

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Preliminary Roost Assessment

Survey site: Sackville School, Lewes Road, East Grinstead, West Sussex RH19 3TY

Client: Sackville School

Survey date: 2nd October 2024

Project:

This report is prepared to inform a planning application with the Mid Sussex District Council. The proposal is described as: The creation of an artificial grass sports field.

The survey results and recommendations contained within this report are valid for 18 months. An updated site visit may be required if the report is to be used any longer than 18 months after completion.

PEA survey methodology and legislation can be found in the Arbtech Supplement: [PEA Methodology and Legislation - 2024.](#)

PRA survey methodology and legislation can be found in the Arbtech Supplement: [PRA Methodology and Legislation - 2024.](#)

The site survey was undertaken by Josie Cooper BSc (Accredited Agent on Natural England Bat licence number: 2019-41480-CLS-CL18).					
Date of survey	Temperature (°C)	Humidity (%)	Cloud Cover (%)	Wind (km/h)	Rain
02/10/2024	16	98	100	18	Showers

Ecological Survey Factor	Detailed using desk study and site survey (carried out under good weather conditions). Any specific limitations noted within relevant section. This table may include further work you will need to commission (if any) to obtain planning permission or comply with legislation for other consent. All clients are expected to read and understand this section, or to contact the lead surveyor for advice.
Conclusion, Impact or Recommendations	
Habitats and plants (see habitat map in appendix 1, location plan in appendix 2, photos in appendix 3 and proposal plan in appendix 4). Botanical species are described with reference to the DAFOR scale (D = Dominant; A = Abundant, F = Frequent, O = Occasional, R = Rare).	
Summary of Survey Findings (UKHab codes used)	<u>Site location</u> The survey site is centred on National Grid Reference RH19 3TY and has an area of approximately 1.7ha. The site is located to the north-east of the town of East Grinstead. Ashplats Wood is present to the north of the site, whilst Pitlands Wood is present to the east. <u>Offsite habitat:</u> Habitat surrounding the site includes residential dwellings and grassland. In the wider landscape, grassland, agricultural land, residential properties, and woodland are present. There are no priority habitats present on site, however deciduous woodland, ancient woodland, traditional orchards, and good quality semi-improved grassland are present within a 2km radius from the site, with deciduous woodland present 90m to the east of the site.

	<u>Onsite habitats:</u> u1b5- Buildings There are two buildings on site; both garages used for storage. g4 10- Modified grassland with scattered scrubs Grassland is present in the centre and around the boundary of the site. Species include cocksfoot (D), clover (A), creeping buttercup (F), daisy (O), dandelion (O), and plantain (O). The grass has a maximum sward height of 10cm. Some scrub is present at the boundaries of the site including bramble (F), sedge (F), ragwort (F), maple saplings (O), and fleabane (O). u1c 10- Artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface with scattered scrubs The site is characterised by the presence of a Redgra athletics and sport pitch. Some sparse scrub is present such as dogwood (O) and field maple saplings (O). u1e- Built linear features The site is surrounded by wire fencing.
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<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	Approximately 0.06ha of grassland is being removed according to the proposed plans. No impacts to any notable habitats are anticipated due to the widespread habitats found on site and distance of the proposed development from such habitats. Furthermore, grassland is being created during the development by extending the central section of grass.
<i>Recommendations</i>	None.
Locality and Designated Sites	

<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	There is one designated site within a 2km radius of the site. Mills Rocks- Site of Species Scientific Interest (SSSI) This site has rock outcrops with a number of rare plants, such as reed fescue grass at one of its only two locations in southern England. The rocks also support a rich variety of mosses and liverworts. There are also areas of woodland, bracken and bramble. Located 1280m to the south-east.
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	No impacts foreseen due to the distance from the designated sites.
<i>Recommendations</i>	None required
Invasive / Non-native species	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	No problematic invasive and non-native species recorded on site.
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	None.
<i>Recommendations</i>	No further surveys but remain vigilant.
Invertebrates	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	Grassland and scrub on site will provide good habitat for a common assemblage of invertebrates, such as pollinator species.
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	A small area of grassland will be removed from the site. This will be inconsequential to local invertebrate populations owing to their low value and the presence of more extensive habitat locally.
<i>Recommendations</i>	No further surveys.
Bats	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	The site is surrounded by residential gardens and grassland which is surrounded by hedgerows. This could be used by bats for foraging and commuting. The wider landscape has pockets of woodland which provide good foraging and roosting opportunities. There is limited foraging habitat on site, however a

small strip of woodland to the north of the site could be used for foraging and roosting, and may link the wider landscape to the site, allowing commuting bats to pass into the countryside.

EPSLs located within a 2km radius of the site

Date	Case reference	Species	Roost and impact type	Location
01/04/2016	2015-15233-EPS-BDX	Common pipistrelle	Destruction and impact of a maternity and day roost	640m located to the south
16/10/2017	2017-31493-EPS-MIT	Common pipistrelle	Destruction of a day roost	890m to the west
01/11/2020	2020-49337-EPS-MIT	Common pipistrelle	Destruction of a day roost	1610m to the west
19/04/2018	2018-34037-EPS-MIT	Common pipistrelle Brown long eared bat	Destruction of a day roost	1680m to the west
17/05/2010	EPSM2010-1891	Common pipistrelle Brown long eared bat	Destruction of a day roost	1760m to the west
24/02/2012	EPSM2012-4152	Common pipistrelle	Destruction of a day roost	1150m to the north

	01/03/2019	2018-37923-EPS-MIT	Common pipistrelle	Destruction of a day roost	1240m to the north
	01/03/2019	2018-37924-EPS-MIT	Common pipistrelle	Destruction of a day roost	1240m to the north
	17/05/2012	EPSM2012-3949	Brown long eared bat Whiskered Bat	Destruction of a day roost	1230m to the north
B1 and B2 B1 and B2 are pebble dash garages with a gabled, corrugated metal roof. The garage doors are UPVC with no gaps or cracks. The gable ends are clad in UPVC with no gaps or cracks. The eaves are closed and UPVC bargeboards are flush with the roof. The metal corrugated roofs appear in good condition with no gaps present.					

	B1 and 2 was found to have negligible habitat value for roosting bats due to presence of raised tiles.  
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	Bats are very unlikely to be roosting within these building and as such, there are not anticipated to be any impacts on roosting bats as a result of the demolition of these buildings. Light levels on and around the site will be increased due to the addition of flood lights on site. Shields have been incorporated into the lighting design which has significantly decreased the light spill into the woodland, however, there is some light spill from the eastern football pitch (Appendix 4). A lighting schedule has been agreed in which the flood lights will not be utilised passed 9pm on weekdays, 6pm on Saturdays, and 2pm on Sundays/bank holidays. Additionally, during the bat season (May to September) the flood lights will not be used past 8pm.
<i>Recommendations</i>	In the unlikely event that a bat or evidence of bats is discovered during the development all work must stop and a bat licensed ecologist contacted for further advice.

	A low impact lighting strategy will be adopted for the site during post-development which outlines the areas of the site that will be retained as dark corridors. Parameters can be found on the Bat Conservation Trust website: https://www.bats.org.uk/our-work/buildings-planning-and-development/lighting-2. A lighting strategy plan may be required. <u>Enhancements:</u> Bat boxes should be installed on trees within the ownership boundary.
Birds	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	No evidence of nesting birds was found on site during the surveys. No habitat for schedule 1 birds was observed.
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	No vegetations which is suitable to support birds will be removed during the proposed development.
<i>Recommendations</i>	None. <u>Enhancements:</u> Bat boxes should be installed on existing buildings within the ownership boundary.
Reptiles	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	Grassland on site provides suboptimal habitat for reptiles due to the lack of dense vegetation for refuge, however, short grassland may be used for basking. Grassland in the wider landscape could provide good habitat for reptiles, however, there is poor connectivity to the wider landscape due to the presence of residential dwellings, fences, roads, and areas of hardstanding. No EPSLs for reptiles are present within a 2km radius of the site.

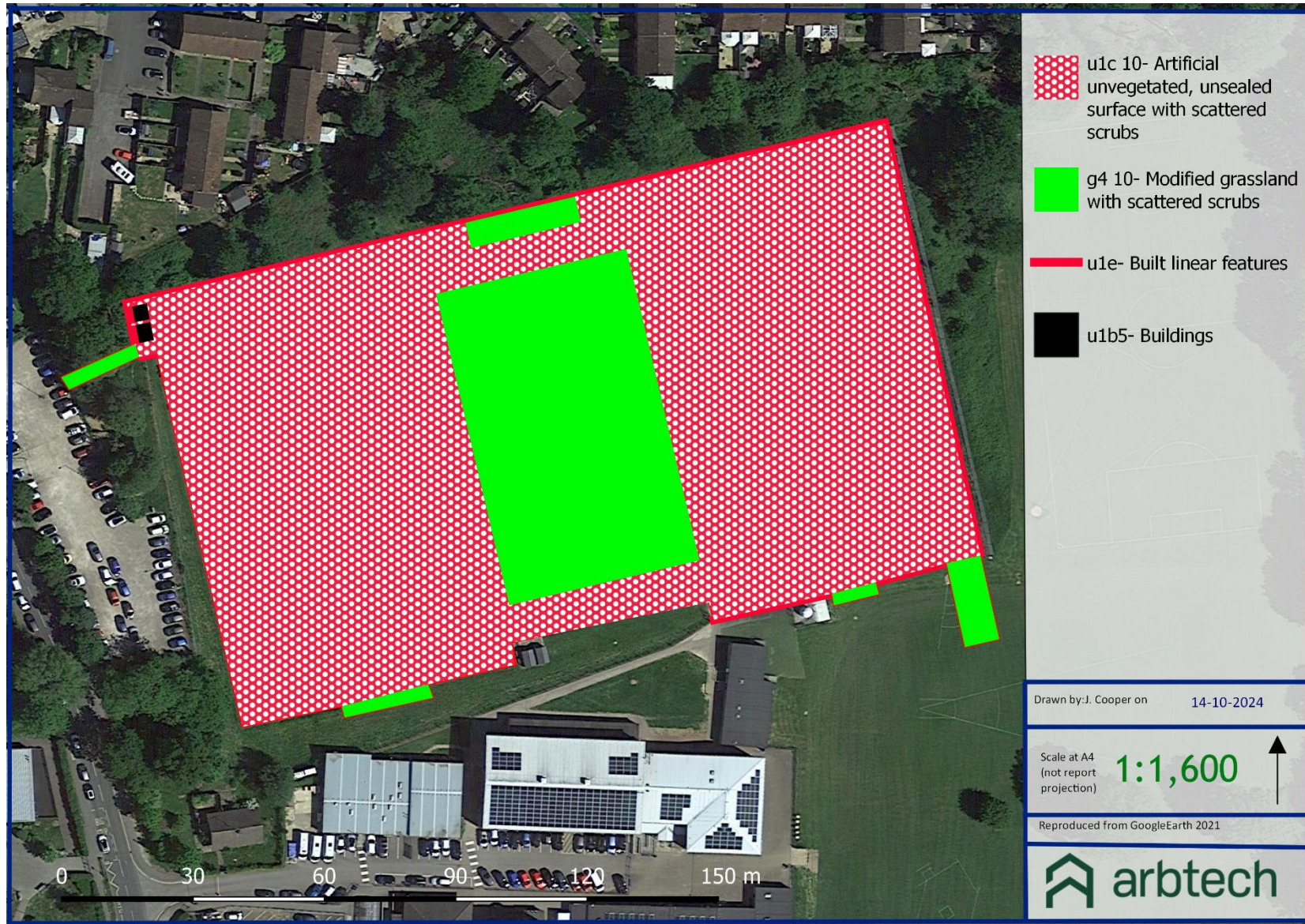
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	The project will result in the removal of a small area grassland. No impacts are anticipated on reptiles due to the minimal area of habitat being removed and the lack of connectivity to the site. However, a small risk of injury may be present.
<i>Recommendations</i>	A precautionary working method will be implemented for widespread reptiles during construction, including the following measures: • Vegetation will be maintained at less than 10cm to discourage reptiles. • Any excavations will be covered overnight, or a ramp will be installed to enable any trapped animals to escape. • Best practice pollution prevention measures will be implemented to minimise impacts to nearby habitats. • Any chemicals or pollutants used or created by the development should be stored and disposed of correctly according to COSHH regulations. • If any reptiles are found in the working area these should be allowed to disperse of their own accord or, if at immediate risk, should be moved by hand to a sheltered, vegetated area away from disturbance. In the unlikely event that a reptile is identified, works must cease and advice must be sought from a suitably qualified ecologist.
Amphibians	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	There are twelve ponds present within a 500m radius of the site. Only one of these is connected to the site due to the presence of kerbed, busy roads, buildings, fences, and other areas of hard standing. P1 is located 5m to the north of the site.

	The grassland on site provides suboptimal habitat for great crested newts (GCN) due to the short sward height of the grassland and the regular use of the space for sports. No dense vegetation is present for refuge for GCN or other common amphibians. However, GCN may use the grassland on site for commuting. In the surrounding area, woodland, grassland, and hedgerows provide good habitat for GCN and other common amphibians.
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	No suitable refuge habitat is present on site, and only a 0.06ha of grassland will be removed. However, due to the close proximity to the pond to the north of the site, there may be a risk to GCN and other common amphibians.
<i>Recommendations</i>	Owing to the nature of the proposed development and the low potential for impacts to great crested newts, further surveys are considered to be disproportionate. A precautionary working method will be implemented for common amphibians during construction, including the following measures: ▪ Heras fencing will be erected around the working area to prevent encroachment towards aquatic habitats where amphibians could be present. ▪ Vegetation will be maintained at a short sward height to ensure GCN do not colonise the site. ▪ Any excavations will be covered overnight, or a ramp will be installed to enable any trapped animals to escape. ▪ Best practice pollution prevention measures will be implemented to minimise impacts to nearby aquatic habitats that amphibians could use. ▪ Any chemicals or pollutants used or created by the development should be stored and disposed of correctly according to COSHH regulations.

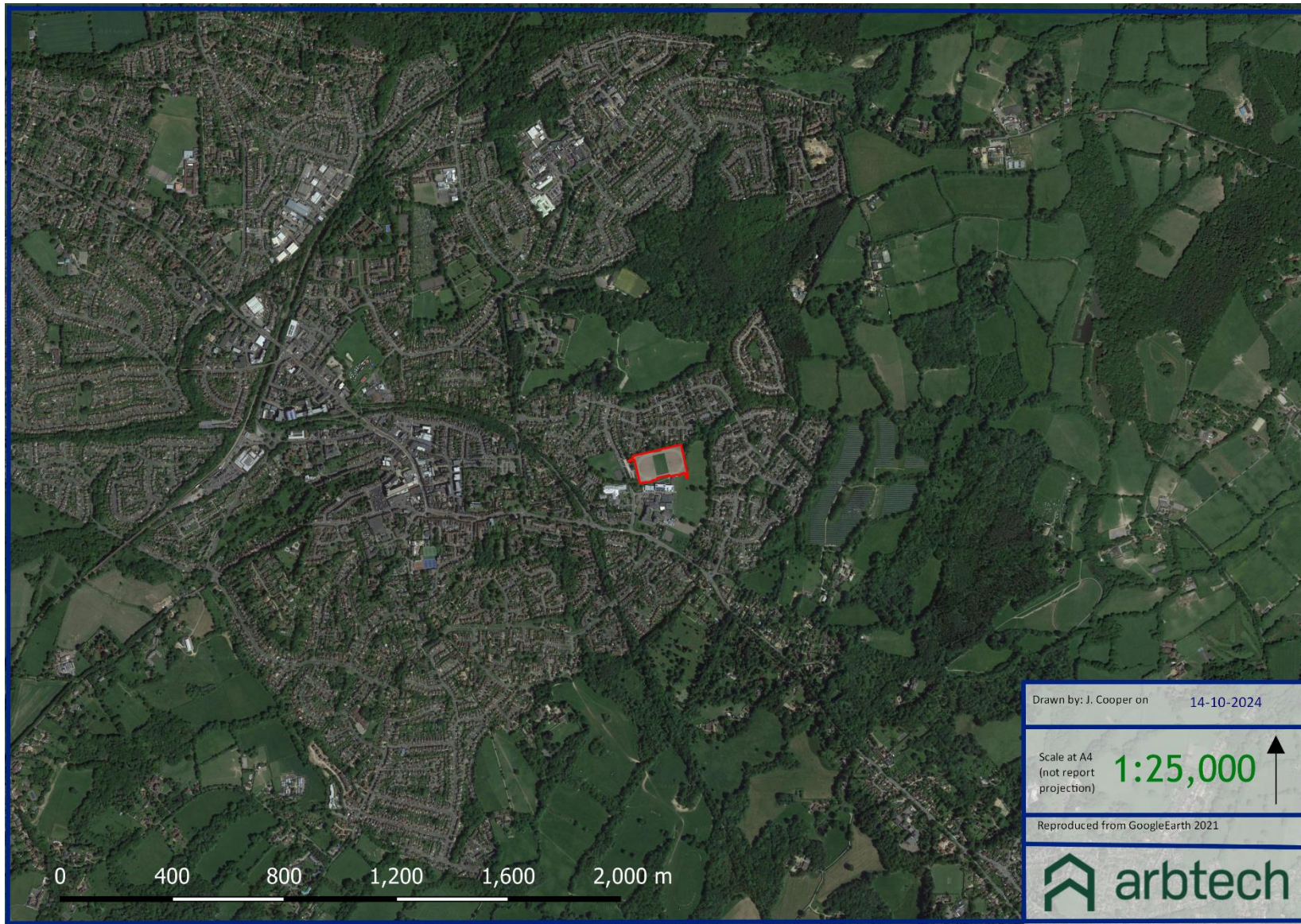
	If any common amphibians are found in the working area these should be allowed to disperse of their own accord or, if at immediate risk, should be moved by hand to a sheltered, vegetated area away from disturbance.
Badger	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	No evidence of badgers was found on or within 30m of the site. Grassland on site can provide good foraging and commuting habitat for badgers. There is poor connectivity to the wider landscape due to roads, buildings, fences, and areas of hard standing. However, badgers are highly mobile and could access the site by road, or under fences.
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	Grassland will be removed from site. This is likely to be inconsequential to local badger populations owing to their low value and the presence of more extensive habitat locally. However, construction activities could result in the death or injury of badgers, if present.
<i>Recommendations</i>	Basic precautionary mitigation during works is recommended: - Any excavations will be covered overnight, or a ramp will be installed to enable any trapped animals to escape. - The use of night-time lighting will be avoided, or sensitive lighting design will be implemented to avoid light spill on to habitats which badgers could use. South and west boundaries. - Any chemicals or pollutants used or created by the development should be stored and disposed of correctly according to COSHH regulations. In the unlikely event that a badger sett is identified within 30m, works must cease and advice must be sought from a suitably qualified ecologist.
Riparian animals	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	There are no watercourses or riparian habitat present on or connected to the site.

<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	No impacts are anticipated on riparian animals as a result of the proposed development.
<i>Recommendations</i>	None.
Hazel dormouse	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	No suitable habitat for dormouse is present on site. Additionally, for isolated habitats in the UK, research indicates that dormice require 20ha of woodland habitat to support a viable population (Bright <i>et al.</i> 1994). There is not 20ha of woodland connected to the site. There is one dormouse European Protected Species License (EPSL) within 2km radius of the site. This is for the destruction and impact on a dormouse resting and breeding site. this is located 900m to the north of the site.
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	No impacts are anticipated on hazel dormice as a result of the proposed development due to the lack of suitable habitat connected to the site.
<i>Recommendations</i>	None.
Other e.g. hedgehog	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	Grassland on site can provide good foraging and commuting habitat for hedgehogs. There is poor connectivity to the wider landscape due to roads, buildings, fences, and areas of hard standing. However, hedgehogs are highly mobile and could access the site by road, or under fences.
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	A small area of grassland will be removed during construction. The loss of such habitat is likely to be inconsequential to local hedgehog populations owing to the small area and the presence of more extensive habitat locally. However, construction activities could result in the death or injury of hedgehogs, if present.
<i>Recommendations</i>	The precautionary working method used for badgers will help protect hedgehogs.

Appendix 1: Survey map



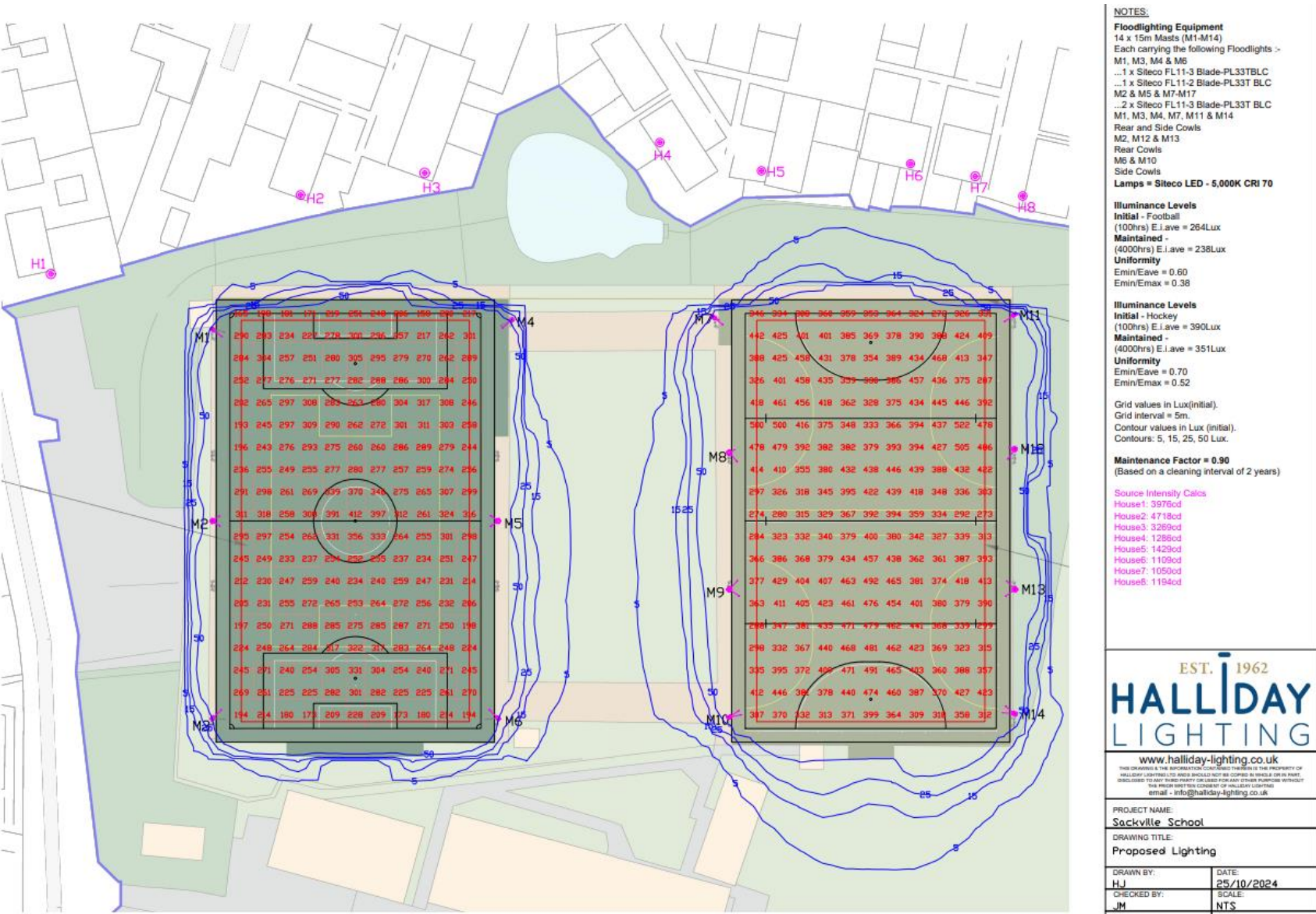
Appendix 2: Location map



Appendix 3: Proposed plan



Appendix 4: Lighting design



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