

COYNE ENVIRONMENTAL LTD.

**Land North of Ethlinden
Hophurst Hill
Crawley Down
RH10 4LP**



PRELIMINARY ECOLOGICAL REVIEW

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INTRODUCTION

Coyne Environmental Ltd. has been instructed by Squire Planning to carry out an ecological study of the land north of Ethlinden, Hophurst Hill, Crawley Down, RH10 4LP, to establish the potential presence or absence of protected ecological features of significance. This is for the change of use to an equestrian establishment with associated works. Planning Application DM/25/0245 has now been granted with the following Conditions:

Condition 3 Precautionary Method Statement (PWMS) for the protection of mobile wildlife

Condition 4 Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy (BES) to demonstrate where wildlife enhancements will be undertaken

Biodiversity Gain Plan (BGP). A BNG metric has already been completed and achieved a 10.01% Habitat Net Gain. A BGP is now required to demonstrate how the mandatory mitigation will be achieved.



Figure 1. An image from Google satellite view showing the site boundary, in red, and the ownership boundary, in blue.

A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) has now been completed along with a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) in accordance with the Environment Act 2021. Following the review Mid Sussex District Council (MSDC) have now asked for further ecological information set out in this Report

The completed Review will enable the local planning authority (LPA) to consider the impact of the proposal on wildlife. The authority can then discharge its legal obligations under the 'Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations' (2018) and any 'Outline Mitigation and Compensation Strategy' if required.

I am a qualified Ecologist, with over 40 years' experience in the environmental field. This includes being a license bat worker (Bat License 2015-15943-CLS-CLS). The PEA Survey was carried out on the 15th of November 2024 by Assistant Ecologist Luke Davenport. This was conducted in the daytime, good weather (9C), no rain, calm (1 Beaufort), cloudy (90%) conditions.

LOCATION

The site is located at Grid Reference TQ 35651 38942, to the north end of Hophurst Hill, a rural road. It is a relatively large plot with a detached house to the south and a woodland to the north, with a fishing pond to the northwest. The proposal is to turn a circular area within the site into a horse paddock, with a gravel driveway connecting to the road from the north. The site is surrounded by predominantly birch woodland. the proposed horse paddock is currently a sparsely vegetated or bare ground area. This is due to groundwork having been previously done on site. The proposed gravel driveway runs north, connecting to a shared right of way. This travels through the woodland to the north, connecting the proposed paddock and the shared right of way. Surrounding the paddock is a dirt bund wall, roughly one meter tall and one meter wide. Within the centre of the paddock is a large dirt mound, where the topsoil from



Figure 2. Three photos showing the mound and wooded area of the site. Taken by Luke Davenport on the 15th of November 2024.

previous groundwork has been amassed. The mound has some emergent species growing atop it, including, ragwort, fleabane, grass and thistles to name a few.

The nearest Wildlife Trust site is Hedgecourt Nature Reserve located roughly 1.5km north of the site, Hedgecourt is also recognised as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). The next closest Wildlife Trust site is Blindly Heath Nature Reserve >5km further north. No other Wildlife Trust sites are nearby. Other Nature Reserves (NRs) nearby include the Gullege Millennium Wood and Pond roughly 1.2km southeast. No other NRs, SSSIs or RAMSAR sites are present within 5km of the site. Considering the rural nature of the surrounding area, and the recognised reserves nearby, Coyne Environmental Ltd. concludes that the surrounding area is one of moderate ecological value.

AREA DESIGNATIONS

Management and protection of ecology and biodiversity within the UK planning system is set out through European and UK legislation. The Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) is the main protection for wildlife. There is also legislation for specific species, Protection of Badgers Act 1992, EU Habitats and Birds Directive and more general guidance, EU Biodiversity Strategy 2011-2020. This study and report have also

considered BS 42020 (2013) Biodiversity -Code of Practice for Planning and Development.

The Mid Sussex District Council (MSDC) adopted the “Mid Sussex District Plan 2014 – 2031”, in 2018. This was then reviewed in 2021 and a new plan for 2021 – 2039 was created. The plan adopts mitigations and adaptations into local planning to ensure that developments use methods to increase biodiversity. Green infrastructure, renewable energy and Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) are some examples of ways discussed and incorporated into this plan. Overall, the plan is aimed at ensuring the environment and wildlife of the county is adequately protected.

ECOLOGICAL CONDITION ASSESSMENT

A full Phase 1 Habitat Survey was not deemed necessary due to the lack of ecological features on site, therefore, only a Walkover Ecological Survey (WES) was deemed necessary for this PEA. However, if the survey identifies any wildlife of significance, measures will be taken as set out in the JNCC guidance Handbook for Phase 1 Habitat Surveys (2010) and CIEEM Guidelines (2017).

The habitats were recorded on site as follows:

Sparsely vegetated Urban Land – Bare Ground (UKHab code; u1f – 510)

Groundwork has occurred within the site, causing most of the site to be classified as “sparsely vegetated – u1f” or “bare ground – 510”. In the centre of the site is a dirt mound with emergent species present, for example, horseweed (*Erigeron canadensis*), thistle (*Cirsium Spp.*), feverfew (*Tanacetum parthenium*) and lawn daisy (*Bellis perennis*) to name a few. A dirt bund wall is present in places surrounding the area, only a few emergent species are seen with the majority being bent grass (*Agrostis Spp.*) and rough meadow grasses (*Poa trivialis*).

The north half of the site is classified as Sparsely vegetated, with bent grass, grass of parnassus (*Parnassia palustris*) and cordgrass (*Spartina Spp.*) present. The clay soils trap some rainfall, causing aquatic species such as water starwort (*Callitriche Spp.*) to be present in patches. To the south side of the site, very few grass shoots can be seen, with most of the area being classified as “bare ground – 510” under the UKHab classification system.

Broadleaved and Mixed Woodland (UKHab code; w1)

Surrounding the site is a birch woodland, classified as a “Broadleaved and mixed woodland – w1”, silver birch (*Betula pendula*) is the predominant species. Only a few other species can be found including, English oak (*Quercus robur*), common holly (*Ilex aquifolium*) and a couple of rhododendrons (*Rhododendron Spp.*) to name a few.

Other Standing Water (UKHab code; r1g)

To the northwest of the site is a fishing pond. Roughly 2000m² the pond is connected to the shared right of way to the north of the site. There are a few elongated islands in the middle of the pond. The water quality is moderate, with murky waters, possibly due to waterfowl and fish using the pond.

ECOLOGICAL ANALYSIS

The site is a large relatively circular area, to the south of a large residential building. The proposals are to turn the area into a horse paddock, with a gravel drive connecting to the paddock from the north. This gravel drive will connect to a shared right of way, where road access can be gained. The driveway will therefore be built through the wooded area surrounding the site.

Groundwork has already occurred on the proposed paddock area, with a dirt bund wall surrounding and a large dirt mound in the centre. Due to this most of the proposed site is bare ground, or sparsely vegetated, with only a few species observed. The south side of the mound is bare ground, while the north side is sparsely vegetated. Due to the south side having some water present, some marsh species can be seen. Species seen include, bent grass (*Agrostis Spp.*), grass of parnassus (*Parnassia palustris*), water starworts (*Callitriche Spp.*), cordgrass (*Spartina Spp.*). Upon the dirt bund wall which encircles the area, bent grass, rough meadow grass (*Poa trivialis*) common bramble (*Rubus fruticosus*), curly dock (*Rumex crispus*), butterfly bush (*Buddleja davidii*), purple foxglove (*Digitalis purpurea*) and some moss (*Bryophyta Spp.*), was observed.



Figure 3. Three photos showing the fishing pond and more of the site. Taken by Luke Davenport on the 15th of November 2024.

The mound in the centre has a few more emergent species present. Species seen include, horseweed (*Erigeron canadensis*), ragwort (*Jacobaea vulgaris*), poison hemlock (*Conium Spp.*), fernleaf biscuitroot (*Lomatium dissectum*), autumn hawkbit (*Leontodon hispidus*), clover (*Trifolium Spp.*), bent grass, creeping buttercup (*Ranunculus repens*), oxeye daisy (*Leucanthemum vulgare*), peppergrasses (*Lepidium Spp.*), thistle (*Cirsium Spp.*), feverfew (*Tanacetum parthenium*) and lawn daisy (*Bellis perennis*).

The proposed driveway will require an area of the woodland to be cleared, this includes a couple of dead trees. There should be minimal impact on other surrounding living trees. Species seen within the wooded area include, silver birch (*Betula pendula*), English oak (*Quercus robur*), rhododendron (*Rhododendron Spp.*), common bramble, stinging nettle (*Urtica dioica*), common holly (*Ilex aquifolium*), bracken (*Pteridium Spp.*), common ivy (*Hedera helix*), and some moss (*Bryophyta Spp.*). Other species seen and heard during the survey include four bird species, European robin (*Erithacus rubecula*), Eurasian blue tit (*Cyanistes caeruleus*), wood pigeon (*Columba palumbus*) and Eurasian wren (*Troglodytes troglodytes*). Numerous deer tracks were seen throughout the area, suggesting a small herd of deer (*Cervidae Spp.*) commute through the site.

HABITAT SUITABILITY INDEX (HSI)

A fishing lake is present just northwest of the site and a Habitat Suitability Index (HSI) has been undertaken. Great Crested Newts (GCN) are European Protected Species (EPS) under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) and by UK law in the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. As such, the possibility of GCN within the lake was assessed using the GCN Habitat Suitability Index (HSI). A Habitat Suitability Index (HSI) assesses the likely impact of a project on such ponds and has ten factors to consider, to achieve an HSI Suitability Score.

The Pond on site was assessed as follows:

Factor	Assessment	Note	Review	SI score count
1	Geographical location	Central England	Area A	1.0
2	Pond area	Omitted due to size	Pond is ~2000m ²	N/A
3	Permeance	Never dries out	Water in at present	0.9
4	Water quality	Poor	Low invertebrate diversity	0.33
5	Shade	Shaded Areas	Mostly Shaded (60-70%)	0.95
6	Waterfowl	Minor	none present at time of survey	0.67
7	Fish	Minor - Major	Waterbody is used as a fishing lake	0.33
8	Pond density	Within 1 km	One	0.4
9	Territorial habitats	Moderate - Good	Woodland adjacent	1
10	Macrophytes	Minimal due to fishing	~10-20% Macrophyte cover	0.5
HSI			Preliminary count	0.6144 (4dp)

To obtain the HSI Score the Factors 1-10 (excluding factor 2) are multiplied together and then the base number is multiplied to the power of 1/9 to obtain the Suitability Index Score of **0.6144** (to 4 decimal places). The result is placed into the table below which indicates that the pond is **average** suitability as a GCN habitat.

HSI	Pond Suitability
< 0.5	poor
0.5-0.59	below average
0.6 -0.69	average
➤ 0.8	excellent

However, it is important to note that while the pond has average suitability for GCN, it is used for fishing. Fishing activities diminish the suitability of the lake and suggest that higher densities of fish are present within the lake. It is also important to note that, while waterfowl weren't present in the lake at the time of the survey, the size and location of the lake make it likely that waterfowl will use the lake from time to time. Some waterfowl prey on GCN, as well as disturb sediments, lower the water quality, and remove aquatic vegetation. Considering these factors, Coyne Environmental Ltd. conclude that the proposals will have minimal impact on the suitability for GCN; thus, works can continue without any further surveys.

ECOLOGICAL REVIEW ASSESSMENT

The proposals are to build a horse paddock and gravel driveway. Thus, the potential impacts of such a proposal on any ecology of significance must be assessed. The main concern for wildlife is bats (European Protected Species) and birds within the trees surrounding the site.



Figure 4. Three photos showing deer tracks, a tree feature and more of the site, respectively. Taken by Luke Davenport on the 15th of November 2024.

Bats. The main opportunity for bats is for potential roosts within the woodland within the site and surrounding area. No buildings are on site and therefore a Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) wasn't required. The vegetation and trees within the site were inspected, using binoculars, for any holes (woodpecker), fissures etc. **No evidence of urine, signs of faeces, entry scratches etc. were found.** Some trees had common ivy; this can be used as roosts for bats. It's important to note that the proposals will have minimal impact on the woodland, with only a few trees requiring removal. Some features such as a tear out were observed, see Fig.4. however, no signs of bats (EPS) were observed.

As such, the removal of any trees with a high potential for bats will require inspection beforehand. This includes mature trees with multiple features, such as tear outs, woodpecker holes, butt rot and heavy ivy growth for example. If any bats (EPS) or signs of bats are found, a suitably qualified ecologist should be contacted. Coyne Environmental Ltd. therefore concludes that in accordance with the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations' (2018) this site has a **Low - moderate potential as a bat roost**, and no further bat (EPS) surveys are required.

Birds. Birds have potential to nest within the trees on site. On inspection, using binoculars, **no nests or evidence of nest building was found**. Some songbirds such as European robin (*Erithacus rubecula*), Eurasian blue tit (*Cyanistes caeruleus*), wood pigeon (*Columba palumbus*) and Eurasian wren (*Troglodytes troglodytes*) were heard and seen. The proposals aren't likely to affect any bird species. However, it's possible birds may nest nearby. Therefore, the removal of any trees or sizeable scrub should have an inspection beforehand and be done under supervision, if done within the breeding season (March – August). Using the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO) guidelines this site has a **moderate Avifauna value**. Thus, the proposals shouldn't affect any birds.

GCN. There is a fishing pond just northwest of the site and a Habitat Suitability Index (HSI) for Great Crested Newts (GCN) was undertaken. The results showed that the pond had an average suitability for GCN. However, due to the size of the waterbody and the potential for fish and waterfowl to use the pond, GCN are unlikely to be present. Inspection under stones, debris and other potential refugia showed no signs of frogs, toads or other species of note. Coyne Environmental Ltd. therefore concludes that this site has a **low probability for GCN**. It is also important to note that the proposals will have minimal impact on the suitability for GCN.

Mammals. Due to the site being surrounded by woodland, badgers have the potential to dig setts here. Badgers tend to prefer the edges of woodland, scrub or thick vegetation to dig setts. Pairing this with the road situated to the east and the house situated to the south, it is highly unlikely badgers would typically dig setts on site. Coyne Environmental Ltd. therefore determines the site to be one of **low value for badgers**. Please note that upon inspection, no trails, passages (footprints) latrine areas (droppings), discarded meals etc. were found.

Throughout the area, extensive deer tracks were observed, suggesting a small herd commute through the site. Though, deer aren't classified as a European Protected Species, with extensive attractive habitat to the north and west. Thus, the proposals should have minimal impact on any mammals of significance. No evidence of footprints or droppings for other mammals such as rabbits or red foxes were observed. While foxes may pass through the site, it's unlikely any foraging and/or den making will take place. No burrows or signs of burrowing were observed. Furthermore, no signs of mole activity were found throughout the area.

Reptiles. The main opportunity for reptiles is within the wider surrounding area and not within the site due to the more attractive vegetation such as larger areas of longer

grass or increased debris, outside the site. It would appear to be a site of **low - negative value for reptiles** like grass snakes and common lizards. Inspections under possible refugia (stones, wood etc.) was carried out but nothing was observed. Coyne Environmental Ltd. therefore concludes that this site has a **low probability for reptiles** and therefore no further surveys are required.

PRECAUTIONARY WORKING METHOD STATEMENT (PWMS)

The following works are recommended to be undertaken to comply with Condition 3 Precautionary Method Statement (PWMS) for the protection of mobile wildlife. This will ensure any existing ecology and wildlife of the site is managed and conserved as much as practical:

- 1 Any works on vegetation on the site to be scheduled for during the winter months to ensure the likelihood of encountering nesting birds (Mar-Aug) is reduced as much as possible.
- 2 If it is not possible to avoid the bird nesting season, then a pre-development (i.e., no greater than 48 hours before clearance begins) search of the vegetation should be undertaken by a suitably experienced ecologist.
- 3 Vegetation/dead wood and any scattered materials, present on site, should be carefully removed to ensure wildlife are not harmed.
- 4 Any proposed excavations, will be covered overnight, or a ramp will be installed to enable any trapped animals to escape.
5. Any Rubble piles should be dismantled by hand and debris stored on pallets or removed from the site to prevent wildlife, including hedgehogs (Priority Species), from utilising these areas.
- 6 Heras fencing (or similar) should be erected around the working areas to limit encroachment by wildlife.
- 7 Any chemicals/pollutants used should be stored and disposed of correctly according to COSHH regulations.
- 8 If in the unlikely event that animals are found on site, they should be left to disperse on their own accord. Any that need assistance should be gently placed in a clean bucket and moved on to a safe location away from the development.

BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN (BNG)

The Environment Act 2021 has a mandatory require for Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) on most new development, of a minimum of 10%. The BNG metric has now been undertaken and achieved a 10.01% Habitat Net Gain, on site.

Suitable mitigation enhancement to comply with Condition 4 Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy and a Biodiversity Gain Plan (BGP) will now be undertaken.

CONDITION ASSESMENT FORMS

Condition Sheet: GRASSLAND Habitat Type (low distinctiveness)

UKHab Habitat Type(s)

Grassland - Modified grassland

Site name/location	Ehrlinden, Hopbarn Hill, Crawley Down	Onsite/offsite	Onsite
Central grid reference of habitat		Unique polygon reference	
Limitations (if applicable)	None	Metric 3.0 survey reference (if condition assessment of this polygon relates to a wider habitat survey)	

Habitat Description

The central mound supports a patch of modified grassland characterised by a mixed, disturbed sward with scattered ruderal and common grassland species. Vegetation is irregular and reflects previous ground disturbance, with no evidence of management aimed at species-rich grassland establishment. Species include: horseweed (*Erigeron canadensis*), ragwort (*Jacobaea vulgaris*), poison hemlock (*Conium* spp.), autumn hawkbit (*Leontodon hispidus*), oxeye daisy (*Leucanthemum vulgare*), clover (*Trifolium* spp.), creeping buttercup (*Ranunculus repens*), bent grass (*Agrostis* spp.), thistle (*Cirsium* spp.), feverfew (*Tanacetum parthenium*), peppergrasses (*Lepidium* spp.) and lawn daisy (*Bellis perennis*).

See UKHab

Condition Assessment Criteria	Condition Achieved (Y/N)	Notes/Justification
1 There must be 6-8 species per m ² . If a grassland has 9 or more species per m ² it should be classified as a medium distinctiveness grassland habitat type. NB - this criterion is essential for achieving moderate condition.	Y	There are 12 species present however, these are not all present concentrated and are spread further than a single meter.
2 Sward height is varied (at least 20% of the sward is less than 7 cm and at least 20% is more than 7 cm) creating microclimates which provide opportunities for insects, birds and small mammals to live and breed.	Y	Scattered species in clusters creating diverse sward heights around can be seen in photography within the PEA
3 Some scattered scrub (including bramble) may be present, but scrub accounts for less than 20% of total grassland area. Note - patches of shrubs with continuous (more than 90%) cover should be classified as the relevant scrub habitat type.	N	No scrub present on the mound
4 Physical damage is evident in less than 5% of total grassland area. Examples of physical damage include excessive poaching, damage from machinery use or storage, erosion caused by high levels of access, or any other damaging management activities.	N	The grass mound is made through landscape modification of the vegetation either side of it.
5 Cover of bare ground is between 1% and 10%, including localised areas (for example, a concentration of rabbit warrens).	N	Bare ground exceeds 10%
6 Cover of bracken less than 20%.	Y	Bracken is non-existent
7 There is an absence of invasive non-native species (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA, 1981).	Y	None of the plant species listed in the description are within Schedule 9 of WCA, 1981

Essential criterion 1 achieved (Y/N)

Number of criteria passed

Condition Assessment Result	Condition Assessment Score	Score Achieved %
Passes 6 or 7 of 7 criteria including passing essential criterion 1	Good (3)	
Passes 4 or 5 of 7 criteria including passing essential criterion 1	Moderate (2)	4
Passes 0, 1, 2 or 3 of 7 criteria; OR 4, 5 or 6 of criteria but failing criterion 1	Poor (1)	

Suggested enhancement interventions to improve condition score

Condition Sheet: URBAN Habitat Type
Habitat Types

Sparsely vegetated land - Ruderal/Ephemeral
 Sparsely vegetated land - Tall forbs
 Urban - Allotments
 Urban - Biodiverse green roof
 Urban - Bioswale
 Urban - Cemeteries and churchyards
 Urban - Facade-bound green wall
 Urban - Ground based green wall
 Urban - Intensive green roof
 Urban - Open mosaic habitats on previously developed land
 Urban - Rain garden
 Urban - Sustainable drainage system (SuDS)
 Urban - Vacant or derelict land
 Urban - Bare ground

Habitat Description

Sparsely vegetated land - Ruderal/Ephemeral - The area comprises sparsely vegetated, disturbed ground with patchy plant cover characteristic of ruderal and ephemeral habitat. Localised waterlogging toward the southern part supports small areas of wet-tolerant species including bent grass (*Agrostis* spp.), grass of Parnassus (*Parnassia palustris*), water starwort (*Callitriche* spp.) and cordgrass (*Spartina* spp.). Vegetation is discontinuous and reflects variable ground conditions rather than a stable grassland community.

See the Statutory Biodiversity Metric User Guide for green roofs and UK Habitat Classification (UKHab) for other habitats:			UKHab – UK Habitat Classification
On-site or off-site, site name and location	On site	Survey date and Surveyor name	Luke Davenport - 15/11/2024
Limitations (if applicable)	None	Survey reference (if relating to a wider survey)	
Grid reference		Habitat parcel reference	
Condition Assessment Criteria		Criterion passed (Yes or No)	Notes (such as justification)
Core Criteria - must be assessed for all urban habitat types:			
A	Vegetation structure is varied, providing opportunities for vertebrates and invertebrates to live, eat and breed. A single structural habitat component or vegetation type does not account for more than 80% of the total habitat area.	Y	Few emergent species scattered around, varied vegetation not dominated by a single species.
B	The habitat parcel contains different plant species that are beneficial for wildlife, for example flowering species providing nectar sources for a range of invertebrates at different times of year.	Y	Scattered flowering ruderal species present (e.g. thistle, oxeye daisy, clover) providing limited nectar resources for invertebrates.
C	Invasive non-native plant species (listed on Schedule 9 of WCA ¹) and others which are to the detriment of native wildlife (using professional judgement) ² cover less than 5% of the total vegetated area ³ . Note - to achieve Good condition, this criterion must be satisfied by a complete absence of invasive non-native species (rather than <5% cover).	Y	No invasive non-native plant species listed on Schedule 9 recorded within the parcel.
Essential criteria relevant for habitat type achieved (Yes or No)			Y
Number of criteria passed			3
Condition Assessment Result	Condition Assessment Score	Score Achieved ×/✓	
Results for habitats requiring assessment of 3 core criteria only (all listed urban habitats except Open mosaic habitat on previously developed land, Bioswale, SuDS and Green roofs):			
• Passes all 3 core criteria; AND • Meets the requirements for Good condition within criterion C.	Good (3)	3	
• Passes 2 of 3 core criteria; OR • Passes 3 of 3 core criteria but does not meet the requirements for Good condition within criterion C.	Moderate (2)		
• Passes 0 or 1 of 3 core criteria.	Poor (1)		

Condition Sheet: URBAN Habitat Type

Sparsely vegetated land - Ruderal/Ephemeral
 Sparsely vegetated land - Tall forbs
 Urban - Allotments
 Urban - Biodiverse green roof
 Urban - Bioswale
 Urban - Cemeteries and churchyards
 Urban - Facade-bound green wall
 Urban - Ground based green wall
 Urban - Intensive green roof
 Urban - Open mosaic habitats on previously developed land
 Urban - Rain garden
 Urban - Sustainable drainage system (SuDS)
 Urban - Vacant or derelict land
 Urban - Bare ground

Habitat Description

Urban: Bare Ground - Very limited vegetation; predominantly exposed substrate with only occasional grass shoots present.

See the Statutory Biodiversity Metric User Guide for green roofs and UK Habitat Classification (UKHab) for other habitats: [UKHab – UK Habitat Classification](#)

On-site or off-site, site name and location	On site	Survey date and Surveyor name	Luke Davenport - 15/11/2024
Limitations (if applicable)	None	Survey reference (if relating to a wider survey)	
Grid reference		Habitat parcel reference	

Condition Assessment Criteria	Criterion passed (Yes or No)	Notes (such as justification)
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Core Criteria - must be assessed for **all urban habitat types**:

A	Vegetation structure is varied, providing opportunities for vertebrates and invertebrates to live, eat and breed. A single structural habitat component or vegetation type does not account for more than 80% of the total habitat area.	N	Habitat largely unvegetated with minimal structural variation; dominated by exposed substrate.
B	The habitat parcel contains different plant species that are beneficial for wildlife, for example flowering species providing nectar sources for a range of invertebrates at different times of year.	N	Very limited vegetation present; negligible availability of flowering species or nectar resources.
C	Invasive non-native plant species (listed on Schedule 9 of WCA ¹) and others which are to the detriment of native wildlife (using professional judgement) ² cover less than 5% of the total vegetated area ³ . Note - to achieve Good condition, this criterion must be satisfied by a complete absence of invasive non-native species (rather than <5% cover).	Y	No invasive non-native plant species listed on Schedule 9 recorded within the parcel.

Essential criteria relevant for habitat type achieved (Yes or No)			N
Number of criteria passed			1
Condition Assessment Result	Condition Assessment Score	Score Achieved x/✓	
Results for habitats requiring assessment of 3 core criteria only (all listed urban habitats except Open mosaic habitat on previously developed land, Bioswale, SuDS and Green roofs):			
• Passes all 3 core criteria; AND • Meets the requirements for Good condition within criterion C.	Good (3)		
• Passes 2 of 3 core criteria; OR • Passes 3 of 3 core criteria but does not meet the requirements for Good condition within criterion C.	Moderate (2)		
• Passes 0 or 1 of 3 core criteria.	Poor (1)	1	

Condition Sheet: POND Habitat Type			
Habitat Type			
Lakes - Ponds (priority habitat)			
Lakes - Ponds (non-priority habitat)			
Lakes - Temporary lakes ponds and pools (H3170) [Use this condition sheet for Temporary ponds and pools, use Lake condition sheet for Temporary lakes]			
Lakes - Ornamental lake or pond [Use this condition sheet for Ornamental ponds, use Lake condition sheet for Ornamental lakes]			
Habitat Description			
Lakes - ponds (non-priority habitat) Managed fishing pond (~2000 m³) with fish and waterfowl influence.			
ukhab - UK Habitat Classification			
On-site or off-site, site name and location	On site	Survey date and Surveyor name	Lake Davenport - 15/11/2024
Limitations (if applicable)		Survey reference (if relating to a wider survey)	
Grid reference		Habitat parcel reference	
Condition Assessment Criteria		Criterion passed (Yes or No)	Notes (such as justification)
Core Criteria - applicable to all ponds (woodland ¹ and non-woodland):			
A	The pond is of good water quality, with clear water (low turbidity) indicating no obvious signs of pollution. Turbidity is acceptable if the pond is grazed by livestock.	N	Water moderately turbid; likely influenced by fish stocking and waterfowl activity.
B	There is semi-natural habitat (moderate distinctiveness or above) completely surrounding the pond, for at least 10 m from the pond edge for its entire perimeter.	N	Pond margins partially modified with access from shared right of way; continuous semi-natural buffer absent.
C	Less than 10% of the water surface is covered with duckweed <i>Lemna</i> spp. or filamentous algae.	Y	Duckweed/algal cover not quantified; moderate turbidity observed.
D	The pond is not artificially connected to other waterbodies, such as agricultural ditches or artificial pipework.	Y	No evidence of artificial inlets, outlets or pipe connections observed.
E	Pond water levels can fluctuate naturally throughout the year. No obvious artificial dams ² , pumps or pipework.	N	Managed fishing pond; water levels likely controlled rather than fully natural.
F	There is an absence of listed non-native plant and animal species ³ .	N	Non-native species presence cannot be ruled out due to fish stocking.
G	The pond is not artificially stocked with fish. If the pond naturally contains fish, it is a native fish assemblage at low densities.	N	Pond managed for fishing; fish stocking present.
Number of criteria passed		2	
Condition Assessment Result	Condition Assessment Score	Score Achieved x/4	
Results for woodland ponds which require assessment of 7 core criteria			
Passes 7 criteria	Good (3)		
Passes 5 or 6 criteria	Moderate (2)		
Passes 4 or fewer criteria	Poor (1)	2	
Results for non-woodland ponds which require assessment of 9 criteria			
Passes 9 criteria	Good (3)		
Passes 6 to 8 criteria	Moderate (2)		
Passes 5 or fewer criteria	Poor (1)		
Suggested enhancement interventions to improve condition score			

Condition Sheet: WOODLAND Habitat Type					
UK Habitat Classification (UKHab) Habitat Types					
Woodland and forest - Lowland beech and yew woodland					
Woodland and forest - Lowland mixed deciduous woodland					
Woodland and forest - Native pine woodlands					
Woodland and forest - Other coniferous woodland					
Woodland and forest - Other Scot's pine woodland					
Woodland and forest - Other woodland; broadleaved					
Woodland and forest - Other woodland; mixed					
Woodland and forest - Upland birchwoods					
Woodland and forest - Upland mixed ashwoods					
Woodland and forest - Upland oakwood					
Woodland and forest - Wet woodland					
Habitat Description					
Woodland and forest - Upland birchwoods: Semi-natural broadleaved woodland dominated by silver birch (<i>Betula pendula</i>), with occasional oak (<i>Quercus robur</i>), and holly (<i>Ilex aquifolium</i>). Woodland structure is relatively uniform with limited understorey and ground flora; small amounts of non-native rhododendron present at low cover					
ukhab – UK Habitat Classification This condition sheet is based on the England Woodland Biodiversity Group (EWBG) Woodland Condition Survey Method, available here: Woodland Wildlife Toolkit (sylva.org.uk)					
IMPORTANT: This biodiversity metric woodland condition assessment must be used to assess woodland being input into the biodiversity metric. The outputs of this condition assessment are not equivalent to, nor are they comparable with the scores from the EWBG condition assessment, because the EWBG assessment has been adapted for the biodiversity metric, including the removal of EWBG Indicator 7 (Proportion of favourable land cover around woodland) and Indicator 14 (Size of woodland), and minor changes to other indicators.					
On-site or off-site, site name and location		Survey date and Surveyor name			
Limitations (if applicable)		Survey reference (if relating to a wider survey)			
Grid reference		Habitat parcel reference			
Condition Assessment Criteria					
Indicator	Good (3 points)	Moderate (2 points)	Poor (1 point)	Score per indicator	Notes (such as justification)
A Age distribution of trees	Three age-classes ¹ present.	Two age-classes ¹ present.	One age-class ¹ present.	2	Predominantly mature birch with limited younger age classes present
B Wild, domestic and feral herbivore damage	No significant browsing damage evident in woodland ² .	Evidence of significant browsing pressure is present in less than 40% of whole woodland ² .	Evidence of significant browsing pressure is present in 40% or more of whole woodland ² .	3	No evidence of widespread browsing damage observed
C Invasive plant species	No invasive species ³ present in woodland.	Rhododendron <i>Rhododendron ponticum</i> or cherry laurel <i>Prunus laurocerasus</i> not present, and other invasive species ³ <10% cover.	Rhododendron or cherry laurel present, or other invasive species ³ ≥10% cover.	2	Rhododendron present at low frequency and limited extent
D Number of native tree species	Five or more native tree or shrub species ⁴ found across woodland parcel.	Three to four native tree or shrub species ⁴ found across woodland parcel.	Two or less native tree or shrub species ⁴ across woodland parcel.	2	Silver Birch dominant with oak and holly also present
E Cover of native tree and shrub species	>80% of canopy trees and >80% of understorey shrubs are native ⁵ .	50 - 80% of canopy trees and 50 - 80% of understorey shrubs are native ⁵ .	<50% of canopy trees and <50% of understorey shrubs are native ⁵ .	2	Canopy largely native, small proportion of non-native shrubs present
F Open space within woodland	10 - 20% of woodland has areas of temporary open space ⁶ . Unless woodland is <10ha, in which case 0 - 20% temporary open space is assessed ⁷ .	21 - 40% of woodland has areas of temporary open space ⁶ .	<10% or >40% of woodland has areas of temporary open space ⁶ . But if woodland <10ha has <10% temporary open space, please see <i>Good practice 7</i> .	3	Woodland largely continuous with limited natural gaps

F	Open space within woodland	10 - 20% of woodland has areas of temporary open space ⁶ . Unless woodland is <10ha, in which case 0 - 20% temporary open space is permitted ⁷ .	21 - 40% of woodland has areas of temporary open space ⁶ .	<10% or >40% of woodland has areas of temporary open space ⁶ . But if woodland <10ha has <10% temporary open space, please see Good category ⁷ .	3	Woodland largely continuous with limited natural gaps
G	Woodland regeneration	All three classes present in woodland ⁸ ; trees 4 - 7 cm Diameter at Breast Height (DBH), saplings and seedlings or advanced coppice regrowth.	One or two classes only present in woodland ⁸ .	No classes or coppice regrowth present in woodland ⁸ .	2	Limited saplings and regeneration noted
H	Tree health	Tree mortality 10% or less, no pests or diseases and no crown dieback ⁹ .	11% to 25% tree mortality and or crown dieback or low-risk pest or disease present ⁹ .	Greater than 25% tree mortality and or any high-risk pest or disease present ⁹ .	2	Trees generally healthy, no significant disease observed
I	Vegetation and ground flora	Recognisable NVC plant community ¹⁰ at ground layer present, strongly characterised by ancient woodland flora specialists.	Recognisable woodland NVC plant community ¹⁰ at ground layer present.	No recognisable woodland NVC plant community ¹⁰ at ground layer present.	1	Ground flora sparse and not characteristic of NVC woodland
J	Woodland vertical structure	Three or more storeys across all survey plots, or a complex woodland ¹¹ .	Two storeys across all survey plots ¹¹ .	One or less storey across all survey plots ¹¹ .	2	Canopy and limited shrub layer present
K	Veteran trees	Two or more veteran trees ¹² per hectare.	One veteran tree ¹² per hectare.	No veteran trees ¹² present in woodland.	1	No veteran trees identified
L	Amount of deadwood	50% of all survey plots within the woodland parcel have deadwood, such as standing and fallen deadwood, large dead branches and or stems, branch stubs and stumps, or an abundance of small cavities ¹³ .	Between 25% and 50% of all survey plots within the woodland parcel have deadwood, such as standing and fallen deadwood, large dead branches and or stems, stubs and stumps, or an abundance of small cavities ¹³ .	Less than 25% of all survey plots within the woodland parcel have deadwood, such as standing and fallen deadwood, large dead branches and or stems, stubs and stumps, or an abundance of small cavities ¹³ .	2	Some standing and fallen deadwood present
M	Woodland disturbance	No nutrient enrichment or damaged ground evident ¹⁴ .	Less than 1 hectare in total of nutrient enrichment across woodland area, and or less than 20% of woodland area has damaged ground ¹⁴ .	1 hectare or more of nutrient enrichment, and or 20% or more of woodland area has damaged ground ¹⁴ .	3	No evidence of nutrient enrichment or ground damage
Total Score (out of a possible 39)					27	
Condition Assessment Result			Condition Assessment Score		Result Achieved	
Total score >32 (33 to 39)			Good (3)		Moderate 2	
Total score 26 to 32			Moderate (2)			
Total score <26 (13 to 25)			Poor (1)			
Suggested enhancement interventions to improve condition score						

CONCLUSION

Coyne Environmental Ltd. has been instructed to carry out an ecological study of the land north of Ethlinden, Hophurst Hill, Crawley Down, RH10 4LP, for Planning Application DM/25/0245. A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) survey has been carried out. There are few ecological features on site, with no signs of European Protected Species (EPS). The survey and subsequent desk top study of the site indicates that this is not in an area of high risk for any specific species or sensitive habitats and has no habitats of importance, including no irreplaceable habitats.

Coyne Environmental Ltd. have determined that the site has no evidence of bats (EPS), GCN, badgers or reptiles. While certain species may commute through the site, it is unlikely any roosting, nesting or den making will take place. Consequently, it is considered that no additional surveys for these species are required.

Therefore, in my professional opinion, when the addition Condition information is completed, I assess that the proposed equestrian establishment, will have minimal impact on the overall ecology of the area. I conclude that no further ecological or environmental studies are necessary, to satisfy the requirement for ecological and biodiversity enhancements. On this basis the proposal can be determined by Mid Sussex District Council.

REFERENCES

Site Plan

Base Habitat Map

Post habitat Plan

Woodland Protection Plan

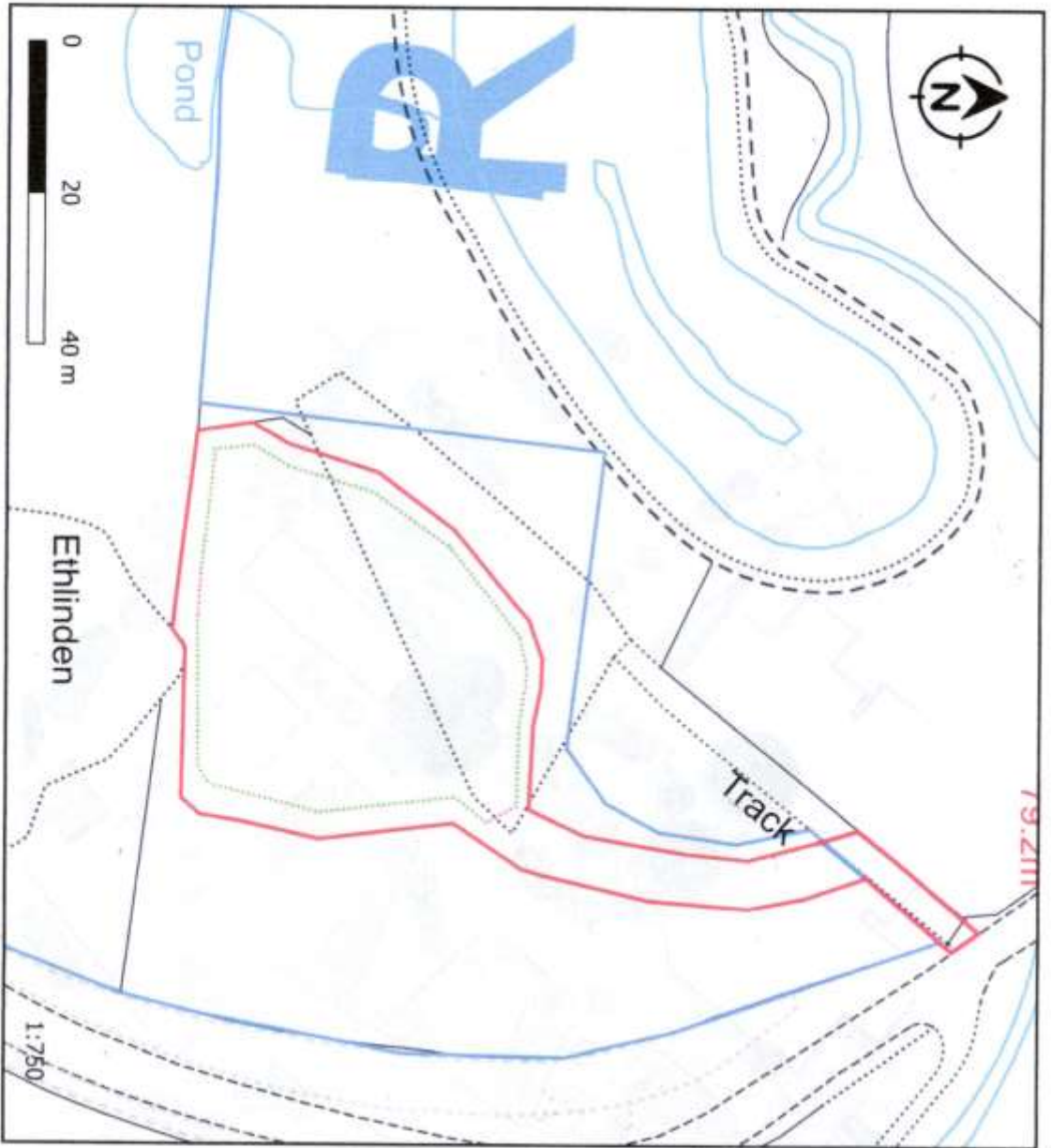
Proposed Enhancement Plan

Wildlife & Countryside Act (1981)

Environment Act 2021

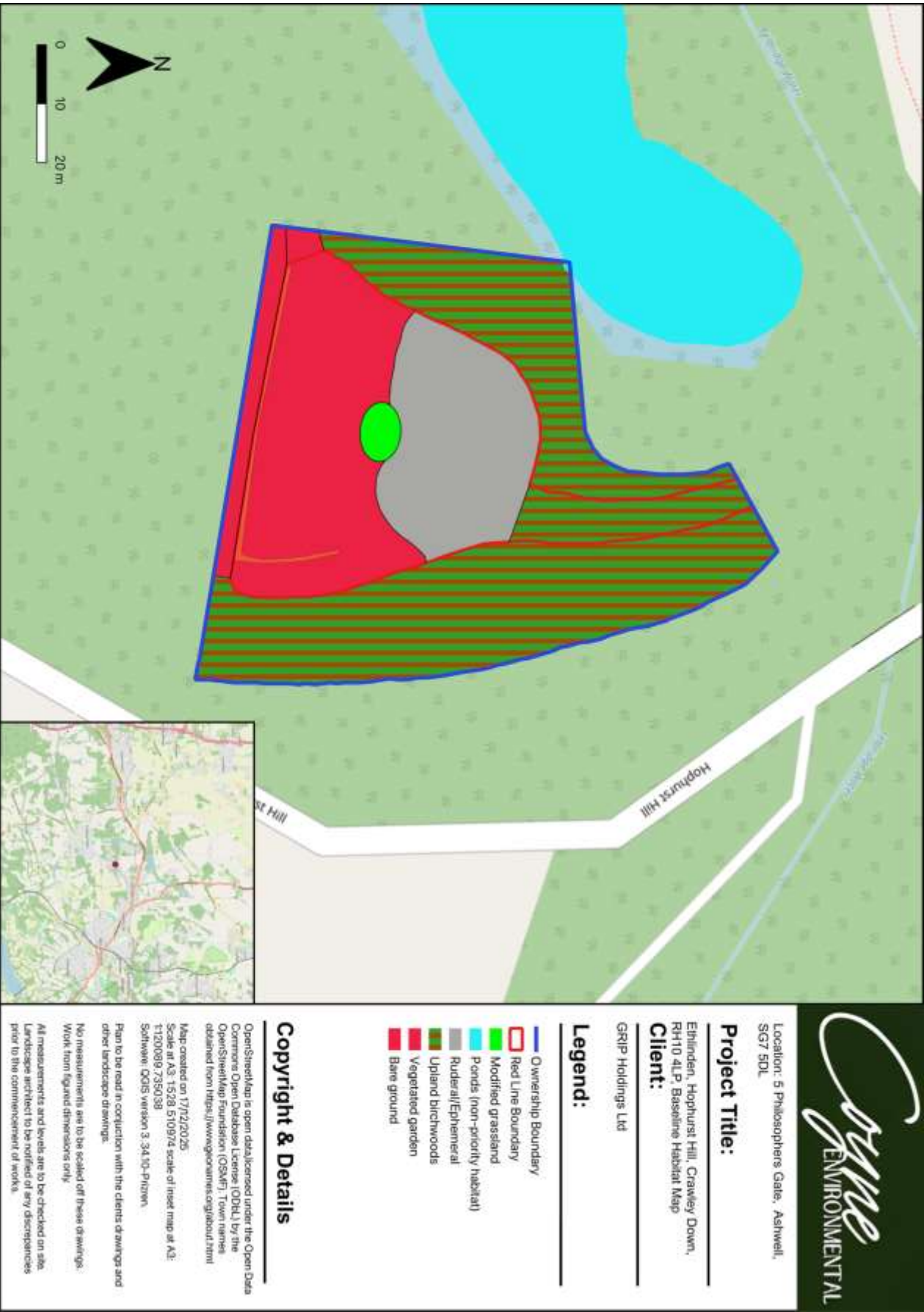
UKHab Ltd. Vers. 2.0 (2018-2023)

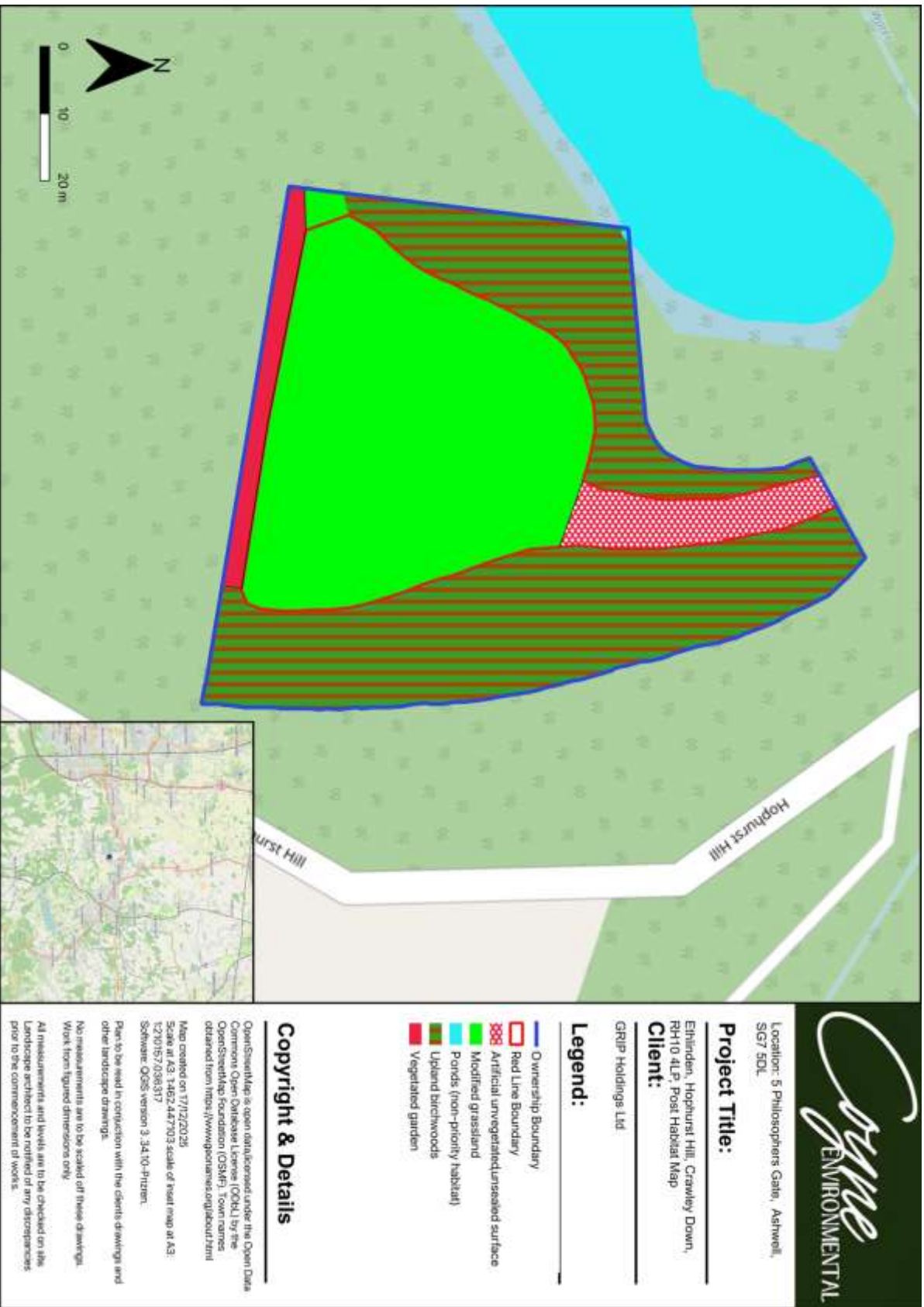
Mid Sussex District Council Local Plan



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Block Plan	
Key Site Area Land Ownership Timber Gate Post and Rail Fencing 1.5m	
Project No:	0077
Date Published:	23/04/2025
Squires Planning The Long Barn Crawley RH10 4HH 01293 978 200 info@squiresplanning.co.uk	
 SQUIRES PLANNING	





Woodland Protection Plan

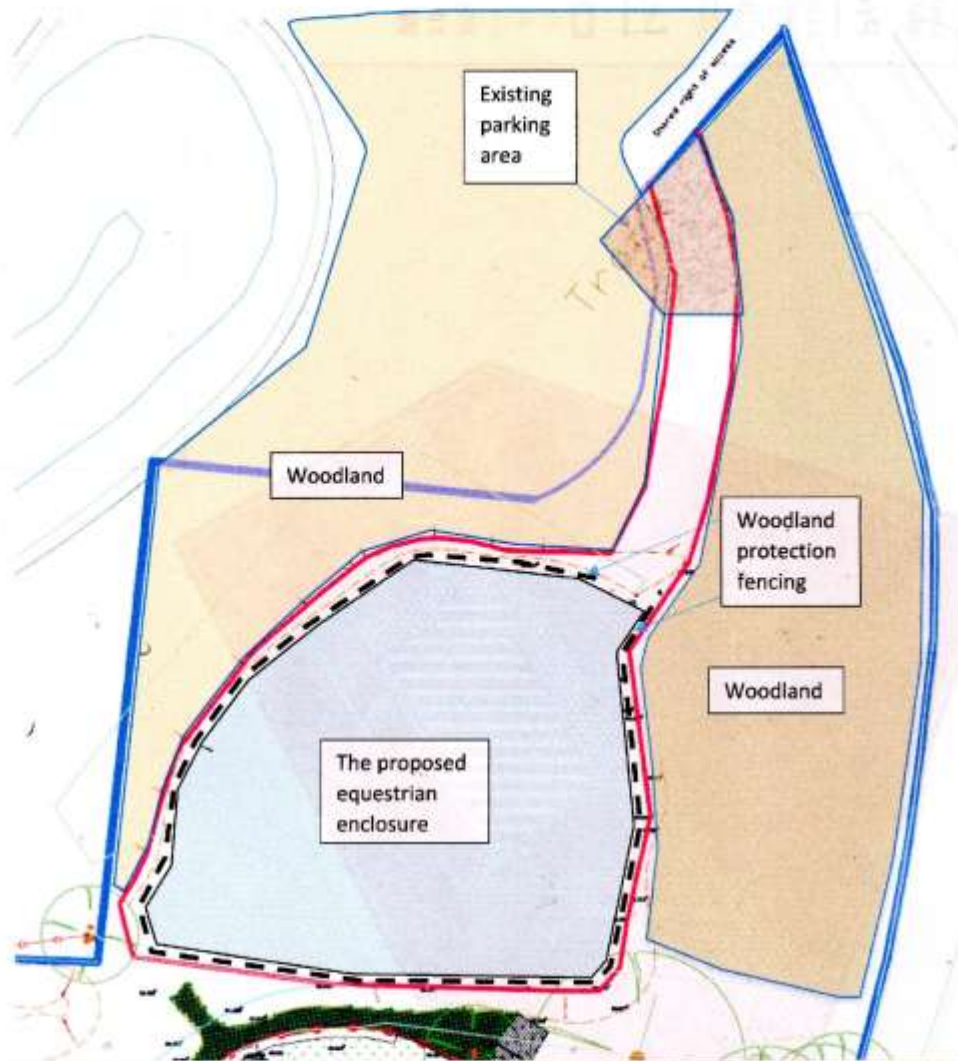


Figure 2. Woodland location and protection plan

Location: 5 Philosophers Gate, Ashwell,
SG7 5DL

Project Title:

Ethilnden, Hophurst Hill, Crawley Down,
RH10 4LP - Enhanced habitat map

Client:

GRIP Holdings Ltd

Legend:

- Red Line Boundary
- Ownership Boundary
- Existing Medium Rural Tree
- Native hedgerow with trees
- Artificial unvegetated/unsealed surface
- Modified grassland
- Ponds (non-priority habitat)
- Upland birchwoods

Copyright & Details

OpenStreetMap is open data, licensed under the Open Data Commons Open Database License (ODbL) by the OpenStreetMap Foundation (OSMF). Town names obtained from <https://www.geonames.org/about.html>

Map created on 15/01/2026

Scale at A3: 1:494.654614 scale of inset map at A3: 1:12395.597108

Software: QGIS version 3.34.10-Pitzner

Plan to be read in conjunction with the clients drawings and other landscape drawings.

No measurements are to be scaled off these drawings. Work from figured dimensions only.

All measurements and levels are to be checked on site. Landscape architect to be notified of any discrepancies prior to the commencement of works.

