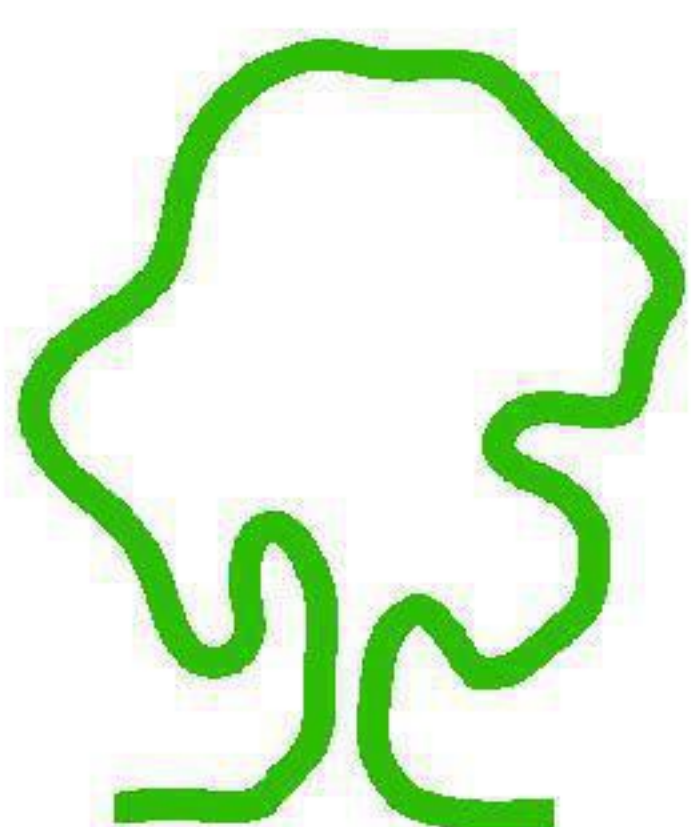


COLIN BRACE

42 HURST ROAD, HAS SOCKS, WEST SUSSEX, BN6 9NL

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

November 2024
(Updated August 2025)



eas ltd

Environmental Assessment Services Ltd

REPORT DATA SHEET

Requirement	Data
Report Reference	759/Lewis&Co/Brace/42HurstRd/PEA
Date	November 2024
Client	Colin Brace
Report type	Preliminary Ecological Appraisal
Purpose	Submission to Planning
Revisions	26/11/2024: Alteration to proposal: Excluding demolition and replacement of rear extension. 05/12/2024: Minor revision to wording. 12/08/2025: Alteration to proposed development – proposed subterranean pool replaced by proposed subterranean dwelling with access.
Prepared by	Nathaniel Scott BSc (Hons), MSc <div><div></div><div>Signed</div></div>
Approved by	Lucy Monday BSc (Hons), ACIEEM <div><div></div><div>Signed</div></div>

COLIN BRACE

42 HURST ROAD, HASOCKS, WEST SUSSEX, BN6 9NL

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

November 2024 (Updated August 2025)

CONTENTS

NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Background
- 1.2 Aim of the Report
- 1.3 Legislation
- 1.4 Assessment Method

2. CONSULTATION AND BASELINE DATA SEARCH

- 2.1 Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre Data Search
- 2.2 Mid Sussex District Council

3. SITE ASSESSMENT

- 3.1 Habitat Assessment
- 3.2 Designated Sites and Priority Habitats
- 3.3 Protected and Controlled Species
 - 3.3.1 *Trees and Hedgerows*
 - 3.3.2 *Plants*
 - 3.3.3 *Invertebrates*
 - 3.3.4 *Amphibians*
 - 3.3.5 *Reptiles*
 - 3.3.6 *Birds*
 - 3.3.7 *Bats*
 - 3.3.8 *Badgers*
 - 3.3.9 *Common/Hazel Dormice*
 - 3.3.10 *Other Protected and Notable Species*
 - 3.3.11 *Non-native Invasive Species*

4. MITIGATION

- 4.1 Trees
- 4.2 Invertebrates
- 4.3 Amphibians and Reptiles
- 4.4 Birds
- 4.5 Bats
-
- 4.7 Hazel Dormice
- 4.8 Rabbits
- 4.9 Non-native Invasive Species
- 4.7 Other Protected and Notable Species

5. ENHANCEMENT

6. CONCLUSIONS

APPENDIX A

Site Location and Existing Site Plans

APPENDIX B

Proposed Site Plans

APPENDIX C

Site Photographs

COLIN BRACE

42 HURST ROAD, HASOCKS, WEST SUSSEX, BN6 9NL

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

November 2024 (Updated August 2025)

NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

Environmental Assessment Services Ltd has been appointed to prepare a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal in relation to proposed development works at 42 Hurst Road, Hassocks, West Sussex.

The site (as existing) comprises a single, detached residential dwelling, with free standing garage, pool house and swimming pool with surrounding gardens which extend north from Hurst Road. It is proposed to remove a side extension from the existing dwelling and remove the existing garage in order to develop a second, detached, residential dwelling to the west of the existing dwelling. It is also proposed to remove the existing pool house and swimming pool, and develop a new (mostly) subterranean dwelling towards the northern end of the garden.

The aim of this report is to collate preliminary, baseline information on the conservation and ecological status of the site in terms of habitats and species within the framework of current environmental legislation and provide recommendations in relation to the proposed redevelopment of the site, where appropriate.

The assessment comprised consultation with the Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre to obtain records of protected, rare and notable species within 1 km of the site, consultation with Mid Sussex District Council regarding Tree Preservation Orders for trees within and adjacent to the site, and a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (walkover survey) undertaken on 17 October 2024 to identify features of ecological value and the site's likely potential to support protected and other notable species.

Consultation with Mid Sussex District Council has confirmed that there are no trees protected by a Tree Preservation Order within or adjacent to the site, and the site does not lie within a conservation area. There are, however, a number of mature trees within the site which should be protected and retained for their ecological value.

Assessment of the site, along with a review of consultation data provided by Sussex Biodiversity Records Centre, found the site to have potential [REDACTED] [REDACTED] for which protection measures will need to be implemented. It is recommended that a mitigation scheme be prepared for submission to Mid Sussex District Council. If it can be agreed that suitable mitigation may be implemented during the redevelopment of the site to avoid disturbance to European Protected Species, further surveying and/or licencing may not be required.

Where appropriate protection and compensation measures are implemented it is considered that the proposed development is unlikely to have a significant impact on the ecological value of the site. Where enhancement measures are secured, there may be an overall ecological net gain.

COLIN BRACE

42 HURST ROAD, HASOCKS, WEST SUSSEX, BN6 9NL

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

November 2024 (Updated August 2025)

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 The following report, prepared by Environmental Assessment Services Limited, is a preliminary assessment of the baseline status of ecology of land at 42 Hurst Road, in Hassocks, West Sussex.
- 1.1.2 The site comprises an existing dwelling, detached garage and garden area, which includes a swimming pool and pool house, together with associated access and hard standing. The Ordnance Survey map reference for the centre of the site is TQ 29473 15700. See Appendix A for the site location and existing site plans.
- 1.1.3 It is proposed to remove a side from the existing dwelling and remove the existing garage in order to develop a second detached, residential dwelling to the west of the existing dwelling. It is also proposed to remove the existing pool house and swimming pool, and develop a new (mostly) subterranean dwelling towards the northern end of the garden. See Appendix B for the proposed site plans.

1.2 Aim of the Report

The aim of the report is to collate preliminary, baseline information on the conservation and ecological status of the site in terms of habitats and species, within the framework of current environmental legislation.

The report also evaluates the potential of the site to support protected species, in particular for:

- Animals and plants listed under Schedules 1 and 5, and Schedule 8, respectively, of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (WCA) as amended, and those European protected species listed under Schedules 2 and 5 of The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.
- Plants and animals with Red Data Book¹ or Notable² status.

¹ The World Conservation Union Red List of threatened species provides taxonomic, conservation status and distribution information on taxa (species or group of related species) evaluated to determine their relative risk of extinction.

² Notable (or Nationally Scarce) species occur in 16 – 100 10 km squares in Britain.


³ Species derived from Section 41 list of the Natural Environmental and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 + the hen harrier.

- Plants, animals and habitats identified as Priority Species / Habitats or Species / Habitats of Principal Importance for Conservation in England (formerly UK Biodiversity Action Plan)³.

Where the site includes features of ecological value and/or has potential for protected species, an assessment of the likely impacts of the proposal is made, together with recommendations for any further surveying, mitigation and enhancement as considered appropriate.

1.3 Legislation

The legislation relevant to this study is:

- i. Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), which transposes into UK law the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (known as the “Bern Convention”) and the Birds Directive 2009.
- ii. The Countryside and Rights of Way Act (CROW) 2000, which strengthens the legal protection for threatened species.
- iii. The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (NERC) 2006, which through Section 41 provides a list of habitats and species of principal importance for biodiversity conservation (Priority Habitats and Species) in England.
- iv. The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. These consolidate all the various amendments made to the Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.). Regulations 1994, which transposed the Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora (EC Habitats Directive) into national law.
- v. 
- vi. The Hedgerow Regulations 1997 (made under section 97 of The Environment Act 1995), which make provisions for the protection of important hedgerows.
- vii. National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which makes requirements for the protection and enhancement of biodiversity through the planning system.

1.4 Assessment Method

This assessment has been prepared generally in accordance with the CIEEM EcIA guidelines, as applicable, as recognised by the British Standard on Biodiversity BS42020:2013.

The assessment was undertaken in two stages:

- a) Consultation: comprising data searches by Sussex Biodiversity Records Centre (SxBRC) and Mid Sussex District Council.

b) Preliminary ecological appraisal (walkover survey) carried out on 17 October 2024 to:

- Assess the baseline status of the site.
- Identify its use by species of flora and fauna protected or controlled under the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 and associated European legislation.
- Identify notable features of interest that should or could be retained and/or enhanced as part of the proposals.

2. CONSULTATION AND BASELINE DATA SEARCH

2.1 Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre Data Search

2.1.1 Data obtained (30 October 2024) from Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre (SxBRC) provided information on statutory and non-statutory designated sites and records of protected and notable species within the search area. The search was conducted for a 1 km radius surrounding the Ordnance Survey grid reference TQ 29473 15700. The search area was selected based on the scale and likely impacts of the proposed development.

2.1.2 The statutory and non-statutory designated sites identified by SxBRC within 1 km of the site are set out in section 3.2 below, together with an assessment of the potential impact of the proposed development on these sites. Mitigation, where appropriate, is recommended in section 4.

2.1.3 Records of protected and rare species within 1 km of the site have been provided by SxBRC. These records are discussed under the protected species headings in Section 3.3 below, together with an assessment of the potential impact of the proposed development on these species. Mitigation, where appropriate, is recommended in section 4.

2.2 Mid Sussex District Council

2.2.1 Mid Sussex District Council's online search function was used to identify any tree or group of trees protected by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) at and/or within the vicinity of the site. At the time of reporting, it is understood that there are no trees within or adjacent to the site which are protected by a TPO, and the site does not lie within a conservation area.

2.2.2 The closest trees to be protected by a TPO lie to the east of the site at 36 Hurst Road. These trees are not considered likely to be impacted by the proposed redevelopment at 42 Hurst Road.

3. SITE ASSESSMENT

The Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (walkover survey) was carried out on 17 October 2024. The following is based on the findings of that assessment, together with a review of information provided by the Sussex Biodiversity Records

Centre (SxBRC) and Mid Sussex District Council. Photographs taken during the site survey are provided in Appendix C.

3.1 Habitat Assessment

3.1.1 The site is located to the north of Hurst Road, east of Wickham Hill. The site lies within a residential area, with land fronting onto Hurst Road being primarily developed for residential use behind which lies a mosaic of undeveloped agricultural fields, paddocks and small parcels of woodland.

3.1.2 The site lies on a north facing slope, which has been divided into terraces. The existing dwellinghouse and garage are located at road level, with the swimming pool and pool house located on the terrace behind, a garden lawn on the middle terrace and an informal garden area where it is proposed to locate the new (mostly) subterranean house towards the northern end of the garden.

Existing Dwelling – to be retained

3.1.3 The existing dwelling comprises a detached two/three-storey building with a complex pitched, clay tiled roof. The roof has a thick cover moss on the roofing tiles. The living space has been extended into the roof void and there are Velux roof windows. There are two chimney stacks, one to the east and one to the west of the building. The façade of the first and third floors to the front and rear of the building are clad in clay tiles.

3.1.4 The rear extension is two storey with a flat roof. Solar panels have been mounted on the roof. The rear façade of the extension is clad in clay tiles and there is ivy growing over the northeast corner of the extension up to roof level. Current plans include the retention (as existing) of this section of the building.

Side Extension – to be removed

3.1.5 The side extension, which is to be removed as part of the site's redevelopment, is a single storey brick extension with a clay tiled, pitched roof and plastic window frames. The living space extends into the roof area, and there is no isolated roof void. There are three Velux windows in the roof.

Garage – to be removed

3.1.6 The garage is a large detached single storey structure with concrete panel walls, a cement tiled, pitched roof with liner, plastic facers, wooden soffits, and wooden weather boarding on the northern façade together with a window which has been boarded over. The garage is used for storage. No evidence of the presence of bats or birds were noted in or on the garage.

Pool and Pool House – to be removed

3.1.7 The existing swimming pool is located on the first terrace together with a hot tub sunk into the surrounding patio area. At the western end of the pool, adjacent to the western boundary of the site, is the pool house. This is a wooden summer house / shed type structure which houses the pool pump and a few household items. The

wooden shed is single skinned with a pitched roof covered in a bitumen felt. The flooring is concrete.

- 3.1.8 At the eastern end of the pool is an area of hard standing with planted beds and a small ornamental pool, which has been covered.

Garden Area – to be relandscaped and to include the new (mostly) subterranean dwelling

- 3.1.9 The site includes a north facing garden with mature trees and ornamental planting split into three levels. The upper garden level (which sits a level lower than the house and garage) includes the swimming pool, plug pool / hot tub, pool house, hard standing, ornamental planting beds and ornamental pool/pond. This level is to be cleared and relandscaped to provide a basement level ‘garden room’ and garden area (soft landscaping) for the new (second) dwelling.

- 3.1.10 The second level comprises a lawn maintained to a short sword.

- 3.1.11 The third level comprises mature trees located along the boundaries and what may have been a lawn towards the centre, now dominated by pioneer weeds including nettles, brambles, docks, thistles, willowherbs, bittercress, smooth sow thistle, wood avens, forget-me-not, ragwort, geranium and mosses, together with an intertwined fig tree and cherry. There are also two rabbit warrens in this area of the lawn.

- 3.1.12 The northern end of the garden is low lying, and damp, dominated by pendulous sedge at ground level and mature trees along the boundaries, including oak, ash, apple and beech. The northern boundary also includes a sparse line of hazel.

3.2 Designated Sites and Priority Habitats

- 3.2.1 There is one Statutory site within 1 km of the site, as identified by SxBRC. This is South Downs National Park which lies to the south of the residential properties on the southern side of Hurst Road, south of the site. There are no other statutory sites within 1 km of the study site.

- 3.2.2 There is one non-statutory site within 1 km of the site; Lag Wood & Butchers Wood, two adjoining areas of ancient woods designated collectively as a Local Wildlife Site (LWS) which lie approximately 1 km to the southeast of the site. Butchers Wood is also a Woodland Trust Site.

- 3.2.3 The proposed redevelopment of the site is not considered likely to have any significant impact on any statutory or non-statutory sites.

- 3.2.4 European sites include Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Special Areas of Conservation (SACs). These, together with Ramsar sites, are protected for their ecological significance. Proposed development should not adversely affect the integrity of European or Ramsar sites. Ashdown Forest SAC and SPA lies within Mid Sussex; however, the site does not lie within the 7 km Impact Risk Zone as identified by Mid Sussex District Council.

- 3.2.5 There will be no direct land take from any designated or non-designated sites as a result of the proposed development. Designated site habitat management will not be affected by the proposed development. The potential impact of the proposed development on feature species of the European and Ramsar sites (including lighting impacts) and invasive species is considered in section 3.3 below.
- 3.2.6 The site has been assessed for its potential to include or be part of (BAP) Priority Habitat as listed on Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act, 2006 (NERC Act).
- 3.2.7 Section 41 Habitats recorded within 1 km of the site include:
- Ancient/Veteran trees
 - Open Water
 - Traditional Orchard
 - Wood-pasture and Parkland
 - Ancient Woodland
 - Deciduous Woodland
- 3.2.8 The site comprises a residential plot of land comprising sealed surface, unvegetated garden habitat, lawn and ornamental planting. The northern end of the garden includes mature trees. There are no recorded Priority Habitats within or adjacent to the site which area likely to be impacted by the proposed development.

3.3 Protected and Controlled Species

3.3.1 *Trees and Hedgerows*

The site includes a number of mature trees. A tree survey and Arbicultural Report was prepared by Arborsense in 2023 and updated in 2024, and July 2025 in relation to the proposed development at the site.

The Lawson cypress trees within the front garden, together with a magnolia, are to be removed to make way for the proposed new access and parking area. These trees are considered to be of generally lower ecological value and may be compensated for with new tree planting within the garden area.

An overmature cherry tree within the garden has been recommended for removal. The tree, approximately 8 m in height, is leaning and in poor structural condition with signs of decay and deadwood. The cut wood should be retained on site for saproxylic invertebrates.

The proposed development will marginally encroach on the root protection area of three trees (T1 a beech, T5 an oak and T6 a cherry) to be retained. Protection measures have been given within the Arboricultural Report in relation to these trees, please refer.

Other trees that will be impacted by the proposed development include ornamental trees within the planting beds adjacent to the existing swimming pool, where the site is to be relandscaped. This includes a Catalpa (Indian bean tree) and palm, together with an apple and a fig towards the northern end of the garden. The loss of

these trees should be compensated for with new tree planting as part of the site's redevelopment.

3.3.2 *Plants*

There are records of 19 protected, rare and notable flowering (higher) plant species within 1 km of the site, together with eight lichen species and two mosses.

The site comprises typical garden planting and lawn areas, together with a low-lying area dominated by pendulous sedge (and mature trees). No rare plant communities were noted during the site walkover, however, the northern end of the garden may support species such as bluebell, which are not typically observable during the season the site was assessed.

There will be some loss of planting associated with the redevelopment of the site, however, the majority of garden planting will be replaced with new similar garden planting. This is not considered likely to have a significant impact on any notable plants/ plant communities.

No further botanical surveying is recommended in this case. However, new planting should be used to compensate and enhance the site. See section 5 for recommendations.

3.3.3 *Invertebrates*

Records held by Sussex Biodiversity Records Centre indicate the presence of 17 rare, notable and protected invertebrate species within 1 km of the site. These include two beetles including Stag Beetle (*Lucanus cervus*) and Oedemera femoralis, four species of butterfly, five species of moth, one true fly and one dragonfly, all of which could use the site.

The proposed development will result in some loss of planting but also will result in some gain which should offset the proposed loss. In this case, it is considered that there will be no significant loss of habitat likely to impact the local invertebrate community. The proposed development may be used to deliver habitat enhancement for the benefit of invertebrates (and other wildlife).

No further invertebrate surveying is recommended in this case. However, habitat enhancement is recommended for the benefit of invertebrates. See section 5 below.

3.3.4 *Amphibians*

Great Crested Newts (GCN) and natterjack toads are fully protected under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and Schedule 2 of The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), making them a European Protected Species. It is an offence (amongst other things) to deliberately capture, disturb, injure, or kill an individual of the species; damage or destroy a breeding or resting place; intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to a resting or sheltering place, meaning that both the individual and its habitat are protected.

According to the Mid Sussex District Council: Impact Risk Zones map (produced by Nature Space), the site appears to lie within the red/amber zone, indicating that the site lies within an area considered highly suitable/suitable for Great Crested Newts. (Mapping at a scale provided is difficult to read.)

Records from SxBRC indicate extensive amphibian surveying within the local area, notably at the former Hassocks Golf Club to the north of the site and at 27 Hurst Road which lies to the south of Hurst Road, southeast of the site. There are a significant number of records for Great Crested Newt, Palmate Newt, Smooth Newt, Common Toad and Common Frog. Recent records (from 2017-2018) indicate the presence of Smooth Newt, Palmate Newt, and Great Crested Newt within the land associated with No 27 Hurst Road.

The closest ponds identified on mapping are located to the rear of properties on the southern side of Hurst Road, where GCN and other amphibians have been recorded. In addition to these, there is a series of in-line ponds within the former golf course to the north of the site, where GCN and other amphibians (as listed above) have also been recorded. It is acknowledged that there may be other smaller garden ponds closer to the site that are not mapped.

There are no ponds within the site, however, there is a small, covered water feature (rectangular lined pool) located to the east of the existing swimming pool, the swimming pool and a plunge pool/hot tub, both of which are also covered. As existing, these pools are not considered suitable for use by GCN. However, GCN could become trapped in these features, which offer no foraging or egg laying potential.

The garden area includes habitats which could be used by amphibians including GCN. The proposed development will result in no significant loss of habitat, however, should amphibians be using the site during site clearance works, they may be at potential of harm. Protection measures should therefore be implemented. See section 4 below.

3.3.5 *Reptiles*

The more widespread reptiles: Grass Snake, Slow-worm, Viviparous Lizard and Adder, are protected under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 (as amended). It is an offence, amongst other things, to intentionally kill or injure any individual. The more restricted species: Sand Lizard and Smooth Snake, are fully protected under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and Schedule 2 of The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, making them European Protected Species.

The more common reptile species, as mentioned above, have been recorded within 1 km of the site. Recent survey efforts from 2015 and 2018 have recorded Slow-worm and Grass Snake approximately 1 km to the east and northeast of the site respectively.

The garden offers habitat which includes potential for both foraging and shelter for reptile species. Whilst the proposed development will result in no significant loss of reptile habitat, there is the potential for any individuals using the site to be harmed

during site clearance and redevelopment. Protection measures should therefore be implemented. See section 4 below.

3.3.6 *Birds*

All wild birds, their nests and eggs are protected by UK law. It is an offence to take, kill or injure any wild bird, or to take, damage or destroy any nest (whilst being built or in use) or egg of any wild bird under Part 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. In addition to this protection, those birds and their young listed on Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) must not be disturbed at or near the nest. Part I birds are protected at all times and Part II during the closed season only.

A summary of the notable bird species recorded within 1 km of the site and their protection status was provided by SxBRC and has been reviewed as part of this assessment.

The site comprises typical garden planting likely to be used by passerine species typical of this habitat. The site is not considered likely to be of significance for bird populations.

The trees within the site, including those which are to be felled as part of the site's redevelopment, and some of the denser planting within the planting beds have potential for use by nesting birds.

Protection measures will be required to avoid impacting nesting birds and new planting should be incorporated into the development plans to compensate for this loss. See section 4 below.

3.3.7 *Bats*

All species of bat are protected under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and Schedule 2 of The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (meaning all species of bat are both UK and European Protected Species).

It is illegal to:

- Kill, injure or capture (take) bats.
- Deliberately disturb bats (whether in a roost or not).
- Damage, destroy or obstruct access to a bat roost.

Disturbance is unlawful where bats ability to survive, breed, reproduce, rear/nurture their young, hibernate or migrate is impaired or where local distribution or abundance is significantly impacted. This may occur where actions impact their roosts, flight lines or foraging areas.

Sussex Biodiversity Records Centre hold records for 11 bat species within 1 km of the site. The site is set within an area which offers ideal habitat for bats, comprising a mosaic of farmland, paddocks and small parcels of woodland, all of which are connected via well-established treelines and hedgerow.

The garden offers some potential foraging habitat, and the buildings and mature trees may offer potential roosting habitat on site. The potential of these features and the likely impact of the proposed development has been considered as follows.

The proposed development includes four distinct parts relevant to bats:

1. The removal of trees
2. The removal of the pool house
3. The removal of the garage
4. The removal of the side extension

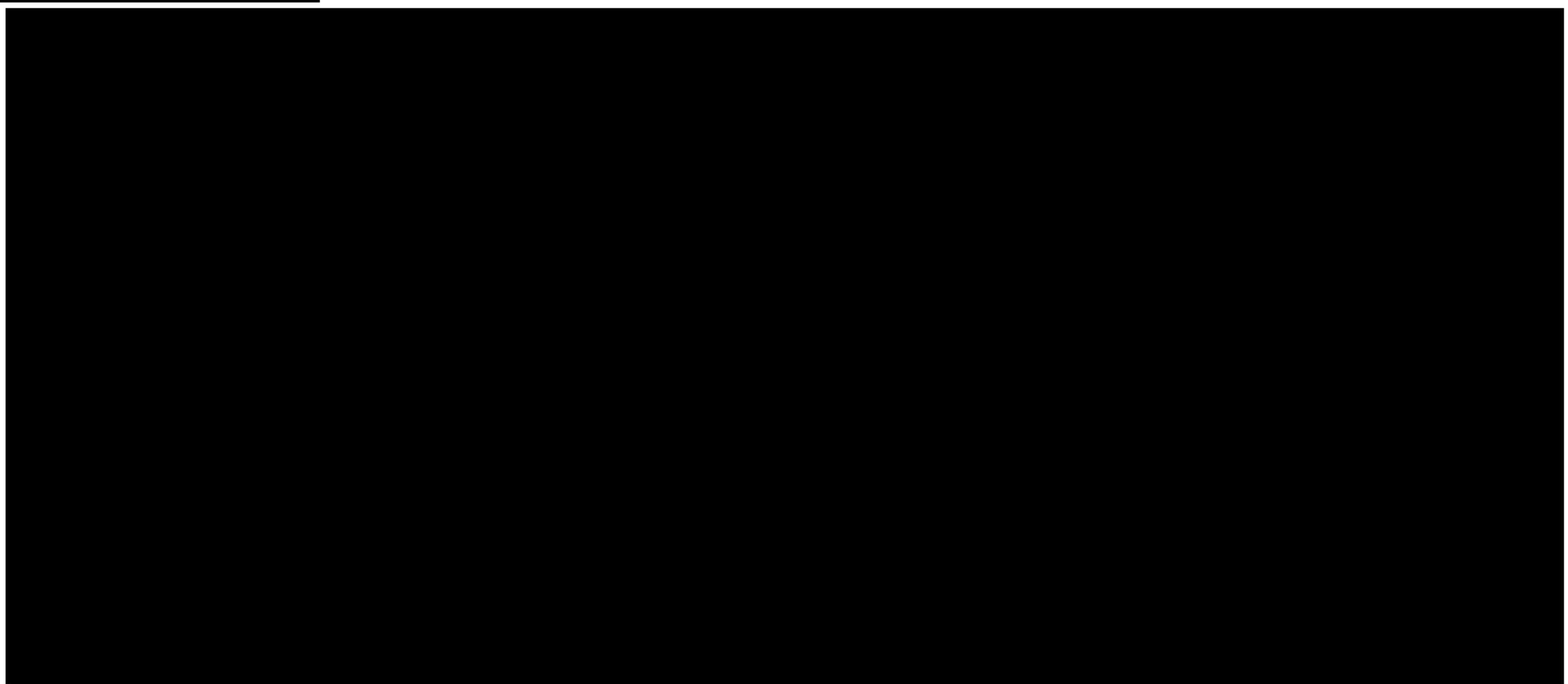
Trees proposed for removal include three cypress and a magnolia to the front (south) of the site, a cherry tree to the rear and a small number of ornamental trees within the planting beds within the rear garden of the site. The cypress trees and magnolia have no potential for roosting bats and are unlikely to form a significant part of the local bat populations foraging and navigation habitat. The cherry tree and other ornamentals were also assessed for their potential to be used by bats and were found to have negligible / no bat roosting or significant foraging or navigation use.

Both the pool house and garage were assessed and searched for potential and evidence of bat use. Both buildings were found to have no significant (negligible) potential for bats and no evidence of bats was found within or on either building.

The side extension was found to have negligible potential for bats. There is no internal access / usable roof void, and all roof tiles and other features were found to be tight fitting, again with no potential access.

There is some potential for roosting behind the tiles on the front and rear façade of the existing dwelling house. If any works are to be undertaken on the main house, other than the removal of the west side extension, further bat surveying would be required.

No further bat surveying is indicated in relation to the current proposal.





3.3.9 *Common/Hazel Dormice*

The common (or hazel) dormouse is protected under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and Schedule 2 of The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, making common dormice a European Protected Species.

SxBRC hold one record for hazel dormice within 1 km of the site. The record, from 2019, identified one adult at Stonecroft Copse which lies to the southwest of the site. Additionally, SxBRC hold records for dormice within Butchers Wood which lies to the southeast of Stone Pound, 1 km southeast of the site at its closest point.

A line of hazel lies along the northern boundary of the site. It is possible that, if hazel dormice are present within the area, this planting could form part of the species wider habitat requirement. However, the planting is limited to approximately five stands, not considered likely to be of significant value.

The northern end of the garden is to remain as existing, i.e. the hazel and adjacent planting (mature trees) is to remain as existing, and there is to be no significant change of use of the site considered likely to alter the habitat at the northern end of the garden. In this case, the proposed development is not considered likely to encroach or modify any habitat with the potential to support hazel dormice.

No further surveying for this species is recommended. However, mitigation (i.e. confirmation that no works are to be undertaken within the northern end of the garden area) is given in section 4 below.

3.3.10 *Other Protected and Notable Species*

SxBRC hold records for hedgehog and rabbit within 1 km of the site. There are no other records of notable species considered likely to be impacted by the proposed development within 1 km of the site.

Evidence of rabbit activity within the northern section of the garden was identified during the site walkover. There appears to be two active warrens. The site is also considered likely to be used by hedgehog as part of this species wider habitat. The proposed redevelopment of the site for additional residential use is not considered likely to impact hedgehog but is likely to directly impact rabbits and their warrens. While rabbits are not a priority species, care should be taken to avoid cruelty. See section 4 below.

3.3.11 *Non-native Invasive Species*

Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 (as amended) lists those non-native species that are established in the wild, but which pose a conservation threat to native biodiversity and habitats. Schedule 9 aims to regulate further release of

these species by making it a criminal offence to release them into the wild. In addition to this SxBRC holds records of species considered invasive and damaging in Sussex.

Species recorded within the area include the following:

Recorded plant species include:

- Japanese Knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*)
- *Rhododendron ponticum*
- Wall Cotoneaster (*Cotoneaster horizontalis*)
- Himalayan cotoneaster
- Three-cornered garlic
- Red Valerian
- Monbretia
- Hybrid bluebell
- Himalayan balsam
- Lamiastrum galeobdolon subsp. argentatum
- Least duckweed
- Parrot's-feather
- Winter heliotrope
- Cherry laurel
- Evergreen (holm) oak

Recorded animal species include:

- Mandarin duck
- Canada goose
- Ring-necked Parakeet
- Harlequin ladybird
- Horse-chestnut leaf-miner
- American mink
- Eastern Grey Squirrel (*Sciurus carolinensis*)

Rhododendron, Cherry Laurel and Bamboo were identified within the garden area during the site walkover. These species should be managed to prevent their spread (See Section 4 below).

4. MITIGATION

The preliminary ecological appraisal identified some features of ecological value and habitat types of ecological value that may potentially be used by protected species.

4.1 Trees

An aboricultural report (dated July 2025) which includes protection measures has been produced in relation to the proposed redevelopment of the site. These measures should be implemented, and compensation planting included within the plans for the redevelopment of the site.

New planting should ideally include native species within known benefits for local wildlife.

4.2 Invertebrates

The proposed development will result in the loss of some typical garden planting and lawn area, together with a small number of trees and some dead wood.

Post development, new planting should be incorporated into the site to compensate for this loss, and the deadwood should be retained on site for the benefit of saproxylic invertebrates (and other species likely to use dead wood for foraging and shelter).

4.3 Amphibians and Reptiles

Whilst the proposed development is considered unlikely to result in the loss of any significant amphibian and/or reptile habitat, amphibians and reptiles, including GCN are known to be present within the immediate area and may use the site as part of their wider habitat. It is therefore recommended that protection measures will be required to avoid impacting any individual during site clearance and redevelopment. Post development site use is considered unlikely to result in any significant habitat change.

A mitigation scheme should be prepared and approved by Mid Sussex District Council / Nature Space. Where it is deemed that appropriate protection can be secured to avoid impacting GCN a licence may not be required. Mitigation measures should include (but not be limited to) the following:

- i. Site clearance, including clearance of the vegetated areas of the site, should be undertaken while amphibians (including GCN) are active to avoid disturbing any amphibians and/or reptiles while they are overwintering (and at high risk from disturbance).
- ii. Removal of dead wood piles and soft landscaping within the site should be carried out by hand (soft strip) following a precautionary approach.
- iii. Should any amphibians or reptiles be encountered during any stage of the proposed development, work should stop, and advice / assistance should be sought from a suitably qualified ecologist.
- iv. Materials associated with the development should be stored within an appropriate location (i.e. on existing areas of hard standing) unlikely to be used by amphibians and reptiles.

District Level GCN Licensing is offered by Nature Space within this area. This is likely to be the preferred option where required. Alternatively, further surveying and impact assessment would be required to obtain a licence from Natural England. Please see <https://naturespaceuk.com/>

4.4 Birds

The proposed redevelopment of the site will include the removal of some existing trees and planting which could be used by birds to nest.

Clearance work should be scheduled outside of the bird nesting season (February – August inclusive). Where this is not possible, a check for nesting birds should be undertaken immediately prior to the start of works. Should nesting birds be confirmed to be present, works should be delayed until all chicks have fledged.

4.5 Bats

The trees proposed for removal, the side extension to the main house (on the western façade), the garage and the pool house are considered to have negligible potential for use by bats.

However, the main house, which includes hanging tiles on the facades, does have potential for use by bats for roosting. No works are to be undertaken on the main house which would result in the loss of potential bat roosting habitat, however, appropriate precautions will be required for works in close proximity to potential bat roosting features to avoid causing a disturbance to bats.

It is recommended that the side extension, which lies in close proximity to hanging tiles (that wrap round the southwest corner of the house), is removed outside of the active season for bats, when bats could use gaps beneath the tiles to roost. The tiles are not considered suitable over wintering habitat.

A toolbox talk is to be given to those undertaking demolition and redevelopment works on site regarding the potential presence of bats, how they are to be protected, and what measures are to be implemented should any bats be discovered during the works.

The developer has indicated that works can be undertaken outside of the active season, when bats would be using their summer roosts, to avoid any potential disturbance. This restriction on the timing of works, together with the toolbox talk, should be secured through a planning condition. If the side extension cannot be removed during the winter months, for any overriding factor, and or, if it will be necessary to remove any tiles from the façade of the main house (which we understand is not the case), further surveying would be required before works commence.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



4.7 Hazel Dormice

No vegetation clearance is to be undertaken along the rear boundary of the site. The existing hazel together with the mature trees are to remain as existing. Where clearance of this area is proposed, further surveying may be deemed necessary.

4.8 Rabbits

There are two rabbit warrens within the northern section of the garden that will be impacted by the proposed installation of the new dwelling and associated infrastructure. Groundworks should be undertaken initially away from the warrens, gradually moving closer to encourage the rabbits to vacate.

4.9 Non-native Invasive Species

Cherry Laurel, Rhododendron and Bamboo have been identified within the garden area. Measures to prevent the spread of these species associated with the redevelopment should be implemented. Any offsite disposal of these species should be managed to avoid spread to the wild.

Any new planting within the site should exclude the introduction of non-native invasive species.

4.10 Other Protected and Notable Species

If any new evidence of protected species is discovered whilst site clearance and construction work is in progress, Natural England should be informed immediately and appropriate advice on how to deal with the situation should be sought from a qualified ecologist.

5. ENHANCEMENT

5.1 Some ecological enhancement should be included within the development site to secure biodiversity improvement beyond that of the existing site. The following recommendations are given:

- i. Roosting features for bats should be included within the proposed redevelopment of the site. Bat roosting boxes (for a variety of bat species likely to use the site) should be positioned onto suitable trees within the garden area and within the fabric of the proposed building in order to provide permanent roosting potential within the development.
- ii. Nesting features for birds should be included within the proposed redevelopment of the site. Bird boxes (for a variety of passerine species likely

to use the site) should be positioned onto suitable trees within the garden area and within the fabric of the proposed building.

- iii. New planting within the site should include a variety of native trees, shrubs and flowering plants to increase diversity within the site, foraging habitat, and provide shelter, hibernation, and roosting opportunities. Non-native invasive planting should be excluded from the planting scheme.
- iv. The amenity grassland within the garden area is presently managed to maintain a short sward. The ecological improvement of the grassland could be achieved by allowing the grass in some areas to grow to provide a varied sward length with seasonal cutting to promote grassland flowers.
- v. Features including log piles, earth mounds, and hibernacula should be incorporated within the site to improve the site for a variety of species including reptiles, amphibians and invertebrates.

6. CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 The site comprises an existing, occupied, residential dwelling with extensions, plus free-standing garage, and mature garden including swimming pool and pool house.
- 6.2 It is proposed to remove the existing garage and side extension to make way for a second dwelling within the plot, and to remove the existing swimming pool and pool house and develop a (mostly) subterranean dwelling towards the northern end of the garden area.
- 6.3 The proposed redevelopment of the site is not considered likely to have a significant impact on the ecological value of the site, however, there is some potential to impact notable species as a result of the proposed works, for which mitigation is recommended. A summary of the recommendations is given below:
 - Trees - Protection measures and compensation planting required.
 - Invertebrates – Compensation required.
 - Amphibians – Protection measures required.
 - Reptiles – Protection measures required.
 - Birds – Protection measures required.
 - Bats – Protection measures required.
 - Hazel dormice – Protection measured required.
 - Rabbits – Protection measured required.
 - Non-native Invasive species – Avoidance measured required.
- 6.4 The majority of recommendations are for standard protection measures, to prevent significant impacts on notable and protected species. However, there is a significant potential for disturbance and / or harm to European Protected Species including bats and great crested newts, if protection measures, which include (but are not limited to) restricted working times cannot be secured through planning. A mitigation scheme should be prepared, and a scheme approved by Mid Sussex

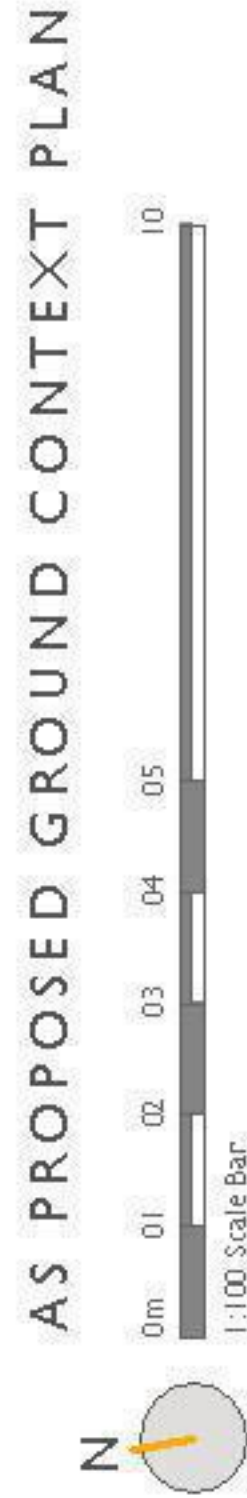
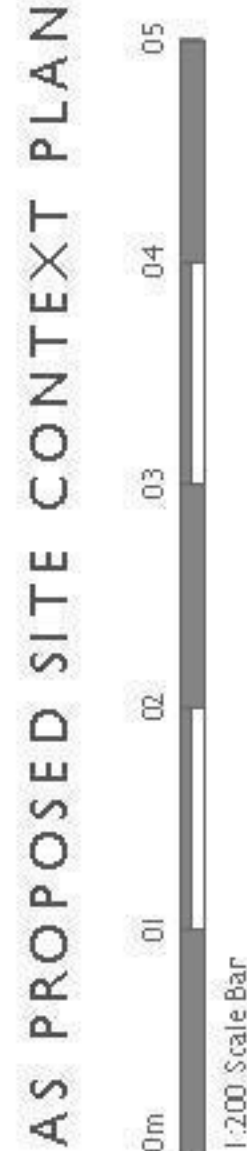
District Council before any works commence on site. Where it is deemed that appropriate protection can be secured to avoid impacting European Protected Species (i.e. bats and/or GCN) licencing may not be required.

- 6.5 An Arboricultural Report (prepared by Arborsense, updated 2024 and July 2025) has been prepared in relation to the proposed development. This report includes recommendations for the protection of trees which are to be retained. Please refer.
- 6.6 The proposed development is not considered likely to have a significant impact on European (SPA and SAC) or Ramsar sites, or wildlife associated with these sites.
- 6.7 Should any new information come to light at any time, advice should be sought, and this report should be updated.
- 6.8 It is noted that planning permission for development does not provide a defence against prosecution relating to protected species. Should any protected species be identified before, or during the development, all works should cease and a suitably qualified/experienced ecologist should be contacted for advice.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

APPENDIX A
Site Location and Existing Site Plans

APPENDIX B
Proposed Site Plans



APPENDIX C
Photographs



Photograph 1:

Existing dwellinghouse.



Photograph 2:

Side extension to be removed.



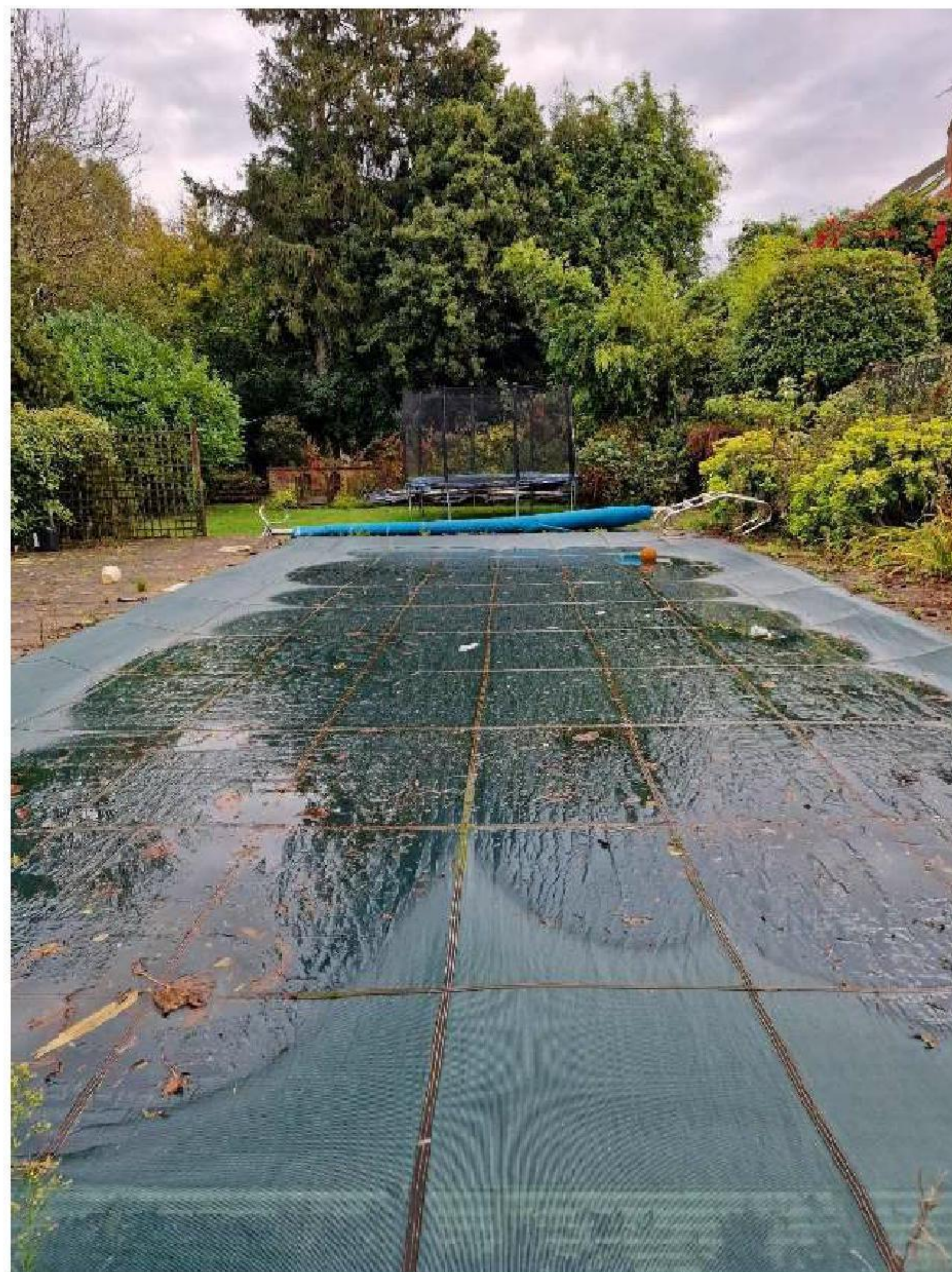
Photograph 3:

Rear extension to be replaced.

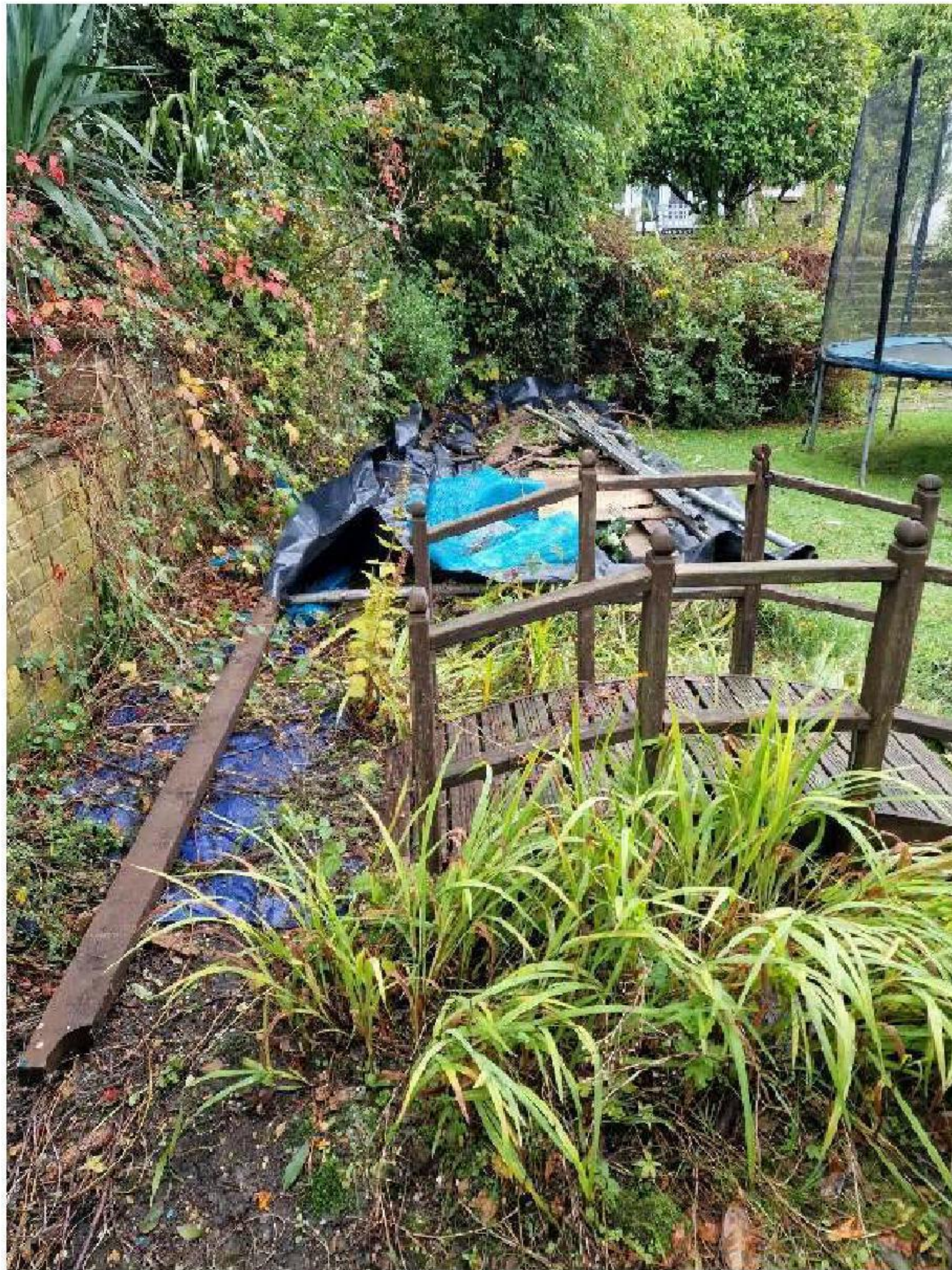


Photograph 4:

Garage to be removed.



Photographs 5 and 6: Swimming pool and pool house.

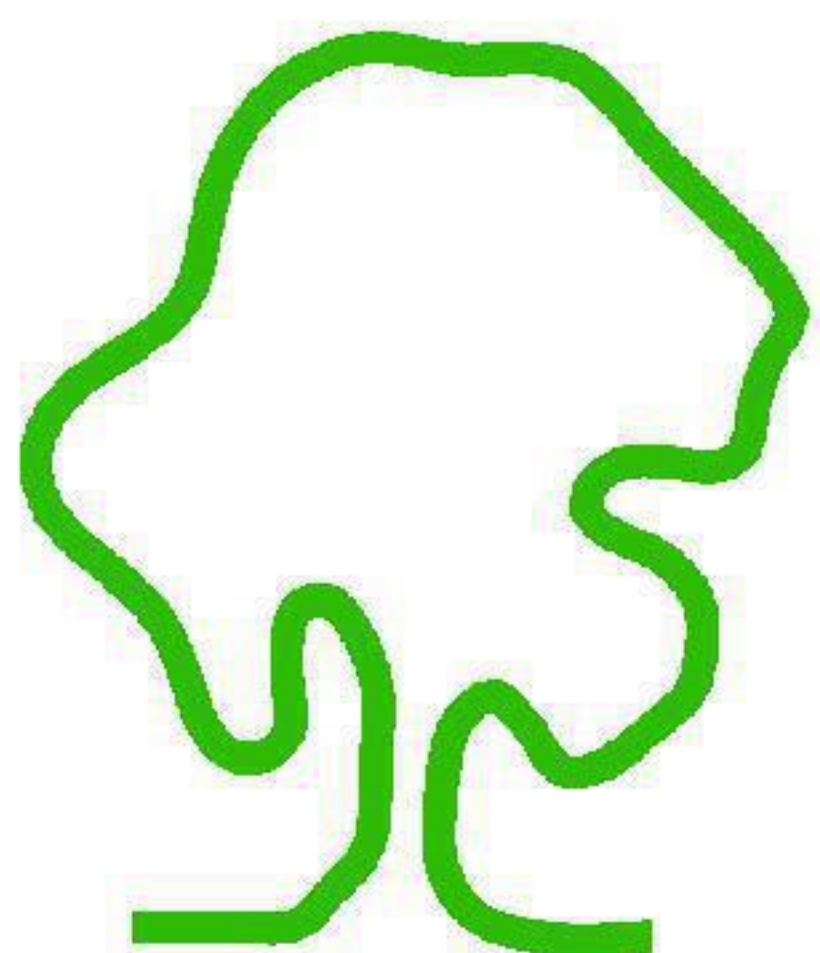


Photograph 7:

Water feature.



Photographs 8 and 9: Lower garden and lawn area. Cherry tree (pictured left) to be removed due to poor condition.



eas ltd

Environmental Assessment Services Ltd

Unit 4B, The Courtyard, Holmsted Farm, Staplefield Road, Cuckfield,
West Sussex, RH17 5JT

Phone : +44 (0) 1444 882552

email : info@easltd.co.uk

web site : www.easltd.co.uk