Dormouse Survey Report

Land off Hammerwood Rd

Ashurst Wood

October 2025 (v01)

DEEPDENE
ECOLOGY

Project details		
Site	Land Off Hammerwood Road, Hammerwood Road, Ashurst Wood, East Grinstead, RH19 3RX	
Client	Virtue Land	
Survey type & date	Dormouse Footprint Tunnel Survey, June-September 2025	
Surveyor(s)	Nadine Clark BSc MSc MCIEEM	
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Associated reports	Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, The Ecology Partnership, July 2025	
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Company details		
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The contents of this report have been produced with due consideration of current best practice guidance, and in accordance with the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management's (CIEEM) Code of Professional Conduct.

Data within this report is valid for a maximum of 18 months from the date of the survey. After this period, an updated site visit will be required to determine a new ecological baseline. More up-to-date survey data may be required for a planning application or licensing, depending on conditions and impacts.

Whilst every effort has been taken to ensure the accuracy of this report and its contents, in view of potential ecological constraints to development or the likely presence or absence of species, it must only be viewed as a snap-shot in time and, therefore, not be viewed as definitive. Due to external factors, such as seasonality, weather etc, having the potential to affect survey results, no liability can be assumed for omissions or changes that may, or may not occur, after the date this report was produced.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

SITE	• An area of woodland dominated by cherry laurel off Hammerwood Road.
PROPOSAL	• It is proposed for the construction of twelve residential houses with associated access and gardens on this allocated site.
HISTORIC SURVEYS & KEY FINDINGS	• Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA), including a walkover survey, by The Ecology Partnership (2025). • The survey found that the majority of the Site comprised poor-quality habitat for dormice. However, due to the presence of higher-quality habitat within parts of the Site and its connectivity to the wider woodland network, the presence of dormice could not be fully discounted. • A dormouse presence/likely absence survey was therefore recommended.
SURVEYS COMPLETED	• A dormouse footprint tunnel survey with 50 tunnels carried out over three months between June and September 2025.
KEY FINDINGS	• There were no constraints or limitations to the survey which was undertaken by experienced and licenced dormouse surveyors. • No dormouse footprints were found during the surveys which indicated that it is highly unlikely that dormouse are present within the Site and immediate area. • No further surveys for dormouse are considered necessary. • Precautionary mitigation measures have been provided for site clearance to ensure the risk to dormouse is negligible. • Enhancements have been suggested to increase the value of the Site for biodiversity.
OVERALL FINDING	• No evidence of dormouse was found during the survey and no further surveys are recommended. • Precautionary mitigation measures have been recommended during site clearance; however, based on the survey findings, it is considered highly unlikely that dormice will be encountered. • Enhancement measures have been recommended that would result in a net improvement in opportunities for bats at the Site.

CONTENTS

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Deepdene Ecology Ltd was instructed by James Caldwell of Virtue Land to undertake a hazel dormouse footprint tunnel survey at 'Land to the South of Hammerwood Road, Hammerwood Road, Ashurst Wood, East Grinstead, RH19 3RX ' (hereafter referred to as the 'Site'). A planning application will be submitted for the construction of 12 residential dwellings including access, parking and gardens.

A Preliminary Ecological Assessment (PEA) was undertaken by The Ecology Partnership in 2024 (updated in 2025). The survey assessed the habitats present within the Site and identified areas of woodland/scrub, although these were of poor quality for hazel dormouse being dominated by cherry laurel *Prunus laurocerasus* with limited species diversity and a lack of suitable food plants. However, the woodland is connected to a wider woodland block. While the on-site habitat was considered unsuitable to support a resident population of dormice, their occasional presence could not be ruled out due to connectivity with higher-quality habitat. On this basis, a dormouse presence/likely absence survey was recommended to determine whether dormice were present within the Site.

The results of the dormouse footprint tunnel presence/likely absence survey is provided in this report, and the PEA report (The Ecology Partnership, 2025) should be read alongside it.

1.2 The Site

The Site (TQ 42375 36648) comprised of an area of woodland to the south of Hammerwood Road and west of Yewhurst Close (see **Figure 1**). The Site is located within a residential area, comprising detached and semi-detached properties with associated gardens. The wider landscape includes woodland, pasture with mature trees, and hedgerows, interspersed with further residential dwellings and garden plots (see **Figure 2**). At a broader scale, the landscape contains interconnected areas of woodland, including ancient woodland situated approximately 270m from the Site.

The habitats present on Site consisted of woodland with dense, mature cherry laurel dominant in places along with rhododendron *Rhododendron ponticum*, cypress trees *Chamaecyparis lawsoniana*, silver birch *Betula pendula,* sycamore *Acer pseudoplatanus, g*oat willow *Salix caprea* and hazel *Corylus avellana.* The wider woodland included cherry laurel, rhododendron, holly *Ilex aquifolium*, hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna* with mature lime *Tilia × europaea* and oak *Quercus robur* trees also present.

Figure 1: Aerial photograph of the Site (indicative only). Image taken from Google Earth.

Figure 2: Aerial photograph of the Site set within the wider landscape (indicative only). Image taken from Google Earth.

1.3 Proposed Development

A planning application will be submitted for the construction of 12 residential houses with associated gardens, parking and access. The development Site is an allocated site (SA26)[1] for residential development.

A full set of drawings will be provided with the planning application with the existing and proposed site plan provided in **Appendix B**.

1.4 Scope of the Assessment

The aims of the dormouse footprint tunnel survey and subsequent report was to:

- Undertake a dormouse presence/likely absence survey to determine whether dormice were using habitat within the Site or within the wider woodland area.
- Assess the habitat present on and close to the Site for their suitability and quality to support dormice and determine a population size if found to be present.
- Outline the mitigation, enhancement and licensing (if applicable) that would be required to ensure that the proposed development could proceed without contravening wildlife legislation..

1.5 Summary of relevant legislation

The hazel dormouse is legally protected under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and is a European Protected Species (EPS) under the Conservation of Habitats & Species Regulations 2019 (EU Exit) (as amended). This makes it an offence to:

- Intentionally or deliberately injure, kill or take any wild dormouse.
- Intentionally or deliberately damage, destroy or obstruct any access to any structure or place used for shelter, breeding, or protection by a dormouse.
- Intentionally or recklessly disturb a dormouse whilst it is using such a structure or place; or possess or advertise / sell / exchange a dormouse (dead or alive) or any part of a dormouse.

Further details on the legislation and relevant policy can be found in **Appendix A**.

2 METHODOLOGY

2.1 Desk Study

A desk study was undertaken to inform this assessment with baseline information collated from the following sources:

[1] Mid Sussex District Council, (2022). Site *Allocations Development Plan Document*. Issued June 2022.

- Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) website[2]- To identify any valuable habitats and granted European Protected Species Mitigation (EPSM) Licences including for dormouse.

- Mid Sussex District Council Planning Portal[3]- To identify any dormouse records from surveys undertaken in relation to other planning applications in the area.

2.2 Habitat Suitability Assessment

An assessment of the habitat within the redline boundary and the wider woodland was undertaken to evaluate its suitability for hazel dormouse and to provide an estimate of potential population size should dormice be found present on Site. The assessment followed the methodologies set out in the Hazel Dormouse Mitigation Handbook (Wells, Chanin & Gubert, 2025) and the Hazel Dormouse Conservation Handbook (Bullion, Wolton & White, 2025).

2.3 Dormouse Footprint Tunnel Survey

A total of 50 dormouse footprint tunnels were installed within the wider woodland area on 13th June 2025 (see **Appendix C**). The tunnels were generally spaced approximately 15m apart, although minor adjustments were made where gaps in vegetation or unsuitable habitat necessitated slightly closer or further spacing. The tunnels were deployed following the guidance in the Hazel Dormouse Conservation Handbook (Bullion, Wolton & White, 2025). Each tunnel consisted of 65mm black plastic downpipes cut to 400mm lengths, with plywood inserts approximately 500mm long. High-quality card inserts were placed inside, along with ink pads using charcoal and oil-based ink to capture footprints. The tunnels were fixed horizontally within suitable vegetation at approximately 1.5m height using heavy-duty cable ties.

The tunnels and cards were checked every 2 weeks (6 checks plus collection). The ink was replenished every two weeks along with the card inserts where footprints were found or where the card had been damaged or stained. Any card insert with footprints were removed for further checks and replaced to minimise the risk of footprints becoming indistinguishable.

The tunnels were deployed for a period of three months plus two weeks to account for the potential neophilic behaviour of small mammals following initial installation. They were collected on 26th September 2025.

2.4 Surveyor information

The survey and assessment were led by Nadine Clark (Dormouse Licence holder, registration number 2023-20767-CLS-CLS). Nadine is a full member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) and has over 18 years' experience of undertaking ecological surveys. The other surveyor was Joanne Balch BSc (Hons) (Dormouse Licence

[2] MAGIC – www.magic.gov.uk (accessed September 2025).

[3] Mid Sussex District Council Planning Portal available online at https://pa.midsussex.gov.uk/online-applications/search.do?action=simple&searchType=Application (accessed September 2025)

holder, registration number 2016-22036-CLS-CLS) who is an experienced dormouse surveyor with experience of undertaking footprint tunnel surveys.

2.5 Limitations

The surveys were conducted in accordance with best practice guidelines. Tunnels were positioned approximately 15 m apart, with minor adjustments made where vegetation gaps required slightly closer or wider spacing. These infrequent adjustments did not compromise the overall coverage of the woodland.

During the survey period, one tunnel was temporarily displaced by a fallen tree but was subsequently redeployed nearby. Another tunnel could not be located during the penultimate check but was recovered during the following survey and at collection. As these issues affected only individual tunnels for a single check, they are not considered to have significantly constrained the survey. All other tunnels were successfully located and re-inked during the survey period.

3 RESULTS

3.1 Desk Study

There is one record for a EPSM licence within 2km of the Site. This licence (2017-28498-EPS-MIT) is located approximately 1.4km to the south and was issued for the damage and destruction of breeding and resting places.

In addition, positive records of dormouse nests were recorded during a nest tube survey in 2016 associated with planning application DM/20/0799, with the nests located approximately 100m to the northeast, on the opposite side of Hammerwood Road (The Ecology Co-op, 2020).

The wider landscape contains numerous woodland areas, including ancient woodland and other deciduous woodland habitats, which are connected to the woodland present on Site. Given the recorded presence of dormice in the immediate area and the availability of higher-quality woodland habitats in the wider landscape, it is likely that dormice occur in other woodland areas across the landscape, although these areas have not been subject to formal survey.

3.2 Habitat Suitability Assessment

The woodland within the Site was assessed for its suitability for dormice, taking into account both the diversity of plant species used by dormice and the structural complexity of the habitat. **Table 2** below provides photographs of the Site to illustrate these features.

The general species diversity of plants used by dormice as food sources was assessed using four quadrats within the Site. On average, the species richness of trees and shrubs of value to dormice (as defined in **Table 3.3** of the Hazel Dormouse Mitigation Handbook, 2025) was 2.5 species, which falls within the 'Low' species diversity category (*Table 3.4*, Hazel Dormouse Mitigation Handbook, 2025).

In terms of structural complexity, the woodland understorey was dominated by cherry laurel and rhododendron, with occasional hazel, holly, and hawthorn present. The canopy included interspersed larger trees, although the main mature trees were located outside the redline boundary. Based on *Table 3.5a* of the Hazel Dormouse Mitigation Handbook (2025), this results in a structural complexity category of Medium.

In combination, the low species diversity and medium structural complexity result in a 'Poor' habitat quality for dormice, as shown in **Table 1** below, which is adapted from Table 3.6 of the Hazel Dormouse Mitigation Handbook (2025).

Table 1: Habitat Quality Assessment (taken from Wells, Chanin & Gubert, 2025)

Species Diversity of Woodland				
Structural Complexity of Woodland		High	Medium	Low
	High	Excellent	Good	Fair
	Medium	Good	Good	Poor
	Low	Poor	Poor	Poor

Table 2: Site Photographs

Photograph 1: Cherry laurel provided the majority of the understorey with no scrub present for the majority of the Site.

Photograph 2: More open section of the Site with cypress trees, hazel and cherry laurel.

Photograph 3: Dense rhododendron was present within the woodland, particularly in the southeastern section.	**Photograph 4**: Woodland edge showing cherry laurel dominating the species mix.

3.3 Dormouse Footprint Tunnel Presence/Likely Absence Survey

No dormouse footprints were recorded during the survey checks between 13th June and 26th September 2025.

There was evidence of birds using the tunnels, with footprints, droppings and feathers noted. There were also wood mouse *Apodemus sylvaticus* footprints recorded throughout the survey area.

4 ASSESSMENT

4.1 Discussion of findings

A Preliminary Ecological Assessment (PEA) of the Site by The Ecology Partnership (2025) noted that the woodland was of relatively poor quality for dormice. However, as the woodland is connected to higher-quality habitats in the wider area, including ancient woodland to the south, the presence of dormice could not be ruled out. Consequently, a dormouse presence/likely absence survey was recommended.

A dormouse footprint tunnel survey was undertaken between June and September 2025 following best practice guidelines. This method was selected as it is considered more effective than nest tube surveys for detecting low-density populations, which was a possibility given the low-quality habitat on Site. The survey deployed 50 tunnels at appropriate spacing for three months plus two weeks, providing a 97.5% probability of detecting dormice if present (Bullion, Wolton & White, 2025). No evidence of dormice was recorded, indicating that the species is highly unlikely to be using the Site, likely due in part to the poor habitat quality.

Based on these findings, dormice are considered absent from the Site and immediate surrounding woodland, and an EPSM licence is not required for the works, as a negative result would preclude licence issuance. Nevertheless, as dormice are present in the wider landscape and some connectivity exists, it is recommended that Precautionary Working Methods (see **Section 5**) are followed during site clearance to ensure negligible risk in the unlikely event an individual is present (Wells, Chanin & Gubert, 2025).

5 RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Precautionary Working Measures

Whilst it is highly unlikely that hazel dormice are present within the Site, as a precaution it is recommended that clearance follows a precautionary method statement, following best practice guidance (Wells, Chanin & Gubert, 2025). The approach recommended is as follows:

Timing of works- Single stage habitat removal is appropriate due to the lack of dense vegetation and the very low risk of encountering dormice, allowing habitats to be searched prior to removal. Above ground works will be undertaken in Spring (April-May inclusive) and Autumn (September-October inclusive) when dormice are active but not breeding. No ground work clearance, including stump removal, should occur during winter, when dormice might be hibernating at ground level.

Supervised clearance- Prior to clearance, all areas will be inspected by a suitably qualified ecologist for evidence of protected species, including dormice, nesting birds, and badgers. If dormice are found (not considered likely), Natural England will be consulted for guidance. Clearance will proceed towards retained habitat in a single direction to allow any animals to move into retained woodland outside the Site. Dense vegetation will be hand-searched and removed using hand tools, and all brash will be removed from the Site to prevent it being used as refugia by wildlife, including nesting birds and hedgehogs.

Protection of woodland habitat- Areas of retained habitat, including woodland outside the Site boundary, should be clearly marked and fenced to ensure no accidental incursions by personnel, machinery or materials.

Retaining connectivity in wider area- The Site comprises a small portion of woodland adjacent to existing residential development. Surrounding woodland and boundary trees will be retained, ensuring that connectivity within the wider area is maintained. Additional planting of species beneficial to dormice and other local wildlife (**Appendix D**) as part of the landscaping proposals around the Site boundaries will further enhance habitat connectivity.

5.2 Sensitive lighting

Night-time working during construction and lighting during the operational phase of the proposals should be avoided where possible to avoid negative impacts to local wildlife given that woodland habitat will be retained in close proximity to the Site.

- Direct any task lighting used during construction away from trees and vegetation;
- Set any necessary security lighting on short timers (e.g. 1 minute) with a sensitivity to large moving objects only;
- Directional lighting or shielding such as hoods or cowls should be used to avoid light being directed at the sky or towards the boundary vegetation;
- Limit lighting times to provide dark periods;
- LED luminaires are preferred due to the lower intensity, sharp 'cut-off', colour rendition and dimming capability;
- All luminaires should lack UV elements and metal halide fluorescent sources should not be used;
- Avoid white and blue wavelengths of the light spectrum and keep the brightness of the lamps as low as feasibly possible; and
- Carefully consider the height of columns to avoid light spill.

5.3 Ecological enhancements

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that local planning authorities should aim to conserve and enhance biodiversity where possible when determining planning applications. The development plans should maximise opportunities for enhancement, in order to achieve a net increase in biodiversity. This is in accordance with the NERC Act (2006) which requires that "*every public authority must, in exercising its functions, have regard, so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity. Conserving biodiversity includes, in relation to a living organism or type of habitat, restoring or enhancing a population or habitat*."

The measures outlined below will help improve the Site overall for biodiversity.

5.4 Habitats

Any new tree or shrub planting in the wider Site, and particularly around the boundary, should include a diverse mix of native species and a suitable list has been provided in **Appendix D** which include species which are of benefit to dormice and other local wildlife species.

6 SURVEY VALIDITY

The dormouse survey findings can be considered valid for up to five years subject to no alterations in suitability or connectivity to suitable habitat, including management of surrounding areas that might result in dormice moving into previously unoccupied habitat (Wells, Chanin & Gubert, 2025). The findings of this report are valid for 12-18 months and after which it is recommended that further assessments are made to determine whether the survey results outlined in this report remain valid with no significant changes on and off site that could otherwise impact the presence/likely absence of dormice.

7 CONCLUSION

This report is based on surveys undertaken between June and September 2025 following best practice guidelines. No evidence of dormice was recorded, and the habitat within the Site was assessed as poor quality. It is therefore highly unlikely that dormice are present or constitute a constraint to the works. Nevertheless, precautionary mitigation measures are recommended to ensure the risk to the species is negligible, maintaining the favourable conservation status of dormice in the wider area. Enhancement measures should also be incorporated into the design to improve habitat value.

8 BIBLIOGRAPHY

Bright, P., Morris, P. & Mitchell-Jones, A. (2006). *The Dormouse Conservation Handbook*. 2nd Edition. English Nature.

Bullion, S., Wolton, R. & White, I. (2025) *Hazel Dormouse Conservation Handbook*. 3rd Edition. The Mammal Society.

Wells, D., Chanin, P.& Gubert, L. (2025 with amendments) *Hazel Dormouse Mitigation Handbook*. The Mammal Society.

Appendix A - Summary of Relevant Legislation and Policy

Hazel dormouse are fully protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) through inclusion in Schedule 5. They are also included in Schedule II of Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 which transpose Annex II of the Council Directive 92/43/EEC 1992 on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora ("EC Habitats Directive") which defines European protected species of animals.

Hazel dormouse is also a species of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity under section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006.

Under the above pieces of legislation, it is an offence to:

- kill, injure or take an individual;
- possess any part of an individual either alive or dead;
- intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct access to any place or structure used by these species for shelter, rest, protection or breeding;
- intentionally or recklessly disturb these species whilst using any place of shelter or protection; or
- deliberate disturb in such a way as to be likely to impair their ability to:
  - survive, breed or reproduce, or to rear or nurture their young; or
  - in the case of animals of a hibernating or migratory species, to hibernate or migrate; or
  - to affect significantly the local distribution or abundance of the species to which they belong;
  - keep (possess), transport, sell or exchange, or offer for sale or exchange, any live or dead dormouse, or any part of, or anything derived from a dormouse.

For any proposed works that could result in an unlawful activity in relation to dormouse (e.g. injury or harm to a dormouse), it is possible to obtain a European Protected Species Mitigation (EPSM) licence to allow the works to proceed lawfully. A licence will only be issued following appropriate surveys and mitigation and only if Natural England are satisfied that all of the following three tests are met:

- The proposal is for 'preserving public health or public safety or other imperative reasons of overriding public interest including those of a social or economic nature and beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment';
- There is no satisfactory alternative; and
- The action authorised by the license will not be detrimental to the maintenance of bat populations at a favourable conservation status in their natural range.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) December 2024

The NPPF aims to minimise impacts on biodiversity and provide net gains where possible, contributing to the Government's commitment to halt the overall decline in biodiversity. Chapter 15 '*Conserving and enhancing the natural environment*' details what local planning policies should consider with regard to planning applications.

Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:

> **180 a)** protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan);
>
> **180 d)** minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures;
>
> **185 a)** Identify map and safeguard components of local wildlife-rich habitatas and wider ecological networks, including the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity; wildlife corridors, and stepping stones that connect them; and areas identified by national and local partnerships for habitat management, enhancement, restoration or creation; and
>
> **185 b)** promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species; and identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity;
>
> **186 a)** if significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused; and
>
> **186 d)** development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to incorporate biodiversity improvements in and around developments should be encouraged, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity.

Regional Planning Policy

Relevant regional planning policies for South East England are detailed in the following documents.

The South East Plan (2009)

The South East Plan was published in May 2009. It has since been revoked with the exception of Policy NRM6 on the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (SPA). Policy NRM6 states "New residential development which is likely to have a significant effect on the ecological integrity of Thames Basin Heaths SPA will be required to demonstrate that adequate

measures are put in place to avoid or mitigate any potential adverse effects, such measures must be agreed with Natural England."

Local Planning Policy

Mid Sussex District Plan 2014 – 2031

Mid Sussex District Council's planning policy in relation to biodiversity includes Policy DP12 in the district plan (Adopted 2018) which states:

DP12: Protection and enhancement of countryside
Strategic Objectives: 3) To protect valued landscapes for their visual, historical and biodiversity qualities; 11) To support and enhance the attractiveness of Mid Sussex as a visitor destination; and 15) To create places that encourage a healthy and enjoyable lifestyle by the provision of first class cultural and sporting facilities, informal leisure space and the opportunity to walk, cycle or ride to common destinations.

Evidence Base: A Landscape Character Assessment for Mid Sussex, A Strategy for the West Sussex
Landscape, Capacity of Mid Sussex District to Accommodate Development Study.
The countryside will be protected in recognition of its intrinsic character and beauty.

Development will be permitted in the countryside, defined as the area outside of built-up area boundaries on the Policies Map, provided it maintains or where possible enhances the quality of the rural and landscape character of the District, and:
• it is necessary for the purposes of agriculture; or
• it is supported by a specific policy reference either elsewhere in the Plan, a Development Plan Document or relevant Neighbourhood Plan.

Agricultural land of Grade 3a and above will be protected from non-agricultural development proposals. Where significant development of agricultural land is demonstrated to be necessary, detailed field surveys should be undertaken and proposals should seek to use areas of poorer quality land in preference to that of higher quality.

The Mid Sussex Landscape Character Assessment, the West Sussex County Council Strategy for the West Sussex Landscape, the Capacity of Mid Sussex District to Accommodate Development Study and other available landscape evidence (including that gathered to support Neighbourhood Plans) will be used to assess the impact of development proposals on the quality of rural and landscape character.

Built-up area boundaries are subject to review by Neighbourhood Plans or through a Site Allocations Development Plan Document, produced by the District Council.
Economically viable mineral reserves within the district will be safeguarded.

The District Plan also has specific planning Policy in relation to Ashdown Forest SPA and SAC in Policy DP17

DP17: Ashdown Forest Special Protection Area (SPA) and Special Area of Conservation (SAC)

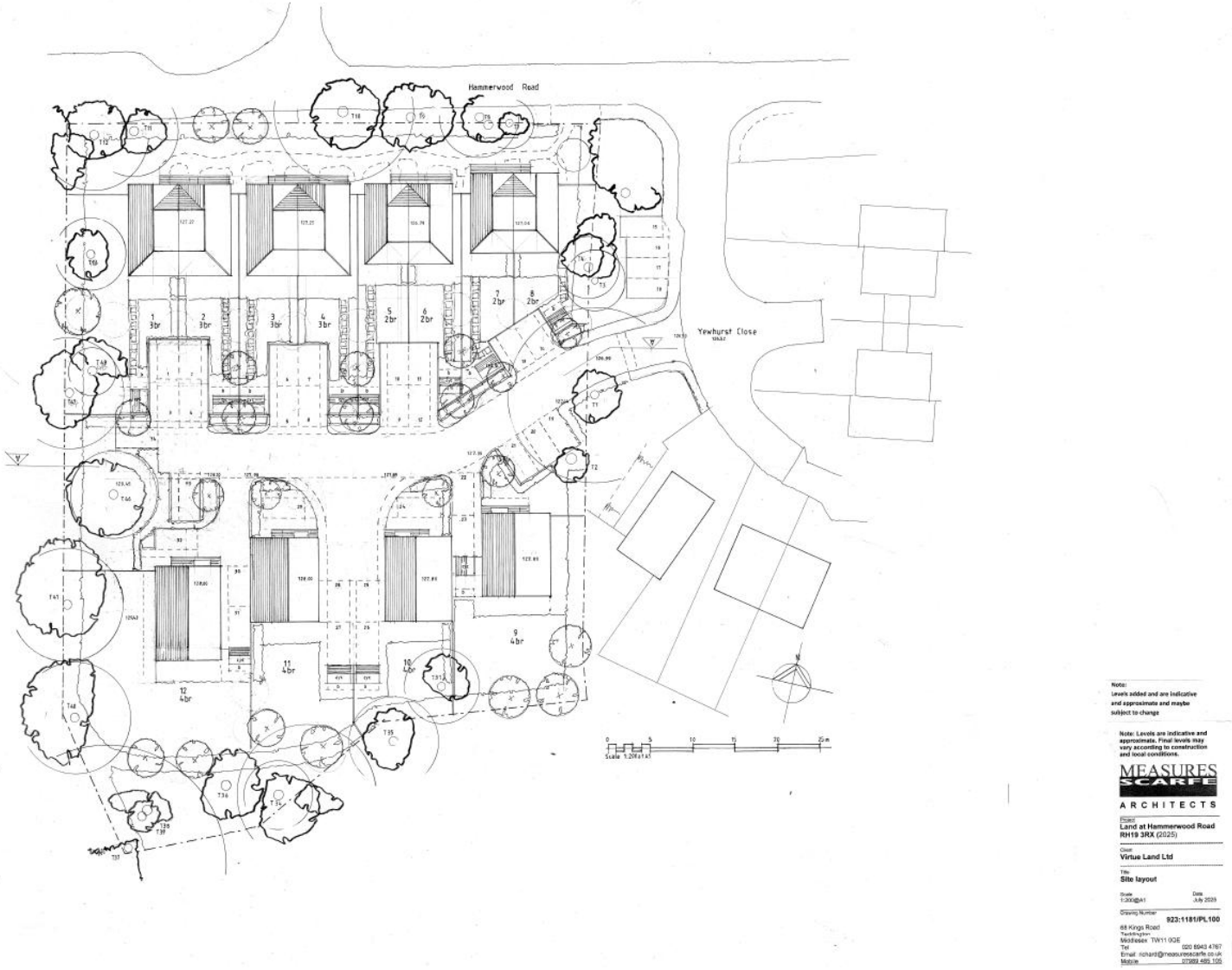
Strategic Objectives: 3) To protect valued landscapes for their visual, historical and biodiversity qualities.

Evidence Base: Ashdown Forest Visitor Survey Data Analysis, Habitats Regulations Assessment for the Mid Sussex District Plan, Visitor Access Patterns on Ashdown Forest. In order to prevent adverse effects on the Ashdown Forest SPA and SAC, new development likely to have a significant effect, either alone or in combination with other development, will be required to demonstrate that adequate measures are put in place to avoid or mitigate any potential adverse effects. Within a 400 metres buffer zone around Ashdown Forest, mitigation measures are unlikely to be capable of protecting the integrity of the SPA and, therefore, residential development will not be permitted. Within a 7km zone of influence around the Ashdown Forest SPA, residential development leading to a net increase in dwellings will be required to contribute to mitigation through:

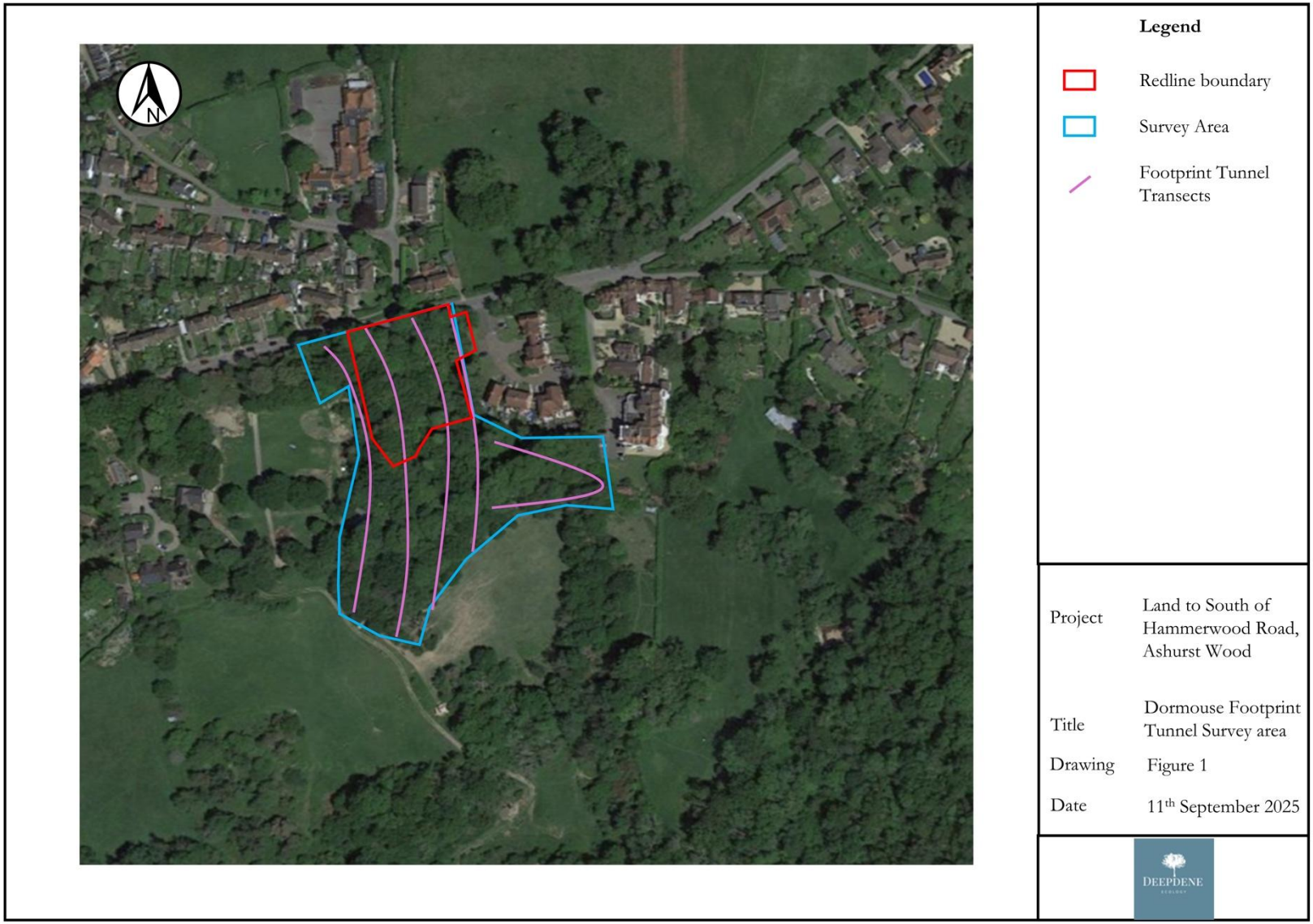
1) The provision of Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) to the minimum level of 8Ha per 1,000 net increase in population; or a financial contribution to SANGs elsewhere; or the provision of bespoke mitigation; and
2) A financial contribution to the Ashdown Forest Strategic Access Management and Monitoring (SAMM) Strategy.

Large schemes proposed adjacent or close to the boundary of the 7km zone of influence may require mitigation for the SPA. Such proposals for development will be dealt with on a case-by case basis. Where bespoke mitigation is provided, these measures will need to be in place before occupation of development and must be managed and maintained in perpetuity. The effectiveness of such 63 mitigation will need to be demonstrated prior to approval of the development. Bespoke mitigation will need to be discussed and agreed by the District Council as the competent authority following advice from Natural England.

Appendix B –Proposed Site Plan (Measures Scarfe Architects, July 2025)



Appendix C- Dormouse Footprint Tunnel Survey Area



Appendix D – Wildlife friendly planting

Native and wildlife-friendly trees and shrubs suitable for planting associated with dormouse enhancements.

Common Name	Scientific Name
Pedunculate oak	*Quercus robur*
Gorse	*Ulex europaeus*
Wych elm	*Ulmus glabra*
Blackthorn	*Prunus spinosa*
Rowan	*Sorbus aucuparia*
Wych elm	*Ulmas glabra*
Alder buckthorn	*Frangula alnus*
Hawthorn	*Crataegus mongyna*
Crab apple	*Malus sylvestris*
Willows	*Salix spp.*
Downy birch	*Betula pubescens*
Field maple	*Acer campestre*
Spindle	*Euonymus europaeus*
Whitebeam	*Sorbus aria agg.*
Broom	*Cytisus scoparius*
Dogwood	*Cornus sanguinea*
Holly	*Ilex aquifolium*
Guelder-rose	*Vibrunum opulus*
Elder	*Sambucus nigra*
Honeysuckle	*Lonicera pericylamen*
Hazel	*Corylus avellana*
Traveller's joy	*Clematis vitalba*
Sessile oak	*Quercus petraea*
Silver birch	*Betula pendula*
Sweet chestnut	*Castanea sativa*
Wild cherry	*Prunus avium*
Wayfaring tree	*Viburnam lantana*
Yew	*Taxus baccata*