Metropolitan University.

Post graduate Diploma in Landscape Architecture (DIP LA) from Manchester Metropolitan University.

Chartered Landscape Architect – registered with Landscape Institute CMLI.

Member of Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management MCIEEM.

Shea O' Neill | Landscape Architect and Ecologist
Director | Adapt Environment
Ba hons. Dip La, CMLI. MCIEEM.



Working in collaboration with individuals and teams, Shea has over 25 years of experience in managing a diverse range of environmental & heritage projects. Skilled in delivering the Ecology & Landscape Visual Impact Assessment chapters in Environmental Statements, she has a strong knowledge of the planning system. Her proven track record of delivering the Ecological Assessment and Visual Analysis for renewable energy projects and telecoms projects has enabled successful planning applications for clients. Her specialism is ecological habitat restoration and enhancement within historic landscapes, especially located along coasts and waterways.

Monaincha Wind Farm – Solar PV Extension Planning consent.
Preparation of the Landscape Visual Impact Assessment for this 253ha site on peat substrate in Country Tipperary. Planning permission was consented to in April 2021. The Solar PV arrays are proposed for installation on the existing Monaincha Wind Farm in Tipperary to share infrastructure and increase energy production.



Monaincha Solar PV Farm Co Tipperary 253h

Kilrue Solar PV Farm County Meath

Part of the team that prepared the successful planning consent for this 650ha Solar Farm proposal in County Meath. The Landscape Visual Impact Assessment including AVR photomontages were prepared in partnership with Entrust. Planning permission consented March 2023.



Kilrue Solar PV Farm Co Meath 650 ha

The Sheehy's (Roscrea) Loop in Substation & overhead pylons.

Preparation of the LVIA assessment as part of planning permission for infrastructure delivery of three existing consented Solar PV sites near Roscrea in Co Tipperary. Consented and currently being delivered onsite on behalf of Entrust.

Ballyroe Sub Station and Infrastructure

Preparation of the LVIA assessment as part of planning permission for infrastructure delivery of existing consented Solar PV sites near Ballyroe in Co Cork. The site is being managed in an environmental sensitive process because of its proximity to a SAC. Currently being delivered on behalf of Entrust.



Ballyroe Extension Solar PV Farm (O' Brien lands.) Landscape Visual Assessment of new Solar PV farm on O' Brien lands adjacent to consented Solar PV sites. Currently being delivered onsite on behalf of Entrust.

Single Wind Turbines on agricultural sites

Wind Turbines and infrastructure Co Tyrone

Working on delivering the ecological assessments for planning consent for a further five single wind turbines on agricultural sites in Co Tyrone and Co Londonderry. Six further sites have successful planning consents which are being prepared for implementation.

Habitat Restoration – West Tyrone.

Environmental restoration of Peat upland habitat in West Tyrone on wind turbine sites. Blocking of drains with grips and seeding of Sphagnum moss in shallow depressions to rewet and regenerate the peat substrate.



Peat and habitat restoration at Wind Turbine site in West Tyrone.

Tourism ECO-Pods-Ancient Woodland Assessment- Co Derry

Successful delivery of the planning consent for tourism ECO-pods adjacent to ancient woodland. Habitat mitigation and creation of off- line ponds and tree planting.



Ancient woodland assessment.

Lancashire Wind Turbine Habitat Restoration

Delivery of habitat restoration as part of the planning permission consent included Ecological Assessment, Tree Survey and Tree Protection Plans, Landscape Layout, Biodiversity Net Gain and Landscape Visual Impact Assessment.



Lancashire Wind Turbine Habitat Restoration

Ecological Assessment for replacement dwellings

These successful planning applications (over 50) for replacement dwellings within rural areas were delivered adjacent to the sensitive habitats of River Foyle & tributaries SAC within the Sperrins AONB in Co Tyrone. Environmental survey and mitigation reports were prepared for the protection of sensitive habitats and Bat surveys.

South Downs National Park Telecommunications Masts. Preparation of landscape proposals including Ecological Assessment, Tree Reports, BNG and LVIA for these sensitive semi- rural sites in the South Downs National Park. Delivery of successful planning consent including project management of the planning process.



South Downs National Park 10 number Telecommunications Masts

Highfield Farm, Woodcroft Farm and Station Road Masts Working on delivering the planning consent for a further three telecoms masts in South Downs National Park.

Eryri National Park SRN 4G Telecommunications Masts Preparation of landscape proposals including Ecological Assessment, Peat Reports, BNG and LVIA for six sensitive rural sites in the Eryri National Park. Delivery of planning application submission including project management of the planning process.

Lake District National Park SRN 4G Telecommunications Masts Preparation of landscape proposals including Ecological Assessment, Peat Reports, BNG and LVIA for seven sensitive rural sites in the National Park. Two successful consents with rebuttal submissions for three non- approvals.

Peak District National Park SRN 4G Telecommunications Masts Preparation of landscape proposals including Ecological Assessment, Peat Reports, BNG and LVIA for four sensitive rural sites in the National Park

Shea O Neill Ba Hons Landscape Architecture, Post Grad Diploma in Landscape Architecture.

December 2024

Experience with the application of Phase 1, Phase 2 and UKHAB – Sharon Richardson Landscape Architect and Ecologist- Member of Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management and Chartered Member of Landscape Institute.

Experience-

Head of Landscape- Sefton Met Borough Council 7 years.

I was responsible for the management of nine national nature reserves (NNR) on the Sefton Coast in Merseyside England including NNR Ainsdale Dunes, Crosby Lake, Ainsdale Lake, Ainsdale Pine Woods and a further 29 sites including Local Nature Reserves.

Projects surveying to NVC/ Phase 2/UKHAB- Most recent

- Monaincha Solar Farm PV on 253 ha of peat substrate and raised bog in Kilrea, County Tipperary - February 2019 to March 2021;
- South Holt Farm site of Telecommunications Mast- Phase 2 of Chalk Grassland July 2021 South Downs National Park, Hampshire;
- Wylds Farm site of Telecommunications Mast- Phase 2 Heathland Site adjacent to SAC May 2021 South Downs National Park;
- Highfield Farm site of Telecommunications Mast- Phase 2 September 2021 South Downs National Park;
- Woodcroft Farm site of Telecommunications Mast- Phase 2 Chalk Grassland adjacent to Ancient Woodland July 2021 South Downs National Park; and,
- Head Down Junction site of Telecommunications Mast- Phase 2 Plantation Woodland adjacent to ancient woodland July 2021 South Downs National Park.
- Outline Peat Management Plan for SRN 4 G Mast in Craig Dyfnant, Elan Valley, Wales, August 2023.
- Outline Peat Management Plan for SRN 4 G Mast in Gleann Duibh Forest, Perth and Kinross Scotland June 2024.
- Outline Peat Management Plan for SRN 4 G Mast in Radnor Forest- 2 Sites, Rhodda Valley Wales August/September 2024
- Outline Peat Management Plan for SRN 4 G Mast in Rhigos Forest , Powys Wales August 2024