

Ecological Survey and Assessment of Land at Rocky Lane Haywards Heath RH16 4TW for a proposed Brighton Main Line (BML) Mast.



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1 Introduction

1.1 Overall Site Description and proposed works

An Ecological Survey and Assessment was carried out on land off Rocky Lane Haywards Heath RH16 4TW (grid ref 532514122168 NGR 3251422168) to inform proposals to construct a BML mast including a compound, crane set down and a new site entrance off Rocky Lane. The survey date of the walkover was 25th November 2024. An extended entrance including sight lines is proposed off Rocky Lane from Haywards Heath, as defined in the planning application layout drawings Figure 7. The site is situated to the southwest of Haywards Heath town centre in proximity to the A272. The site has been previously used for arable agricultural uses. The site is currently not in agricultural use. The site is predominantly improved Rye grassland with boundary hedgerows. There are trees within the boundary of the former agricultural field but not in the area of the proposed BML mast and infrastructure within the compound or within the extended entrance. Therefore, no trees or hedgerow will need to be removed as part of this planning application with the exemption of the dead Alder highlighted in the Hayden's AIA. The dead Alder is overhanging the proposed extended entrance to be used during construction by the crane and other vehicles. The dead Alder is proposed to be removed for health and safety reasons. The application site is entirely grass and is currently fallow with boundary hedgerows and trees outside the red line boundaries. This report should be read in conjunction with the Layout drawings, Preliminary Ecology Assessment and DEFRA BNG statutory matrix prepared by Adapt Environment Ltd to inform the development of land at Haywards Heath. The Arboriculture Impact Assessment including the Tree Survey and Constraints Plan prepared by Haydens Arboriculture Consultants should also be read in conjunction with the report.

The site is in a semi-rural position (Figure 1) located at the cross section of the A272 and Rocky Lane. Ashenground and Bolomore Woods LNR are located to the north on the outskirts of Haywards Heath. Further woods are located to the east of the railway line. The site is outside the Haywards Heath settlement boundary and is in a semi-rural location adjacent to the Brighton Main Line (BML). The proposal involves the redevelopment of part of the site currently not used for agricultural usage to a BML mast and compound. The aim is to construct a new entrance from Rocky Lane and then use a temporary access track to access the construction works area at the compound location. Refer to layout drawings Figures 4 to 7 for further details. The gated new entrance and turning head will be located off Rocky Lane as shown in Figure 7. The site will be leased by the operator.

Figure 1: Location plan of proposed site shown by red arrow.

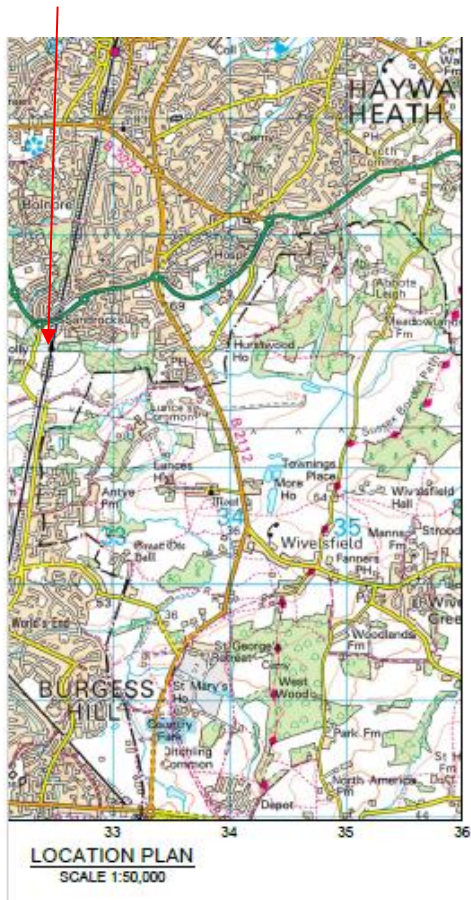


Figure 2: Existing conditions plan of proposed BML compound site shown by red arrow.

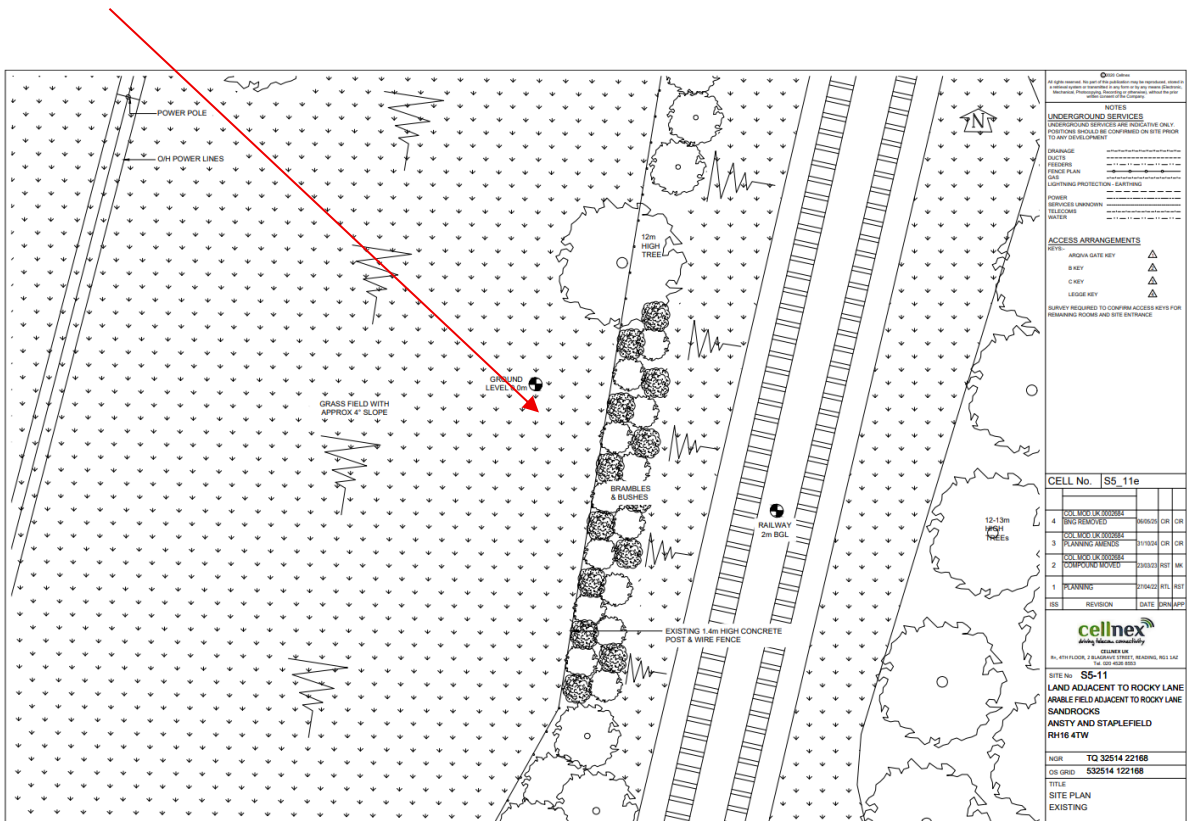


Figure 3: Existing conditions elevation of proposed BML compound site shown by red arrow.

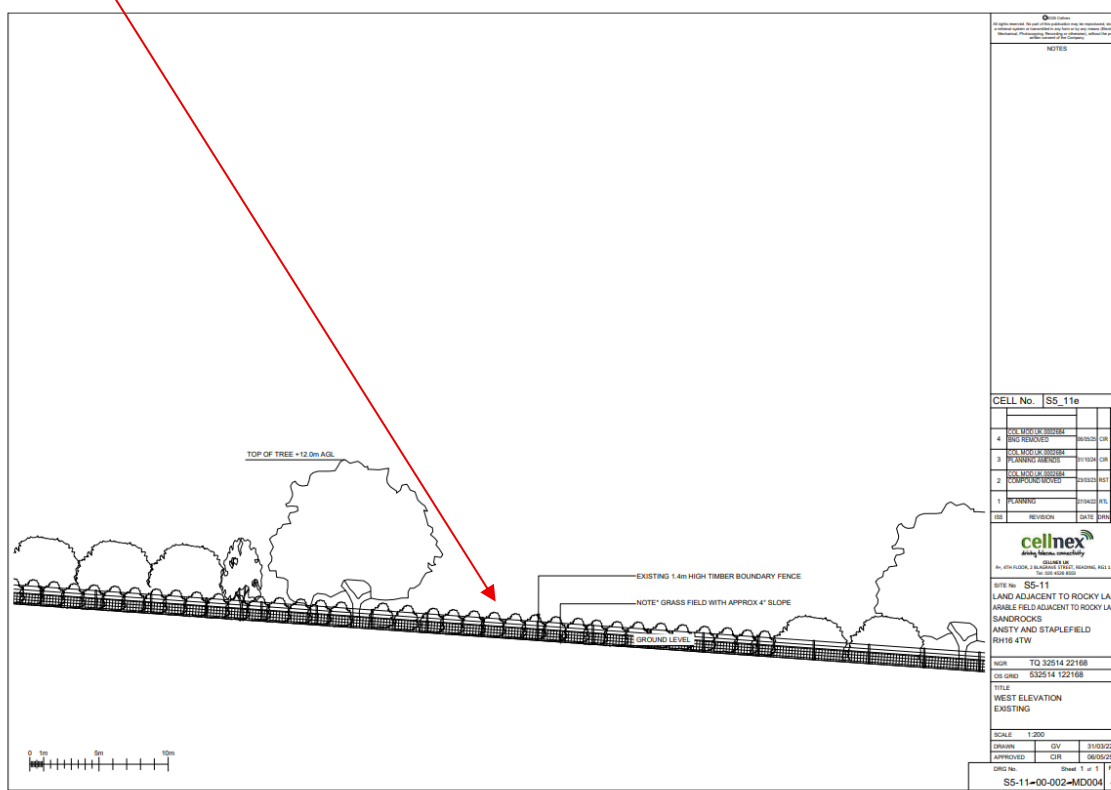


Figure 4: Layout plan of proposed site including compound, BML mast and associated infrastructure area.

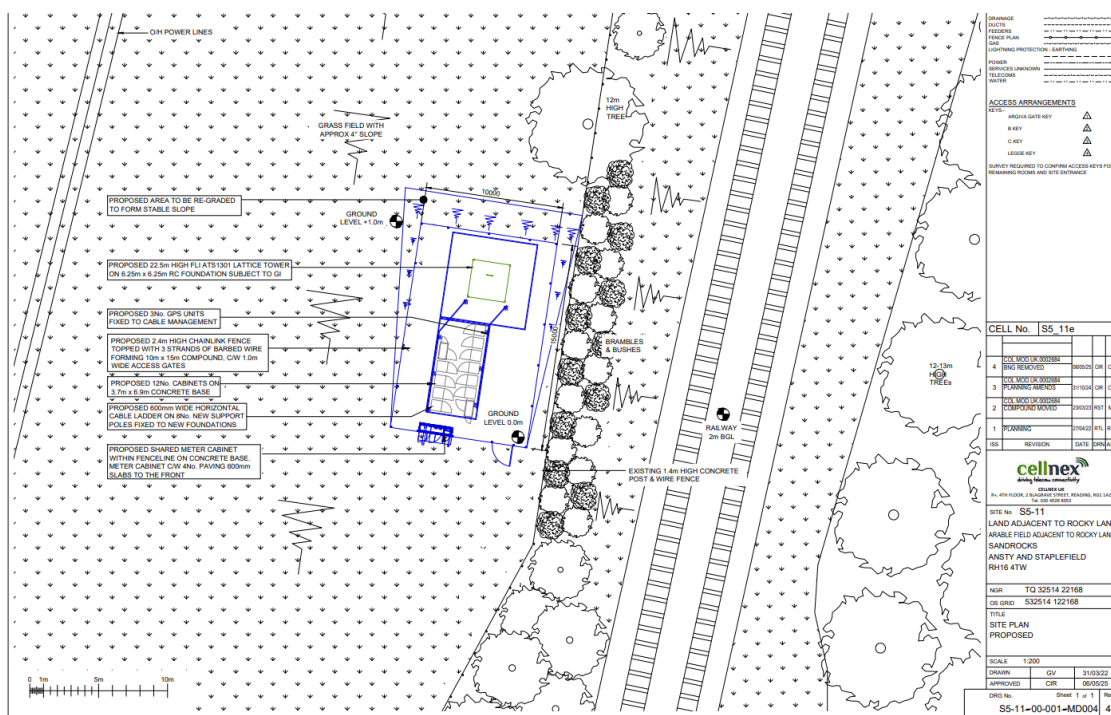


Figure 5: Layout plan of proposed site including compound, BML mast, crane set down and proposed route of temporary access using “trackaway” or similar temporary support sheeting for vehicles and crane.

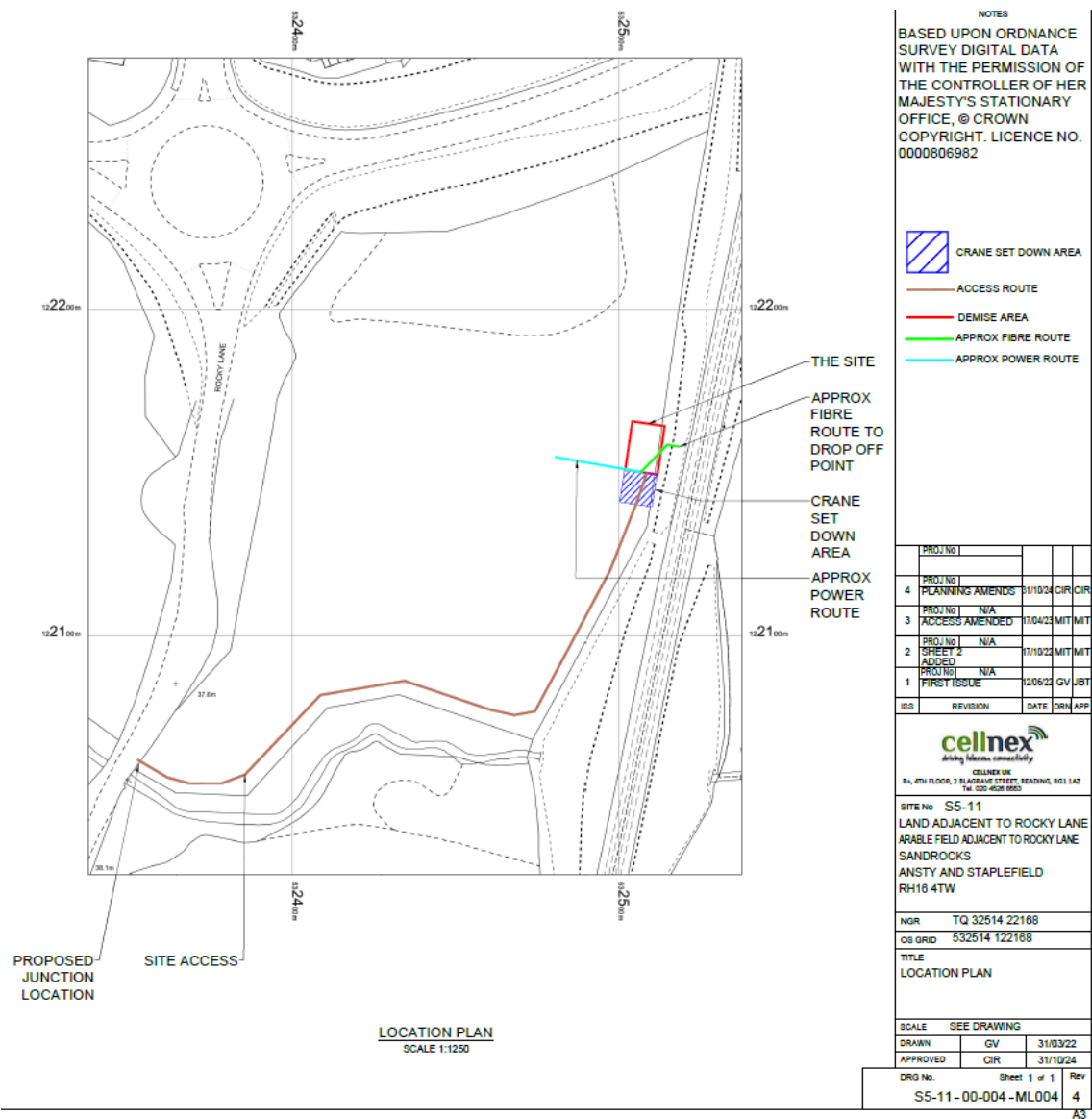


Figure 6: Proposed elevation of proposed BML compound site and BML mast.

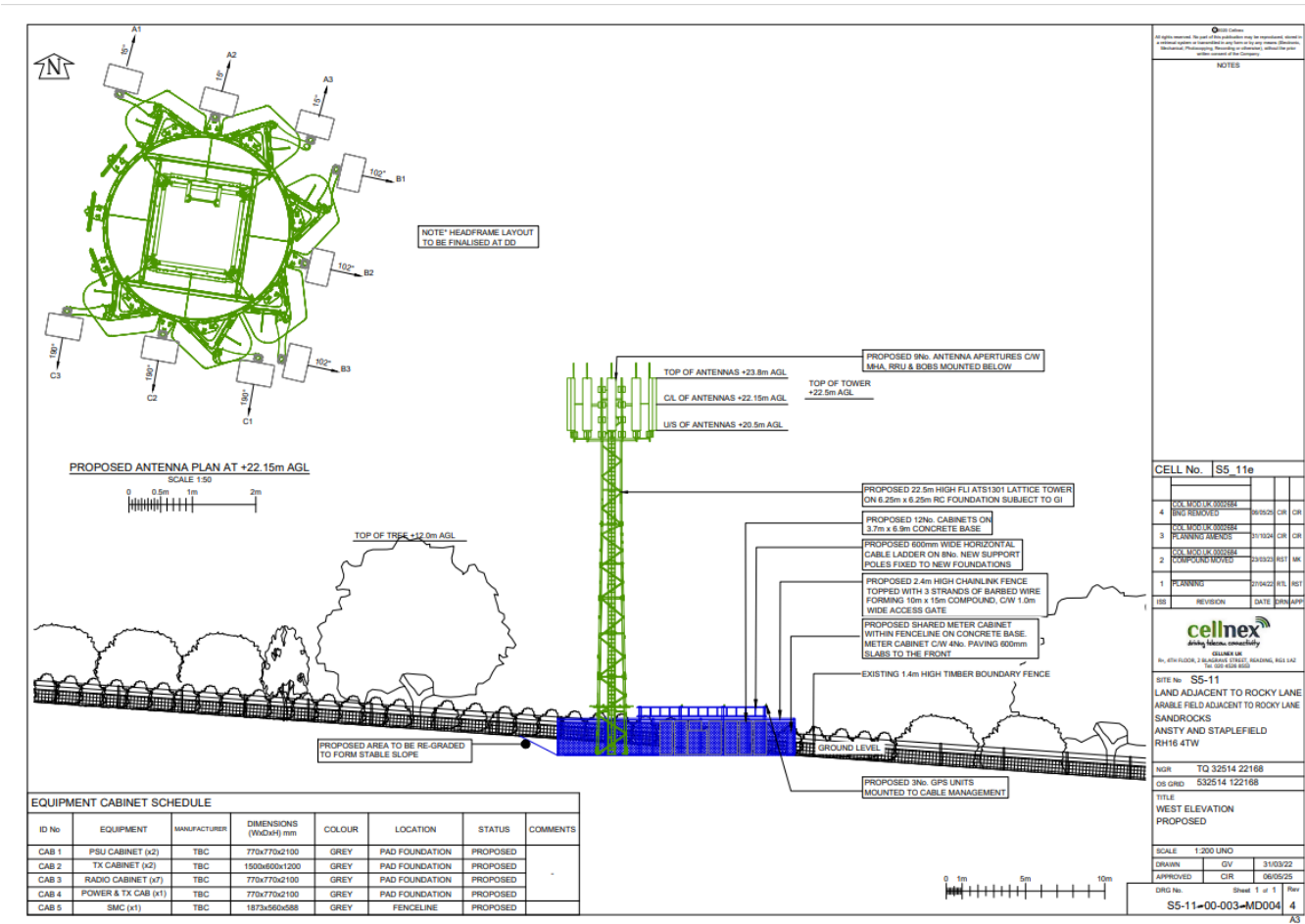
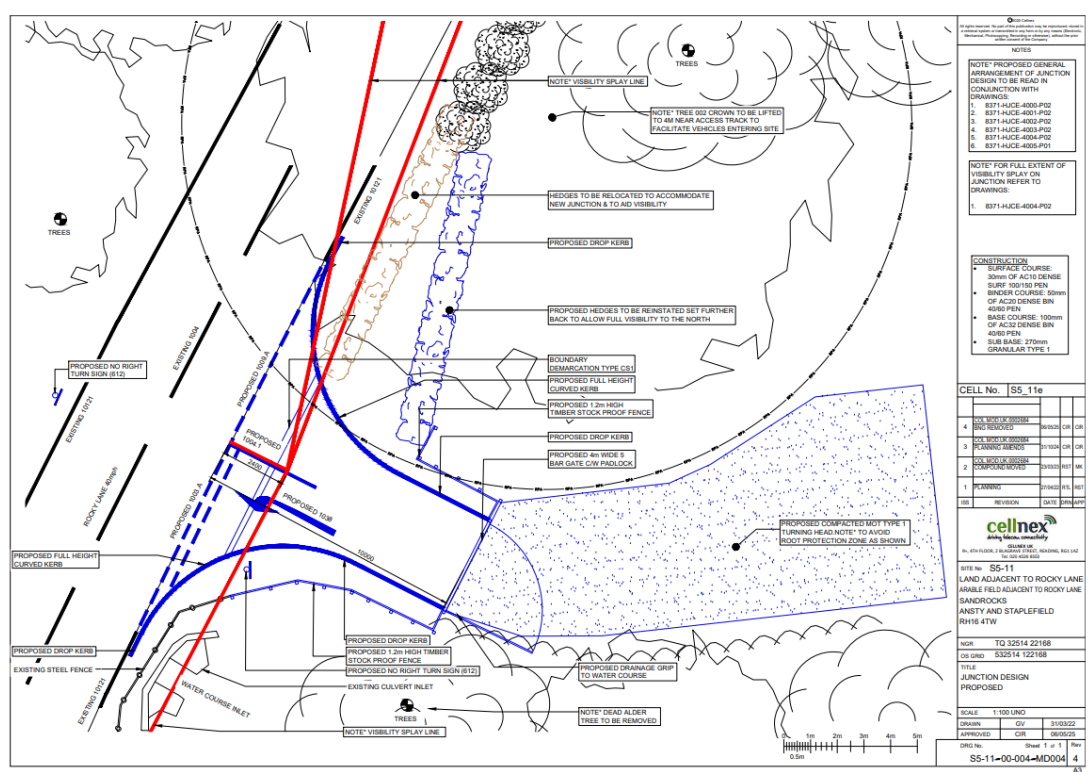


Figure 7: Layout plan of proposed new entrance with sightlines. Note dead Alder tree to be removed prior to the commencement of the construction works.



Depending on the works programmed, (estimated) to start in May 2026, the dead Alder tree will be removed in dormant bat season and before bird breeding starts in March. If the project programme changes for any reason and the dead Alder tree needs to be removed during bat active or bird breeding season then the felling of the dead tree by the tree surgeon will be supervised by an Ecologist (MCIEEM) with a Natural England Level 2 Bat license with experience of handling bats. The tree will be inspected for signs of a bat roost or a single bat roosting in the spilt trunk one day prior to the proposed tree felling. If bat/s roosting are found not to be present in the spilt trunk, then works would proceed as planned under supervision by the SQE Ecologist holding a NE Level 2 license to disturb Bats. If a bat/s are found to be present roosting in the dead tree, then works will be delayed and a NE Bat license will be sought. The works to remove the dead tree would then proceed under the conditions of the NE bat license with supervision by the Ecologist, holding a Level 2 NE license to disturb and handle bats.

There are no buildings, currently on the site. There is existing poor-quality improved Rye grassland, with an existing entrance from Rocky Lane.

The surrounding land to the west and south is predominantly in agricultural land use pasture and woodland. There are mature trees to the south along the watercourse and outside the red-line site boundary. These trees within the woodland will remain and are unaffected by the development. The town of Haywards Heath is located to the north, off the A272 Rocky Lane.

There is a fall from north to south across the entire site, with the site draining to the rough grassland to the south. This is located outside the red line boundary, to the south. There are a watercourse and woodland outside the red-line development boundary to the south. These areas are not in the landowner's possession. The trees located outside the red line boundary in the Hedgerow along Rocky Lane to the east are mixed species and mature including Alder, Elder, Oak and Sycamore. In addition, there are priority habitats LNR woodland and established hedgerow boundaries to the north and west outside the red-line site boundaries. Sections of the hedgerow identified in the Haydens Arboriculture Consultants Tree Survey and Constraints Plan will not require removal to facilitate Highways specification for sightlines at the extended entrance. It is recognised by the Ecologist and the client that the hedgerows and mature trees bounding Rocky Lane are priority habitat and that the design of the extended entrance has been considered to minimise impacts on the RPA of T1 Oak. The remaining hedgerows will be retained and protected in accordance with BS: 5837 Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction 2012. The Fountain woodlands to the northeast are outside the site boundary and in proximity to the railway line. There is no public access to the site and it is not subject to disturbance. The site is not designated at any level for its nature conservation value and it is not known to support any specially protected mammal or insect priority species (*ref.* CEDaR desktop data search). There are priority species – Oak in the boundary hedgerow to the west with the Rocky Lane.

Figure 8- Site Location. Aerial image of existing grassed field below. Not to scale.



2 Aims and Objectives of the Survey and Assessment

- 2.1 To record and describe the current habitats and species present on the site
- 2.2 To identify any occurrences of rare and/or protected plant species at the site and also any non-native invasive plant species
- 2.3 To undertake habitat appraisal and assess the potential of the site to support protected species such as roosting, commuting and foraging Bats, Badgers, Otters, Amphibians, Reptiles and specially protected Bird species.
- 2.4 To undertake habitat appraisal and survey work in relation to other wildlife, such as breeding birds and 'species of principal importance' (Priority Species).
- 2.5 From the survey results, identify any potential ecological concerns or constraints that could influence development and provide feedback on appropriate mitigation and compensation measures to avoid, mitigate or compensate for impacts on protected species and other local wildlife.

3 Methodology

3.1 Desk-top study

A range of desk and internet-based resources, were used to obtain background information prior to attending the site for the field surveys. Resources included –

- Google Earth for aerial maps,
- Ordnance survey maps,
- Plans of current development proposals;
- Flora of British Isles; and,
- DEFRA MAGIC mapping.

- 3.2 Surveys were undertaken according to the Chartered Institute and Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) Code of Professional Conduct, CIEEM Guidelines for Ecological Assessment and British Standard BS 42020:2013 Code of Practice for Planning and Development. All surveys were carried out in accordance with Natural England and CIEEM survey specifications. Badger Surveys were undertaken in accordance with BS 42020:2013 to 25m buffer outside the red line boundary of the site compound and extended entrance. The route of the temporary access track is shown on layout drawings Figure 5. Badgers are protected under Article 10 of Wildlife Order. Great Crested Newt Surveys or HSI assessment of ponds in accordance with Froglife: GCN Conservation Handbook were not undertaken because the walkover survey was completed out of the active survey season and no ponds were recorded. Bat potential surveys were undertaken in accordance with BCT Survey Guidelines ^{4th} Edition and Manual for Bat Workers specification. Further Mammal surveys included checking the site for Otters and Pine Martens usage.

3.3 Extended Phase 1 Habitat Surveys including Birds, Amphibians, Mammals- Badger, Otter, Pine Marten and Bat roost potential Surveys

Following a request by the Council Ecologist an assessment for protected species was completed. A site walkover survey was undertaken by experienced Ecologist Shea O' Neill CMLI MCIEEM on the 25th November 2024 from 11am to 2pm. The weather was dry and foggy. The weather on the 25th of November 2024 was mild (14 degrees) with overcast foggy skies and no rain. This was within average temperatures for November.

The methods used during the walkover survey broadly followed methods used in an 'extended' Phase 1 habitat survey, based upon the Phase 1 Habitat survey methodology (JNCC2010). The notes of the previous PEA surveys (2024) were also referenced. There were no Ponds recorded on or close to the site red line boundary to include the BML mast and associated infrastructure. There is a watercourse but no ponds within the blue line. If ponds were present they would have been assessed using the Habitat Suitability Index (*HSI, Oldham et al, 2000*). This methodology involves an assessment of ponds for their suitability to support the specially protected species Great Crested Newts. This method is non-invasive and the methodology does not involve contact with water within ponds or terrestrial habitat. It does not involve actual surveys for the presence/absence of Newts including GCN and does not provide a population size-class assessment.

November is outside the optimal time of year for undertaking Phase 1 habitat surveys but there were no access, visibility or weather restrictions. November is sub-optimal for undertaking Phase 1 Survey, but the weather was mild and dry and there were no weather or access restrictions.

The initial Field Survey comprised a Phase 1 Extended Habitat Survey, including a check for signs of Badger's setts and/or usage within a 25m buffer of the red line site boundary of the BML mast and compound. The survey walkover was carried out on the 25th of November 2024. The woodland adjacent to the watercourse beyond the 25m buffer was not checked for Badgers because access was not available and it was outside the 25m buffer. All Badger surveys were carried out in accordance with BS: 42020:2013 Survey Methodology for Badgers. Two plans (not to scale) of the survey area including the 25m buffer are included in Figure 9 and 10- yellow line boundary.

There are several mature trees outside the red line boundary of the works area within the hedgerows along the railway line to the east and Rocky Lane to the west. Refer to Tree Survey and Constraints Plan 11353-D-CP prepared by Haydens Arboriculture Consultants. There are two Oak Trees T1 and T2 and a dead Alder noted in the AIA. T1 is located closest to the proposed extended entrance. There are no trees within the centre of the former agricultural field. There are no live trees to be removed within the red line boundary because the site is mainly grassland. One dead tree (Alder) is to be removed for health and safety reasons because it is adjacent to the proposed extended entrance to be used by the crane and other vehicles. Therefore, there were no trees inside the red line boundary available to be checked for their Bat Roost Potential (BRP). All live trees in the hedgerow adjacent to Rocky Lane are to be retained. Please refer to the Hayden's Arboriculture Impact Assessment. Three trees outside the red line boundary were checked for their BRP as a precaution. For a precautionary approach, a Bat Roost Potential (BRP) assessment was completed on the dead Alder to be removed adjacent to the new entrance and the two Oak trees

(T1 and unnamed) closest to the proposed compound and extended entrance. The second Oak tree (T2) included in the hedgerow is not impacted by proposed construction and will be retained. Therefore, a BRP assessment was not completed on T2 because this tree is to be retained and not impacted. There are trees and suitable scrub or habitat available for tree-nesting bird species in the boundary hedgerows adjacent to the railway line and hedgerow along Rocky Lane. The site was checked for evidence of ground nesting Birds, but the site survey was outside the breeding season in November. There are very limited suitable areas of habitat available for Pine Martens, but this species was included in the checks because there are larger areas of suitable habitat at Bedelands and Fountains woods nearby. Pine Martens are recorded in small numbers within Sussex and the extents of the South Downs National Park and numbers are increasing. There are trees within the field boundaries but there is limited connectivity to the larger areas of woodland at Bedeland (LNR) or Ashenground and Bolomore Woods (LNR). A watercourse is present within the 25m buffer of the proposed extended entrance to the southwest, so the site was also checked for signs of Otters including prints and spraint. A check for Smooth and GCN Newts and other Amphibians in the grassland adjacent to the water course and along the eastern boundary hedgerow was undertaken on the 25th of November 2024, as required but the survey was completed out of breeding active season. The habitat within the red line and adjacent to the watercourse was not assessed for HSI potential to support breeding amphibians on the 25th November 2024 because there was no standing water or ponds. The watercourse outside the red line boundary was polluted and fast flowing into a culvert to cross under the Rocky Lane highway.

Specific habitats and species receive legal protection in the UK under various pieces of legislation, including:

- The Wildlife and Countryside Act (WCA) 1981 (as amended);
- The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2019 (as amended);
- The Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000;
- The Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006;
- The Hedgerows Regulations 1997; and
- The Protection of Badgers Act 1992.

In the UK, the WCA 1981 (as amended) is the primary legislation protecting habitats and species. SSSIs, representing the best examples of our natural heritage, are notified under the WCA 1981 (as amended) by reason of their flora, fauna, geology or other features. All breeding birds, their nests, eggs and young are protected under the Act, which makes it illegal to knowingly destroy or disturb the nest site during nesting season. Schedules 1, 5 and 8 afford protection to individual birds, other animals and plants.

The Protection of Badgers Act 1992 provides specific protection to badgers and their setts. Both the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (*as amended*) and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2019 (*as amended*) provide a high level of legal protection to a rare amphibian, Great Crested Newts. Sussex is a stronghold for this species.

Phase 1 Extended Habitat Surveys establish the presence, extent and distribution of habitats and assess the potential of the site to support any specially protected or priority species. Systematic species surveys were not carried out, but incidental species records were collected and target notes of any ecologically notable features were taken.

Field signs of the following species were searched for and noted if found –

- Badgers;
- Birds;
- Otters;
- Pine Martens;
- Reptiles;
- Amphibians including Smooth and Great Crested Newts- HSI Assessment of ponds on and near the proposed site were not required as no ponds were present;
- Bats; and,
- Invasive Plant Species

and the potential of the site to support any of the above species was assessed. The grassland habitat was assessed for its potential to support breeding Amphibians and Reptiles. There are trees onsite within the boundaries. Badger surveys involved a search of the site and an area of 25 m buffer around the site boundary (Figures 9 and 10) for signs of Badgers, which include -

- Setts or signs of badger digging;
- Well-used mammal paths through vegetation;
- Latrines and dung;
- Hairs; and,
- Footprints.

The survey for Otters entailed checking within the area surrounding the site perimeter along the watercourse boundary adjacent to the proposed entrance (as shown in Figures 9 and 10) for any indications of their presence. The development site was evaluated to have limited capacity in supporting Otters because there was no stream or watercourse with moving water within the red line boundary. A watercourse and woodland were recorded within the 25m site buffer of the proposed site entrance. However, the water quality within the watercourse was poor. The proposed site is re-seeded former arable fields currently being ungrazed and lying fallow.

There is very limited habitat available on site but there are larger areas of woodland nearby. Pine Marten surveys involved a search of the site around the site boundary (Figure 3) for signs of Pine Martens. The proposed site contained no trees (photograph 1 and 2) and the site was considered to have very low potential to support Pine Martens. The survey for Pine Martens entailed checking the agricultural grassland within the area surrounding the site perimeter (as shown in Figures 9 and 10) for any indications of their presence. There are trees on the potential site (as shown by

photographs 1 and 2) but only on the boundaries. The site was evaluated to have very limited capacity in supporting Pine Martens because there were no trees within the red line boundary and no woodland as suitable habitat. Woodland was present nearby.

3.4 Bat Potential Surveys in existing boundary trees.

No trees were growing within the red line boundary of the BML mast and compound or new entrance. Therefore, the BRP of trees within these areas was not assessed. The capacity for a Bat Roost within the red line boundary was therefore negligible. Initial BRP bat surveys and assessments of the areas in proximity to the proposed site including the bat roost potential of the trees to be impacted by construction was completed without the use of a high lumen torch which would have had the potential to disturb bats if present. There are trees located within the blue line boundaries of the field within the hedgerow bounding Rocky Lane and the railway line.

Three trees of mixed species were assessed by the Adapt Environment Ecologist Shea O'Neill for BRP because they were closest to the proposed construction areas located within compartment 1 and compartment 2. All the trees were surveyed to assess their value and requirements to be protected or removed per the Hayden's Arboricultural Impact Assessment. The trees T1 and T2 referenced in the Haydens AIA report to be retained were assessed. The trees T1 and unnamed Oak are of varying ages and sizes. The dead Alder (unnamed) adjacent to the watercourse was assessed for its BRP because it was to be removed for health and safety reasons. No high powered torch was used in the assessment of the BRP.

Trees are listed as:

- T1 Oak- *Quercus robur* (outside red line boundary) BRP assessed;
- T2 Oak- *Quercus robur* (outside red line boundary) not assessed as not impacted by construction;
- Unnamed dead Alder (outside red line boundary); and
- Unnamed Oak- *Quercus robur* (outside red line boundary in proximity to compound and BML mast)

The bat roost potential of the trees, T1 and Oak adjacent to compound, were assessed as a precautionary approach. All live trees are to be retained. The BRP of the dead Alder was assessed.

The survey comprised a walkover survey inspecting the exterior of the trees from the ground with close focusing binoculars to assess cracks and crevices in the trunk and branches for bat roost features (BRF) and signs of bats including droppings and grease stains. No high lumen torch was used because this was a licenced activity. The exterior of the tree trunk and branches was not inspected with a high-lumen torch. The Ecologist was Shea O'Neill BSc Hons Dip LA CMLI MCIEEM.

Reason for survey

The bat roost potential of the two Oak trees was assessed as a precautionary approach. All live trees are all proposed for retention. The dead Alder was assessed because it is to be felled and removed. The existing entrance on Rocky Lane is to be retained and is subject to alterations. The existing non gated entrance onto Rocky Lane is to be enlarged to facilitate the construction of sight lines. This will be guided by local authority Highways comments because this is the construction access onto Rocky Lane.

The trees were assessed because the surrounding woodland habitat is good for Bats and there is woodland (Fountains) nearby.

3.5 Legal protection offered to Bats

The main potential ecological constraint to the planned development was considered by the surveyors to be the possible presence of Bats. All Bats in England are afforded a high level of legal protection and the presence of roosting bats would be a material consideration in the determination of a planning application. The presence of bats will also have licensing implications which represent an additional form of development control.

Bats are fully protected in England through inclusion within the Conservation (Natural Habitats, etc.) Regulations. Under this legislation bats are given the status of a European Protected Species (EPS).

The Regulations make it an offence to deliberately:

- Capture, injure or kill a bat;
- Disturb a bat while it is occupying a structure or place which it uses for shelter or protection;
- Disturb a bat in such a way as to be likely to:
 - (i) Affect the local distribution or abundance of a bat species;
 - (ii) Impair its ability to survive, breed or reproduce, or rear or care for its young; or
 - (iii) Impair its ability to hibernate or migrate;
- Obstruct access to a breeding site or resting place of such an animal; or
- Damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place of such an animal.

Because Bats are mobile in their habits and can change roosting sites throughout the year, but often return to roosts that they have used before (particularly for breeding), roosts are protected even when Bats are not present. A known roost can only be considered to be no longer a roost if it has been shown to have been unused for a year or more.

It may be possible for Natural England to facilitate works with a licenced bat handler to allow activities that would otherwise be an offence under the Regulations, providing that

- (a) there is no satisfactory alternative, and
- (b) that the action authorised will not be detrimental to the maintenance of the population of the species concerned at a favourable conservation status in their natural range. In addition, it is an offence to breach a license condition.

3.6 Status of Bats in England

There are 18 species of bat commonly found in England. The most common are listed below –

Species	Distribution	Population Trend	Rarity
Daubentons' Bat	Widespread	Stable	Frequent
Natterer's Bat	Widespread	Stable	Scarce
Whiskered Bat	Widespread	Stable	Scarce
Common Pipistrelle	Widespread	Stable	Common
Soprano Pipistrelle	Widespread	Stable	Common
Brandt Bat	Restricted	Stable	Scare
Noctule Bat	Widespread	Stable	Frequent
Brown long-eared bat	Widespread	Stable	Frequent

Bat populations have historically undergone severe declines throughout the UK and all bats are considered vulnerable (BCT, 2013, Mitchell-Jones, 2004) although there is some recent evidence (since the 1990s), that over the whole of the UK and Ireland some bat species populations are increasing or stable.

Species reported to be increasing, or at least stable, include Common pipistrelle *pipistrellus pipistrellus*, Daubenton's bat *Myotis daubentonii* and Natterer's bat *Myotis nattereri*. Stable populations include soprano pipistrelle *Pistrellus pygmaeus*, brown long-eared bat *Plecotus auritus* and whiskered bat *Myotis mystacinus*. There is insufficient survey data to estimate the population trend for Leisler's bat *Nyctalus leisleri* or Nathusius' pipistrelle *Pipistrellus nathusii*.

Recent population increases, however, are not yet considered sufficient to counter the previous severe declines in populations (BCT, 2013). In addition to the legal protection Brown long-eared bat, Nathusius' pipistrelle and Soprano pipistrelle are listed as UK priority species for conservation.

Of the above species by far the most common are Common Pipistrelle bats and Soprano Pipistrelle bats. These species are highly adaptable and are the most frequent species encountered in dwellings, including in urban and suburban areas. They are small bats and are generally crevice dwelling bats and can occupy very small, inaccessible cracks and crevices which can make them difficult to detect. Breeding roosts of these species (the most important type of roost encountered) tend to be in buildings which are warm and stable. Maternity tree roosts of Pipistrelles are (almost) unknown.

3.7 Surveying for Bats in Trees.

Bats (depending on species) often use trees as roosting sites because they provide a choice of safe, dark, dry places. Trees are mainly used by Bats in Summer. Trees can provide a range of potential transient roost sites and Bats tend to move frequently between roosts, e.g.

- Within cracks and crevices between/under loose tree bark on mature trees;
- In larger holes in tree trunks eg disused Woodpecker holes; and,
- In crevices between tree trunks and mature Ivy;

Bats are mobile in their habits and can occupy a range of different roosting sites depending on the time of year and the stage of their life cycle. The most obvious use of trees by bats is transient roosts between May and August when Bats are foraging between sites. Temporary (transient) roost sites can then be occupied in the autumn before bats then move again into hibernation roosts for the winter.

Large (significant) roosts in holes in tree trunks are generally easy to detect because signs of Bat activity will be evident to experienced surveyors with evidence of grease staining and droppings on the entrance hole located in a tree trunk or branch junction.

Transient (day) roosts in trees are often only used by single or small numbers of bats and can be very difficult to detect.

In addition, many trees in areas supporting good feeding habitat can be used as temporary night roosts or feeding perches.

Since bats move roosting sites and can be difficult to detect directly the key identification feature to identify the presence of bats is droppings. Sometimes droppings are found on the outside of tree trunks beside an obvious large hole. Other features used to identify the presence of bats include:

- Characteristic odour;
- 'Chittering' by bats, usually in warm summer weather or when bats are active at dusk and are about to leave the roost; and,
- Staining around possible access points on a tree trunk or large branch.

Any survey should include a desk-top survey for any existing records of bats close to the trees being inspected and an assessment of the quality of the habitat surrounding the trees or woodland. Since very many types of mature trees can support bats, one of the best indicators of the possible presence of bats in a mature tree is the presence of good feeding habitat for bats nearby and suitable cracks and crevices that can be used.

3.8 Judgement of Potential for bat roosts in trees

Level of Potential	Criteria
High	Trees with obvious staining around entry points indicating use; woodlands with many trees which are suitable roosts; trees with many suitable roosting opportunities including old trees; old trees with many roosting opportunities close to water courses/ponds/lakes or other favoured feeding sites.
Moderate	Trees with splits, cracks, loose bark, ivy, woodpecker holes or other features which could be used for roosting; trees with roosting opportunities close to water courses/ponds/lakes or other favoured feeding

	sites.
Low	Young trees with loose bark, conifer plantations, tree isolated from suitable habitat in the wider landscape (e.g. within open fields unlinked by hedgerows).
Negligible	Scrub, saplings and young /immature trees with no potential as roosts; individual coniferous trees and trees in good condition with no splits, cracks or features which could be used by bats.

This type of survey characterises how local bat populations currently make use of the site, so that an assessment of the potential impacts of development can be made. It does not accurately assess local bat populations. Walkover surveys were carried out to collect the following data (*BCT survey guidelines 4th Edition*):

- The assemblage of bat species using the site;
- The relative frequency with which the site is used by different species;
- The nature of activity for different bat species, for example foraging, commuting and roosting.

The Bat potentials surveys are included in later sections of this report. It is not planned to remove any trees within the hedgerows or along the stream (outside the site boundary) to facilitate the development proposals.

3.9 Invertebrates

The open grassland can sometimes be valuable for invertebrates. Where observed any invertebrate species present and any habitats with high value for invertebrates were recorded.

3.10 Amphibians.

The open grassland was checked for signs of Amphibians including Great Crested Newts. There were no standing water or ponds on the sloping site. The watercourse was within the 25m buffer of the entrance and adjacent low-lying area were checked for their suitability to support GCN. A HSI assessment of ponds was not completed because no ponds were present within the red line boundary or 25m buffer.

3.11 Invasive Species

The spread of certain invasive plant species can sometimes be an offence. Invasive plant species were therefore recorded where present.

3.12 Survey Limitations

This survey and assessments inevitably provide a snapshot of the current ecological value of the development site. Habitats are dynamic and can sometimes be fast changing, and species can be mobile in their habits.

However, there were no unusual constraints with the surveys and given the overall assessment of the ecological value of the habitats on this site it is concluded that no further level of ecology survey is required prior to deciding a planning application, although if development is delayed for more than a year following the date of this survey (November 2024) then the survey should be updated.

3.13 Surveyor Credentials

Surveys were carried out by Landscape Architect and Ecologist Shea O' Neill BA. Hons. Dip LA CMLI MCIEEM who is working towards her NE and NRW Bat licences under the supervision of two licenced bat handlers and trainers. Experience of her handling bats under licence is included in the Appendix.

Landscape Architect and Ecologist Shea O Neill holds BA. Hons. Dip LA and is a member of CMLI and MCIEEM. Sharon has been a Chartered Landscape Architect and Ecologist for more than 25 years and is a full member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management and of the Landscape Institute. She is the Director of Adapt Environment Ltd. A full CV and experience of the Ecologists to carry out surveys are included in Appendix 4.

4.0 Results - Desk Study

4.1 Protected (Designated) Sites

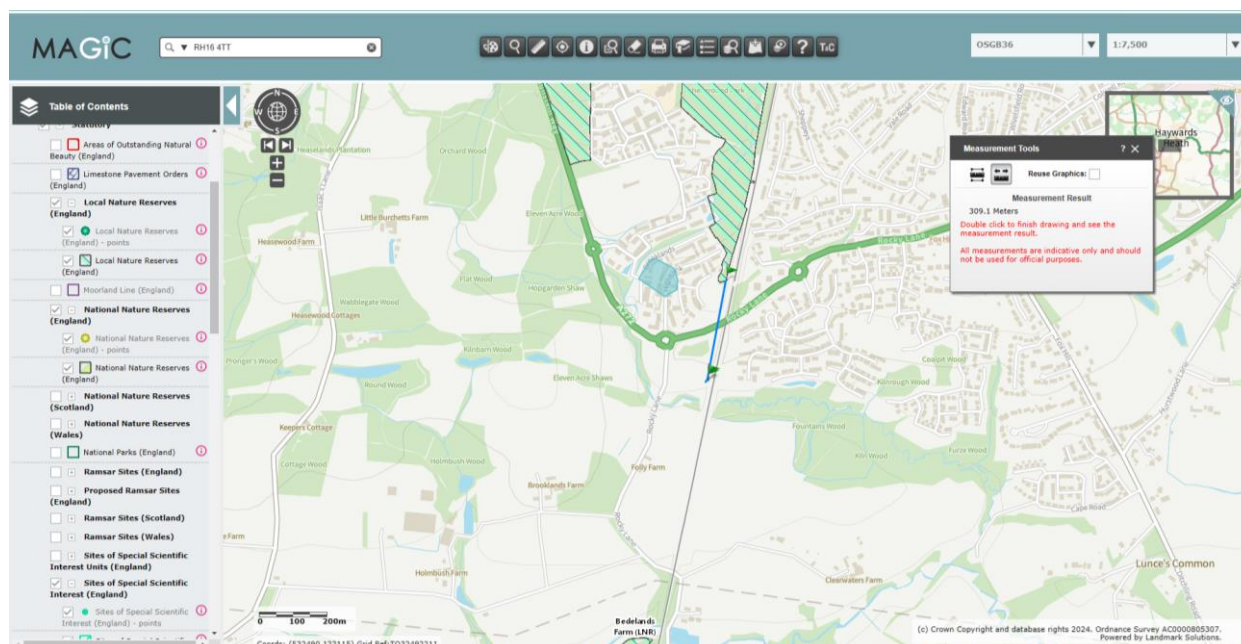
Designated Sites

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

Irreplaceable & Priority Habitats

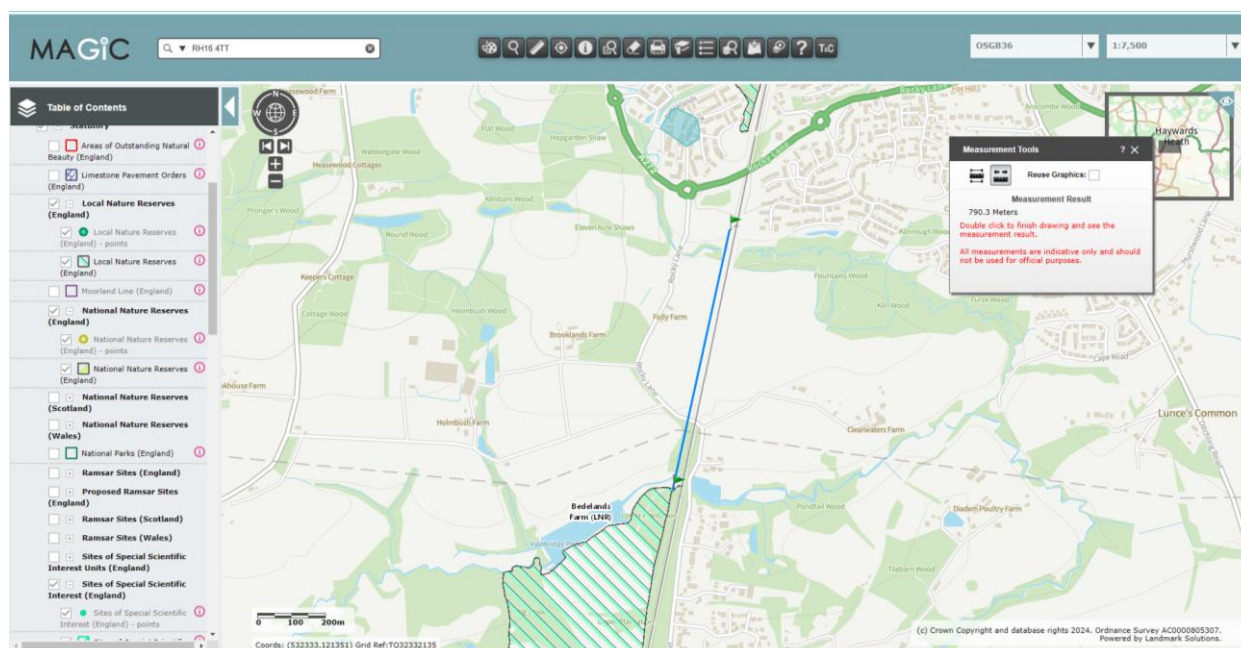
There are no irreplaceable or priority habitats on the site. A large area of woodland LNR is located across High bank and A272 to the north of the site. This is a priority habitat as listed on Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006. This area may also contain ancient woodland (irreplaceable & priority habitat).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

Figure 8: Location of Ashenground and Bolmore Woods Local Nature Reserve -309m north.
Extract DEFRA Magic Maps.



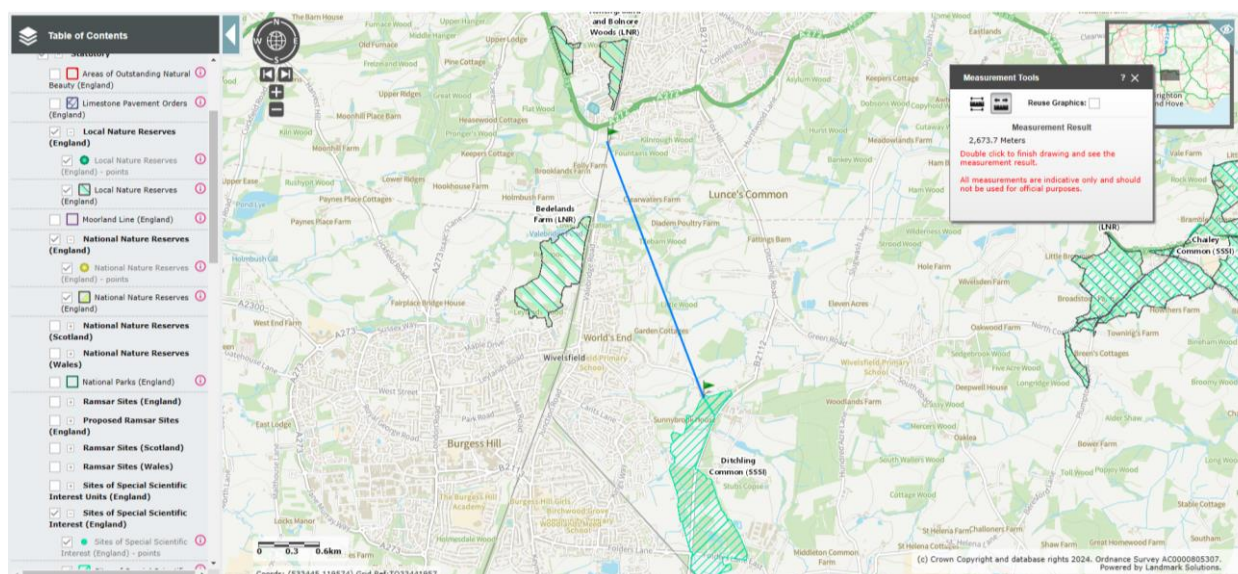
A further area of woodland Bedelands Farm LNR is located across agricultural land to the south of the site. This is a priority habitat as listed on Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006. This area may also contain ancient woodland (irreplaceable & priority habitat). The proposed development does not pose any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

Figure 9: Location of Bedelands Farm Local Nature Reserve -790m south. Extract DEFRA Magic Maps.



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

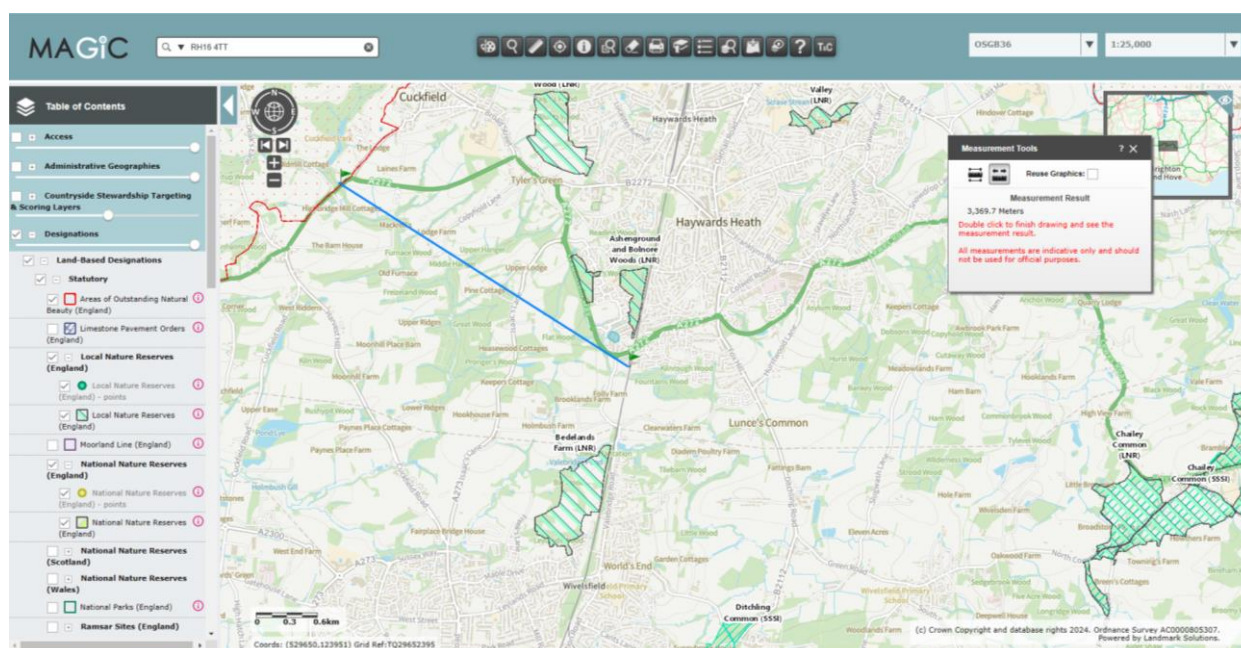
Figure 10: Location of Ditchling Common SSSI -2673m southeast. Extract DEFRA Magic Maps.



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

The site is not within High Weald Ecological Network or the High Weald AONB or National Landscape Area. The boundary of the High Weald AONB is 3.3km to the Northwest as shown by Figure 11.

Figure 11: Location of boundary of High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty AONB 3.36km to the northwest. Extract DEFRA Magic Maps.



There is no hydrological linkage between the proposed site and the LNR with no associated impacts. The closest notable wildlife site is Bedelands Farm LNR located 1.5km to the south. There is no hydrological linkage between the proposed site and the LNR with no associated impacts. The site itself is not designated at any level for its ecological importance and it is not within 1 km of any statutorily designated sites.

Designated wildlife areas within 5km include:

- Ashenground and Bolmore LNR is located approximately 309m to the northeast;
- Bedelands Woods LNR is located approximately 790m to the southeast;
- Ditchling Common SSSI is located approximately 2.67km to the southeast;
- High Weald Ecological Network is located approximately 3.3km to the northwest;

The High Weald Ecological Network Area (National Landscape) is noted for its population of invertebrates. There is no hydrological linkage between the proposed site and the NL with no associated impacts. The closest notable wildlife site is Ashenground and Bolmore LNR located 309m to the north. There is no hydrological linkage between the proposed site and the LNR or High Weald NL with no associated impacts.

Protected (Designated) Sites

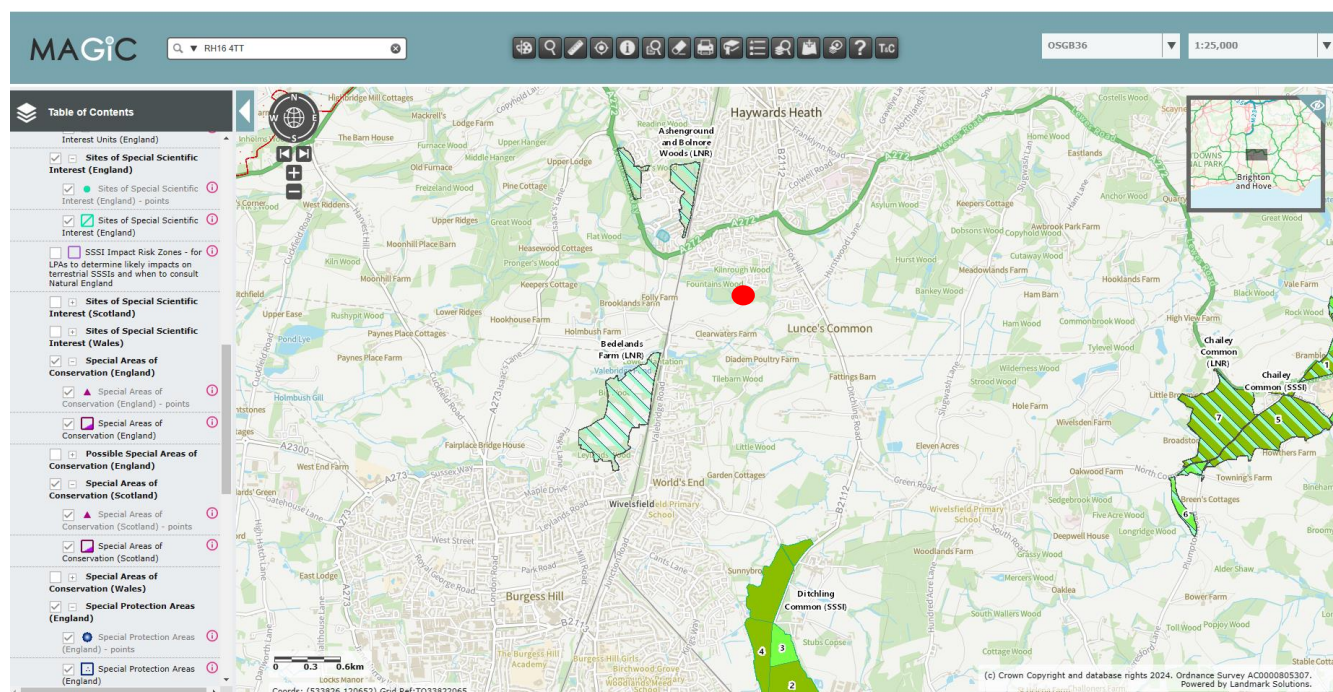
The site itself is not designated at any level for its ecological importance and it is not within 1 km of any statutorily designated sites.

Designated wildlife areas within 5km include:

- Ashenground and Bolmore LNR is located approximately 309m to the northeast;
- Bedelands Woods LNR is located approximately 790m to the southeast;
- Ditchling Common SSSI is located approximately 2.67km to the southeast;
- High Weald Ecological Network is located approximately 3.3km to the northwest;

The High Weald Ecological Network Area (National Landscape) is noted for its population of invertebrates. There is no hydrological linkage between the proposed site and the NL with no associated impacts. The closest notable wildlife site is Ashenground and Bolmore LNR located 309m to the north. There is no hydrological linkage between the proposed site and the LNR or High Weald NL with no associated impacts.

Figure 8: Summary of designated sites within 5km buffer of proposed site. Extract DEFRA Magic Maps.



4.2 Priority Habitats

There are no priority habitats within the red line site boundaries. There are trees and hedgerows which form priority habitats hedgerows within the blue line site boundary and within 25m buffer of the site entrance. The development site of the proposed BML Mast including associated infrastructure is located within existing greenfield agricultural land previously used for arable. The existing entrance is proposed as the access route is from Rocky Lane. Local woodland habitats LNR are of high quality.

Designated wildlife areas within 5km include:

- The High Weald Ecological Network area and National Landscape (NL) is located approximately 3.3km to the northwest;
- Ashenground and Bolmore LNR is located approximately 309m to the north;
- Bedlands LNR is located approximately 790m to the south; and,
- Ditchling Common SSSI is located approximately 2.6km to the southeast;

4.3 Protected Species

There are no known records of protected species from the site (*ref. DEFRA Magic Map desk top records*). There are no known records of protected species including Bats, Otters, Pine Martens, Birds and Smooth or Great Crested Newts.

There are no trees currently on the site within the red line boundary. There are trees and hedgerows within the 30m buffer which are all proposed for retention. The site supports limited habitat suitable for use by foraging Bats along the mature hedgerow boundaries and woodland to the south along the watercourse. Mature Oak trees are present in the hedgerows.

4.4 Priority Species

The Priority Bird species Lapwing and Curlew have been recorded within 5km of the site within the Ditching Common SSSI and High Weald Ecological Network Area noted for its populations of Butterflies, but there are no existing Priority species records from the site itself(*ref.* Magic Map desktop records). The site does not support habitats suitable for use by these species.

5.0 Results of Field Surveys

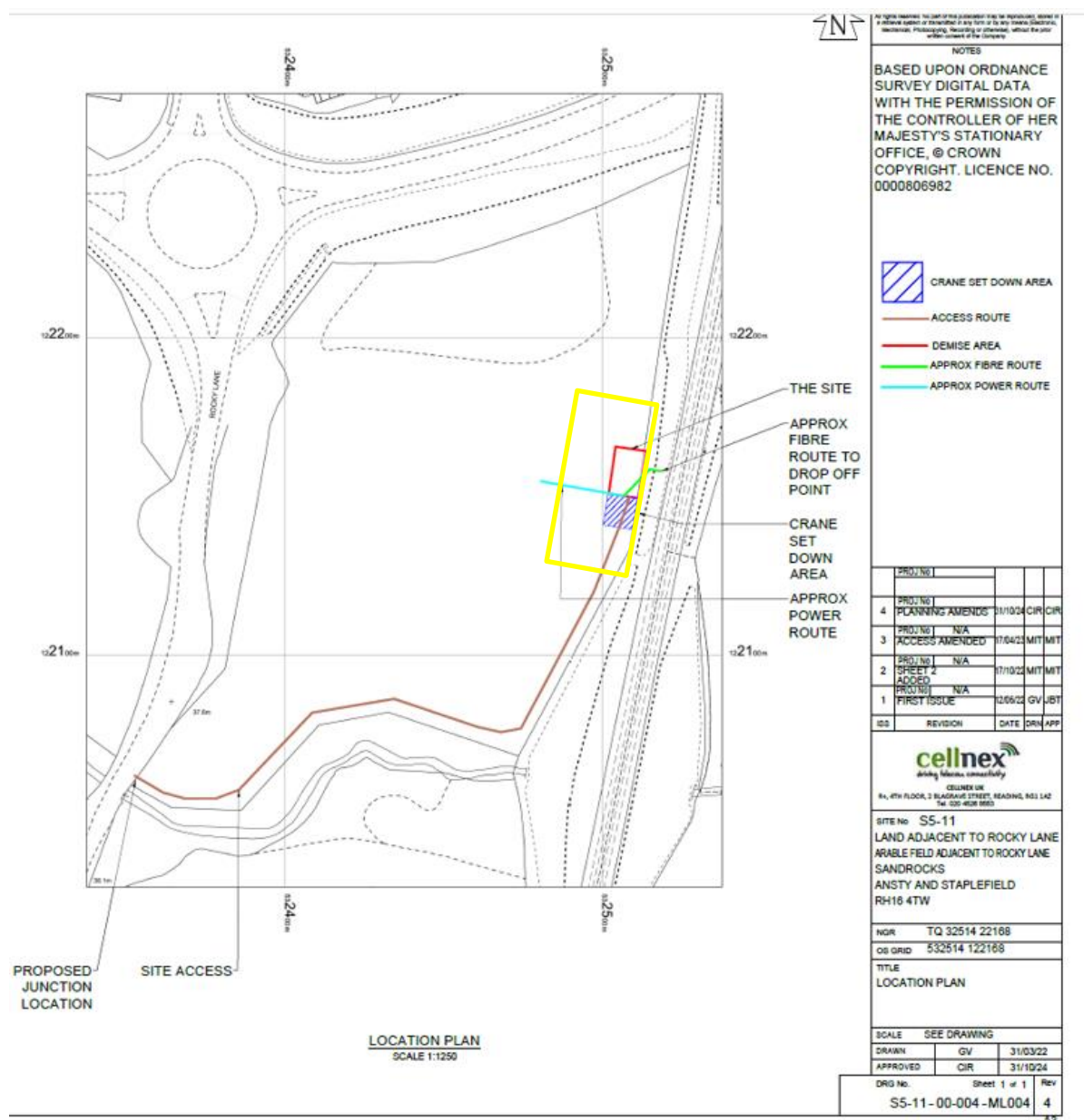
Summary of results undertaken on the following dates:

- 25th November 2024;

The habitat descriptions should be read in conjunction with the Hayden's Arboriculture Impact Assessment Report.

The variable nature of the site lends itself to being divided into two distinct Compartments 1- BML Mast and compound boundaries and Compartment 2- new entrance and temporary access track. The compartments are described, in the text below. Smaller areas of habitat and notable species are described in the Target Notes.

Figure 9- Site survey area as part of Compartment 1 marked by yellow rectangle- 25m buffer included. The area to the east adjacent to the railway line was excluded for health and safety reasons.



5.1 Compartment 1

Compartment 1 includes the BML mast and associated infrastructure within the fenced compound. Compartment 1 is located adjacent to the railway line and is an area of improved grassland on mineral soils. From historical aerial records this area has previously been used for growing arable crops. There are moderate amounts of ruderal weeds including Bramble, Buttercup and Broad-leaved Dock, however, the majority of the grassland is of low-quality Rye grassland. This compartment slopes south and west towards the watercourse and Rocky Lane. In proximity to the edge of the compound fence there is a slight embankment to the railway track level which is within a shallow cutting.

The embankment is currently not being used for agricultural purposes, and includes a metal boundary fence, mature trees, hedgerow and dense scrub.

There were no records or evidence of invasive plant species Himalayan Balsam, especially within the central grassland area where the compound is proposed. There was no evidence of Giant Hogweed, Ragwort or Creeping Thistle in the proposed compound area or on the railway embankment. There was no Japanese Knotweed recorded in the proposed compound area or adjacent railway embankment. The compartment 1 area has been improved by seeding with Rye grass but was not being used for agriculture at the time of surveys. The grassland was in poor condition and nutrient rich. Grasses present included Ryegrass, with a moderate percentage of ruderal weeds including Dock and Bramble. Compartment 1 drains towards the south and west, into the watercourse.

To the east, compartment 1 is bounded by mature trees and hedgerows along the railway line embankment. The mature trees and hedgerows are all outside the red line boundary of the proposed compound and will be retained. The hedgerow boundaries are described in more detail in the Haydens Arboriculture Impact Assessment. The hedgerows are based on mineral soils on the edge of a railway cutting embankment. There are no ancient woodland indicator species at the bases including Woodruff or Dogs Mercury on the eastern boundary. This compartment slopes south and west towards Rocky Lane. This area of land is not currently used for grazing or cut for silage. The compartment 1 grassland has been improved by seeding and it was not being used for agriculture at the time of surveys. The grassland was nutrient-rich on the boundaries beneath the hedges. Grasses present included creeping soft grass, fescues and bent grasses. Forbs were rare, but included Creeping Buttercup. This area also supported ruderal weeds including Willow Herb, Common Nettle, Buttercup and Dock.

Photograph 1 Hedgerow 1 adjacent to railway line looking east to crane set down area and proposed access route: Hedgerow is low and contains mainly Hawthorn with scattered Holly, Elder and Hazel- Priority habitat. There is one Oak tree to the north of the proposed compound.



Photograph 2 Hedgerow 1 adjacent to railway line looking south to proposed crane set down area and proposed temporary access route: Hedgerow is low and contains mainly Hawthorn with scattered Holly, Elder and Hazel- Priority habitat.



Photograph 3: Compound area looking northwest- Rye Grassland with ruderal weeds.



Photograph 4: Compound area- Rye Grassland with ruderal weeds. Mature Oak in boundary to be retained.



Target Notes Target Note 1: Photograph 1

Oak tree to be retained. Hawthorn present in a significant percentage within the eastern hedgerow. Refer to Photograph 1. The hedgerow is priority habitat due to its continuous length of more than 20m.

Target Notes Target Note 2: Photograph 2

View of eastern hedgerow priority habitat due to continuous length of more than 20m. During surveys on the 25th November 2024. Birds including Crow, Magpie, Blackbird, Wren, Bluetit and Robin were recorded flying over compartment 1 and along eastern hedgerow boundary with railway line.

Target Notes Target Note 3: Photograph 3.

View of existing poor quality rye grassland.

Target Notes Target Note 4: Photograph 4

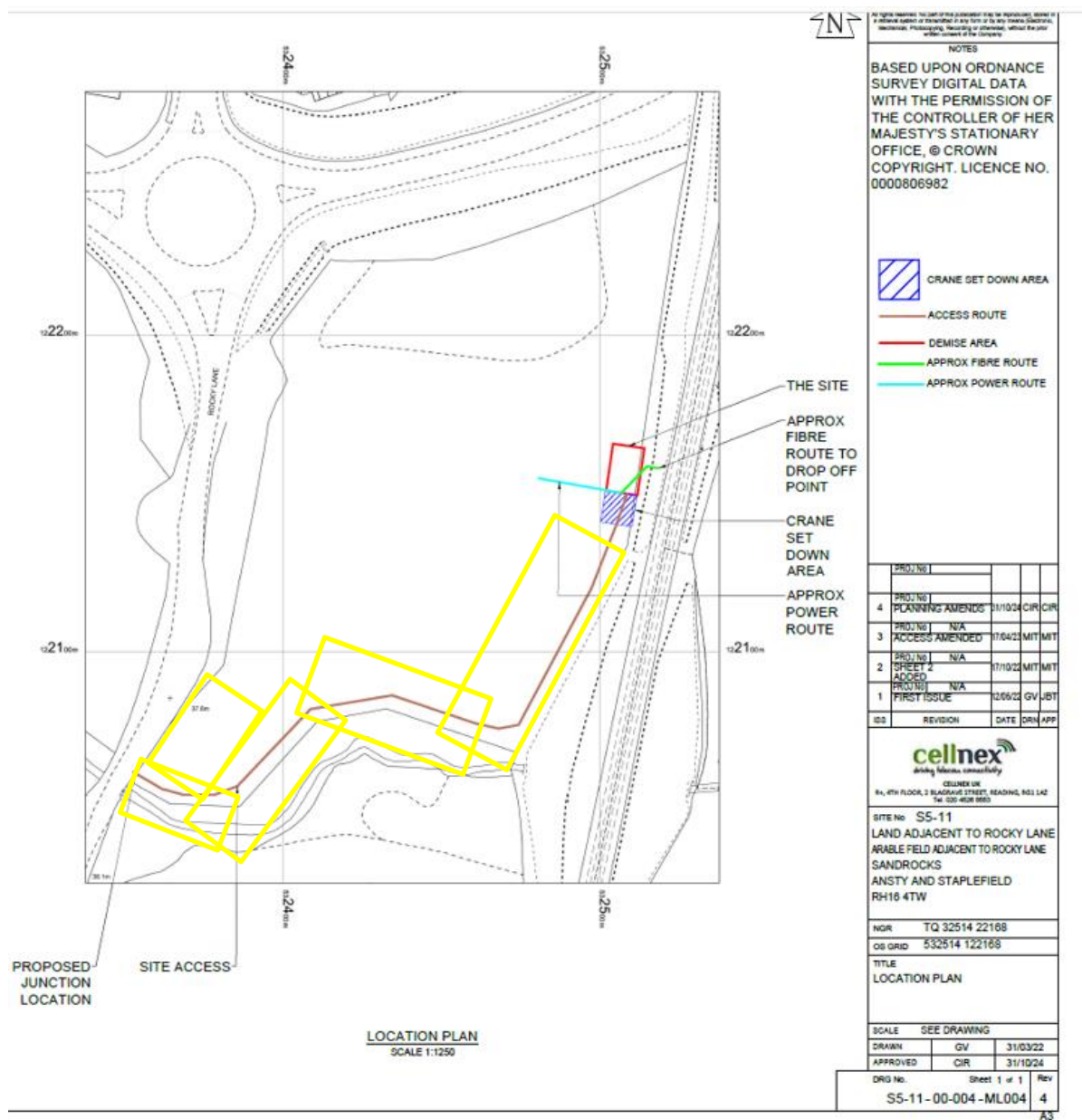
Mature Oak tree present within the eastern hedgerow. Refer to Photograph 4. Hedgerow is priority habitat due to its continuous length of more than 20m. Grassland includes ruderal weeds. Bramble is present on boundaries.

5.2 Compartment 2

Compartment 2 is linear and to the east and south and west is bounded by mature hedgerows. Compartment 2 includes the temporary access route and new entrance leading to Rocky Lane. It is an area of improved grassland on mineral soils and is adjacent to the watercourse and woodland on the southern boundary. There is a mature hedgerow containing trees T1 and T2 adjacent to the proposed entrance. A dead Alder is present outside the red line on the southern boundary. The Alder is not numbered in the AIA report and is adjacent to the watercourse. All live trees are to be retained. The dead Alder is to be removed. Refer to Hayden's Arboriculture Impact Assessment which should be read in conjunction with this survey report. This area denoted as compartment 2 is historically a field used to grow arable crops. This is shown by aerial images on google maps. The field has been re-seeded with Rye grass. Ruderal weeds are present due to the field not being in current agricultural use for grazing or cutting silage. There are moderate amounts of ruderal weeds including Buttercup, Nettles and Broad-leaved dock, however, the majority of the grassland is of low-quality Rye grassland. This compartment slopes south and west towards the watercourse and Rocky Lane. This area of land is currently not being used for agricultural purposes.

There were no records or evidence of invasive plant species Himalayan Balsam, especially within the banks of the watercourse and woodland area. There was no evidence of Ragwort or Creeping Thistle. There was no Japanese Knotweed or Giant Hogweed recorded.

Figure 9- Site survey area as part of Compartment 2 marked by yellow rectangle- 25m buffer included. The area to the east adjacent to the railway line was excluded for health and safety reasons.



Photograph 5: Hedgerow adjacent to railway line looking south along proposed access route to the entrance from Rocky Lane: Hedgerow is low and contains mainly Hawthorn with scattered Holly, Elder and Hazel- Priority habitat. The grassland is ryegrass with ruderal weeds including Nettle, Thistle and Dock.



Photographs 6 and 7: Watercourse on southern boundary. Watercourse is culverted under Rocky Lane and appeared to have poor water quality, as shown.



Photographs 8 and 9: Photograph 8- Western Hedgerow containing mature Oak tree T1 refer to AIA. Mature Oak in boundary with Rocky Lane to be retained. Photograph 9 Southern hedgerow boundary with watercourse.



Target Notes- Target Note 5: Photograph 5

Hawthorn was present in a significant percentage within the eastern hedgerow. Refer to Photograph 5. Hedgerow is priority habitat due to its continuous length of more than 20m. During surveys on the 25th November 2024. Birds including Crow, Magpie, Blackbird, Wren, Bluetit and Robin were recorded flying over this compartment 2 and along hedgerow boundary with railway line.

Target Notes- Target Notes 6 and 7: Photographs 6 and 7

The watercourse outside the site boundary appears to have poor water quality and is culverted.

It was fast flowing on the day of survey.

Target Notes- Target Note 8: Photograph 8

Mature Oak tree present within the western hedgerow. Refer to Photograph 8 and AIA report for condition assessment.

Target Notes- Target Note 9: Photograph 9

This southern boundary hedgerow with the watercourse is outside red line boundary is a priority habitat due to its continuous length of more than 20m. Grassland includes ruderal weeds. Bramble is present on boundaries.

5.3 Assessment of trees for their potential to support bats

A Bat roost potential survey was carried out on the 25th of November 2024 between 2.00 pm and 3.00 pm as part of the walkover survey by Shea O' Neill in accordance with Bat Survey for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines BCT 4th Edition. The weather during the survey was mild (14 degrees) and foggy. It was dry but there had been heavy rain over night. Please refer to the Appendix for Shea O' Neill's experience and training. She is working towards a NE and NRW Bat Licence under the guidance of two licenced bat licence trainers. The certificates of her bat handling training with Neil Middleton a NE level 4 bat licenced handler and trainer is included. She is a member of BCT, Bat Conservation Ireland and the South Lancashire and Cheshire Bat groups. A Bat potential survey of the two mature Oak trees outside the red line boundary was undertaken in the daytime of the 25th November 2024 looking for Bat Roost Features (BRF). A Bat potential survey of the dead Alder tree outside the red line boundary was undertaken in the daytime of the 25th November 2024 looking for Bat Roost Features (BRF). The survey was completed not within the Bat active season 1st May to 30th August. All surveys were completed from the ground during non-active season for Bats without the use of a high lumen torch. Surveys were completed to BCT Guidance 4th Edition without the use of a high lumen torch which could have potentially caused disturbance to Bats.

Compartment 1- There was one tree (Oak not numbered in AIA report) in proximity to compartment one with low potential to support a bat roost (BRP). The mature Oak was healthy and had no obvious cracks or crevices that could potentially support a bat roost. The tree was not covered in Ivy and was adjacent to a busy railway line which means there was disturbance at night and during the day. A high lumen torch was not used to inspect the tree due to its closeness to the railway line and potential disturbance to Bats, if present. There were no signs of urine staining or bat droppings on branches or tree trunk. All surveys were completed from the ground during non-active season for Bats. Surveys were completed to BCT Guidance 4th Edition without the use of a high lumen torch which could have potentially caused disturbance to Bats. The survey was not completed during active Bat season. Trees were not recorded inside the red line boundary of the compound in the Arboriculture Impact Assessment (Hayden's). No trees or hedgerow are to be removed so minimal short-term construction impacts on potential habitats (Oak tree) adjacent to the compound are expected.

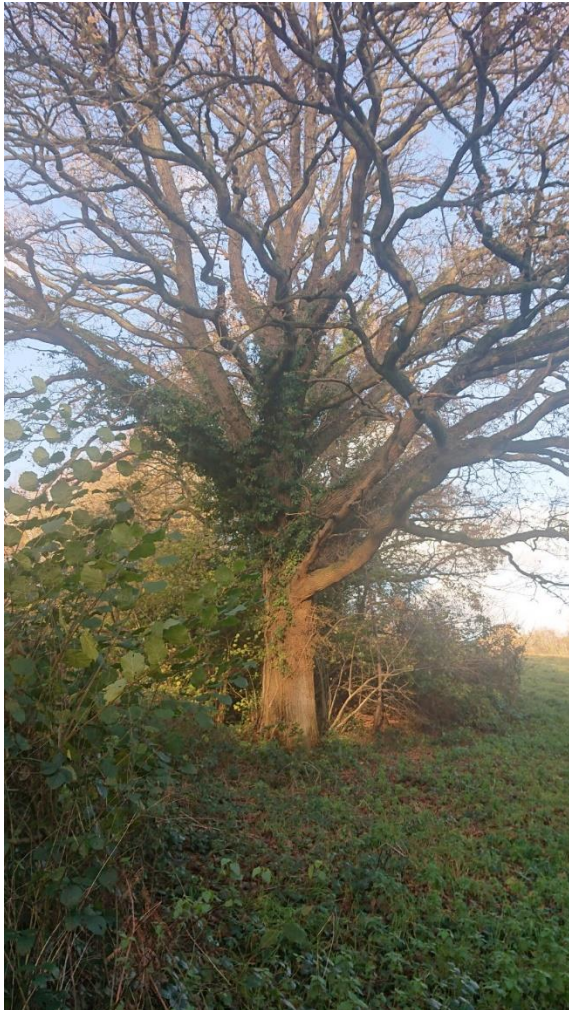
Photographs 10 and 11: Mature Oak with low BRP potential to support a Bat roost.



Compartment 2- There was one tree (Oak not numbered in AIA report) in proximity to new proposed new entrance with low potential to support a bat roost (BRP). The mature Oak was healthy and had no obvious cracks or crevices that could potentially support a bat roost. The tree was not covered in Ivy and was adjacent to a busy road which means there was disturbance at night and during the day. A high lumen torch was not used to inspect the tree T1. There were no signs of urine staining or bat droppings. All surveys were completed from the ground during non-active season for Bats. Surveys were completed to BCT Guidance 4th Edition without the use of a high lumen torch which could have potentially caused disturbance to Bats.

The survey was not completed during active Bat season. Trees were not recorded inside the proposed red line boundary of the new entrance in the Arboriculture Impact Assessment (Hayden's). No live trees or hedgerow are to be removed so minimal short-term construction impacts on potential habitats (Oak tree) are expected. A small section of the RPA of T1 will be impacted, refer to AIA. One dead Alder is to be removed for health and safety reasons at the entrance.

Photograph 12: Mature Oak T1 with moderate BRP potential to support a Bat roost. A small amount of Ivy was present. There were no obvious cracks or splits.



Photographs 13, 14 and 15: Dead Alder in woodland at entrance outside red line boundary with moderate BRP potential to support a Bat roost. BRP moderate due to the spilt in the tree trunk.



5.4 Assessment of trees for their potential to support Bats.

One Oak (T1 AIA report) was identified in the Adapt Environment- Phase 1 Extended Ecology Survey as having moderate Bat Roost Potential on the 25th November 2024. One Oak tree (unnamed AIA report outside red line boundary of compartment one) was identified in the Adapt Environment-Phase 1 Extended Ecology Survey as having low Bat Roost Potential on 25th November 2024. The tree had limited suitable small cracks and crevices. One dead Alder was identified in the Adapt Environment- Phase 1 Extended Ecology Survey. It was assessed as having moderate Bat Roost Potential on the 25th November 2024, during the site walkover survey because there was a split in the trunk. The AIA report is submitted with planning permission and should be read in conjunction with this report. Trees within the hedgerows but outside red line boundary of construction areas are listed below:

- T1 Oak compartment 2 - in proximity to the extended site entrance (AIA) BRP Moderate;
- Oak (not numbered in AIA) compartment 1- mature in proximity to BML mast and compound BRP Low;
- Alder compartment 2 (dead) in proximity to the extended site entrance (not named in AIA) BRP Moderate; and,
- T2 oak was not assessed for BRP because it was not impacted.

Reason for survey

The two live Oak trees in proximity to the proposed site in Compartment 1 and 2 are to be retained and minimal impacts to any potential Bat habitat are expected during construction. The BRP inspection was a precautionary inspection. The one dead Alder in Compartment 2 in proximity to the extended entrance is to be removed. Potential impacts to the potential Bat habitat are expected. The inspection was a precautionary inspection. A mitigation strategy to minimise the risks to a potential bat roost/habitat during the felling and removal of the dead Alder is recommended.

5.5 Nesting Birds

There are trees within the boundary of the grassland area (outside red line boundary) that have suitable habitat for nesting birds. There is mature woodland to the east and south (within 5m) that is outside the red-line boundary and not subject to development. There were no signs of ground-nesting birds in the grassland of compartment 1 or 2.

All nesting birds their eggs and young are protected under the terms of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

5.6 Mammals including Badgers, Pine Marten and Otters.

Nearby habitats to the south within the woodland are rural and suitable for supporting Badgers. Habitats to the north, east and west beyond the hedgerows are not suitable because of the railway line and busy road. The busy Rocky Lane and railway line are barriers to the movement of Badgers. Traffic movements on the A road to the north and west are much higher speed and frequency and more likely to prove a barrier to the movement of Badgers. To the further north and west, the boundary of Haywards Heath is an urban settlement pattern with lower potential to support Badger habitats.

Nearby habitats are rural on the southern boundaries are generally suitable for supporting Badgers. The wet wood land to the south has lesser potential to support habitat suitable for Badgers but was surveyed within 25m buffer of the red line boundary of compartment 1 and 2. The woodland to the south has limited potential to support Badgers but was not surveyed beyond the survey guidelines of a 25m buffer.

No signs of Badgers setts were recorded within the site boundary or within 25 m of the site boundary buffer during the walkover survey on the 25th November 2024. Surveys were carried out where possible within the nearby rural area including the wetter grassland and adjacent hedgerow boundaries to the south within the watercourse and woodland extents. There were no signs of Otter spraint adjacent to the watercourse. The water quality was poor.

In accordance with BS 42020:2013 a buffer area of 25m was surveyed for Badgers outside the red line boundary.

The areas surveyed included:

Within the red line boundary of Compartment 1 and 2;

- Hedgerows and grassland on the eastern boundary 25m outside red line boundary where access was possible and not within the railway embankment boundary;
- Hedgerows and grassland on the western boundary 25m outside red line boundary;
- Hedgerows and grassland on the northern boundary 25m outside red line boundary;
- Hedgerows and grassland on the southern boundary 25m outside red line boundary;

There were no signs of any Badger setts, snuffle holes or signs of foraging within there red line ownership boundary or within 25m buffer of the red line planning application boundary.

No signs of Badgers were recorded in the site boundary or within 25 m buffer of the site boundary during the walk-over survey on the 25th November 2024.

There are low numbers of Pine Martens recorded in Sussex as part of a reintroduction programme within the South Downs National Park. The numbers are small but increasing. Therefore, a check was carried out as a precautionary approach under the understanding that the site was not wooded and the potential was very low. Nearby habitats to the east are rural and wooded and may be suitable for supporting Pine Martens, if present in the area. There is limited connectivity to the larger woods to the west. However, the A road to the west and north are barriers to the safe movement of Pine Martens.

Red squirrels have not been recorded in Sussex since the 1960's. So, no survey was undertaken.

The grassland habitat within the red line boundary of the BML compound without a flowing stream or any suitable scrub cover was an unsuitable habitat for Otters and no evidence was found. The watercourse to the south had limited potential to support a habitat for Otters with moving water. However, the water quality in the watercourse was poor.

No signs of Otters, Pine Martens or Badgers were recorded in the site boundary or within 25 m buffer of the site boundary during surveys on 25th November 2024.

5.7 Amphibians including Smooth and Great Crested Newts

Great Crested Newts are a rare Amphibian found in the UK. Great Crested Newts rely on ponds for breeding but otherwise they spend much of their lives on land. This means that, where Great Crested Newts are present, it is important to conserve both ponds and the surrounding terrestrial habitat. They are most active between February and October inclusive. Between November and January they are much less active, and are often in hibernation.

Some adult Great Crested Newts commence migration to their breeding ponds as early as the first frost-free days in late January, but most move later, with the majority reaching the ponds by mid March. Newts mostly move at night, reducing the risks of predation and desiccation.

Whilst on land and outside of the hibernation period, Great Crested Newts require refuge from extremes of weather, meaning that during the day they will rest in dense vegetation, under refuges, or underground. They will also forage on land, taking a range of invertebrate prey.

Great Crested Newts have been found to move over considerable distances (up to 1.3km from breeding sites). However, the vast majority of Newts will inhabit an area much closer to the pond (within 100m), and the exact distribution and migration patterns of Newts on land depends on a variety of factors. The quality of terrestrial habitat near to breeding ponds is important, as are the lack of barriers to dispersal (such as fast-flowing rivers, or very busy roads). The distribution of ponds and hibernation opportunities may also influence movements, but in general Great Crested Newts commonly move between ponds that are within around 250m of each other

The site within the red line boundary and 25m buffer was checked for Smooth and Great Crested Newts on the following date:

- 25th November 2024.

There are currently no areas of standing water or ponds on the site suitable for supporting breeding Amphibians including Smooth or Great Crested Newts. The site is sloping. There is a fast flowing watercourse with poor water quality outside the site boundary, but this feature is considered to have negligible potential for supporting breeding Amphibians due to the fast flowing water levels and adjacent culvert. The water appeared to be poor quality with low oxygen levels. This watercourse is outside the red line boundary, but within the 25m buffer. Fast flowing watercourses act as a barrier to the movement of Newts and other Amphibians.

No evidence of Amphibians including Smooth or Great Crested Newts was recorded on the site during the walkover surveys on the 25th November 2024.

5.8 Invasive Species

Invasive plant species, including Himalayan Balsam, Japanese Knotweed and Ragwort, were not recorded on the site, during the site visit on the 25th November 2024.

5.9 Reptiles

Generally, the grassed areas in Compartment one (base of hedge) and two were considered to have negligible potential to support Reptiles. Records of Reptiles are very scarce in the area. Reptiles can therefore be regarded as reasonably absent.

5.10 Birds (feeding)

Blackbirds, Blue-Tits and Robin were all recorded flying over hedgerows during the field surveys on the 25th November 2024. There is bird nesting habitat on the site boundaries of compartment 1 and 2. There is low potential for ground nesting birds due to the open nature of the grassland within the red line boundary. There were no breeding birds on site in the hedgerows at the time of surveys because the survey was completed outside active breeding season. The site was checked for evidence of ground-nesting birds and none were observed. Trees and hedgerows outside the red line boundary are high quality habitat for nesting birds and will be retained.

5.11 Invertebrates

Invertebrates including Honey Bee, Wasp, Horse Fly and Gnat were recorded on the survey dates on the 25th November 2024. The survey day was mild and foggy on the 25th November 2024. Invertebrates were recorded in low numbers because of the low temperatures.

5.12 Habitats and Flora

Habitats and flora on the grassland site were considered to be unremarkable and common in the area. There were trees and high-quality mature hedgerows within the southern and western hedgerow. Full plant species lists are recorded in Appendix 1. The mature trees within the hedgerows outside the red line boundary will have local nature conservation value and these features will be retained and not subject to development.

6.0 Impacts of the development

6.1 Impacts on designated sites

The development proposal will not directly affect any designated nature conservation sites including the closest SSSI's and LNR woodland due, to distance of more than 2 km.

6.2 Impacts on habitats

There are no live trees on-site to be removed. The development proposal involves the construction of a BML mast within a fenced compound, widening the existing entrance onto Rocky Lane, and a temporary access track. The improved grassland has a low habitat value. There is no proposal to remove any of the live trees on the southern boundary (outside the red line) or hedgerows on the western boundary (outside the red line). A small section of the RPA of T1 will be impacted by the widening of the existing entrance. Please refer to the AIA for further information. One dead Alder will be removed and the impacts on habitats for bats are discussed elsewhere. The BRP was assessed as moderate. Depending on the works programmed, (estimated) to start in May 2026, the dead Alder tree will be removed in dormant bat season and before bird breeding starts in March. If the project programme changes for any reason and the dead Alder tree needs to be removed during bat active or bird breeding season then the felling of the dead tree by the tree surgeon will be supervised by an Ecologist (MCIEEM) with a Natural England Level 2 Bat license with experience of handling bats. The tree will be inspected for signs of a bat roost or a single bat roosting in the spilt trunk one day prior to the proposed tree felling. If bat/s roosting are found not to be present in the spilt trunk, then works would proceed as planned under supervision by the SQE Ecologist holding a NE Level 2 license to disturb Bats. If a bat/s are found to be present roosting in the dead tree, then works will be delayed and a NE Bat license will be sought. The works to remove the dead tree would then proceed under the conditions of the NE bat license with supervision by the Ecologist, holding a Level 2 NE license to disturb and handle bats.

Boundary landscape planting (trees outside the red line boundary within boundary hedgerows) have local ecological value and the retention of these trees are recommended. It is possible to retain and protect the trees and hedgerows during the construction and operation of the development.

6.3 Impacts on important species

There are no live trees to be removed on site. All live trees T1-T2 and unnamed Oak are to be retained. One dead Alder is to be removed. The proposed development will not have any significant effects on any protected species. The assessment of the three trees located outside the red line boundary for their BRP as a precaution was completed. A mitigation strategy for the removal of the dead Alder is recommended. There were no signs of Badgers, Pine Martens, Reptiles, Otters or Amphibians including Smooth and Great Crested Newts within the red line boundary and 25 m buffer. Trees (live) south of the site are not proposed for removal and are all outside the red-line boundary. These trees and the southern hedgerow are not impacted by the development. Given the extent of alternative suitable habitats nearby that bats can use for feeding, the loss of a small area of grassland to the development will have no effect on the conservation status of local bat populations. There are extensive alternative habitats nearby, such that the loss of some small areas of grassland under the proposed BML mast and compound and new entrance area will not be significant.

It is proposed to make the surfacing at the new entrance porous to reduce impacts. Refer to proposed layout drawings.

Potential harm to any ground nesting birds can be avoided by carrying out any grassland vegetation clearance necessary to facilitate the scheme outside of the optimum period for bird nesting (March to August inclusive).

The potential for the presence of ground-nesting birds is very limited. There were no signs of breeding birds in the hedgerows, however the site survey was undertaken out of breeding season. The hedgerows have high potential to be used by birds during the breeding seasons. No live trees or hedgerows are planned for removal. Potential harm to any ground nesting birds can be avoided by carrying out any grassland vegetation clearance necessary to facilitate the scheme outside of the optimum period for bird nesting (March to August inclusive). One dead Alder is planned for removal. Under the current development programme this is planned outside bird breeding season under the supervision of an Ecologist MCIEEM. If the programme changed and the dead Alder requires removal inside bird breeding season, a breeding bird and nest check of the dead Alder will be completed one day before felling by an Ecologist MCIEEM. Potential harm to birds can be avoided by carrying out any grassland vegetation clearance necessary to facilitate the scheme outside of the optimum period for bird nesting (March to August inclusive).

7.0 Conclusions and Recommendations

There are no apparent significant or substantive ecological constraints to the planned development.

There were no signs of Bats, Reptiles, Pine Martens, Badgers or Amphibians including Smooth and Great Crested Newts within the red line boundary or 25m buffer. There were no signs of breeding birds in the hedgerows on the 24th November 2024. Survey walkover was completed out of the breeding season. The hedgerows will support bird nests during active breeding season.

The proposed development will not affect any sites designated for their ecological value and will not cause harm to any specially protected or priority species. The development will not affect any important or priority habitats.

All live trees within the boundary hedgerows (outside the red line boundary) should be retained and protected during construction works and incorporated. The hedgerow to the south (outside red line boundary) are not affected by development. One dead Alder is proposed for removal.

Vegetation grassland clearance should take place outside of the optimum period for bird nesting (March to August inclusive).

Protection of wildlife (general)

The following recommendations will help to avoid harm to wildlife in general -
Initial grassland clearance work should be sensitively timed.

At the outset, there is to be careful and controlled removal of all debris within the development footprint. Soil removal will be limited. Soil will be retained onsite for re-use within grass reinstatement areas. In the unlikely event that any Amphibians (excluding Great Crested Newts), Hedgehogs or small Mammals are found, they are to be carefully captured using gloved hands and placed at the base of shrubs and trees just outside the site boundaries where the trees provide some shelter and connectivity.

In the unlikely event that any Great Crested Newts or Bats are found during works, all works should stop and an appropriately qualified ecological consultant should be consulted for advice and next steps. Limited new fencing is proposed around the compound. Close boarded fences with concrete bases, or any fences that meet with the ground are barriers to animal movement will not be used as inappropriate within the rural area. Where possible there is to be a 5 – 10cm gap between any fence base and the ground (greater in some locations and less in others is not a problem). This is so that the site is permeable to wildlife such as Hedgehogs. Outdoor lighting is typically a deterrent to nocturnal wildlife, particularly bats and is not proposed to be used onsite. No new planting is proposed because BNG habitat units will be purchased offsite. Grass will be used to reinstate embankments and compound edges where required.

APPENDIX 1 SPECIES LISTS

Plants

Common Name	Scientific Name
Oak	
Alder	
Elder	
Foxglove	<i>Digitalis purpurea</i>
Bramble	<i>Rubus fruticosus</i>
Broad-leaved Dock	<i>Rumex obtusifolius</i>
Cleavers	<i>Galium aparine</i>
Clover	<i>Trifolium pratense</i>
Common bent grass	<i>Agrostis capillaris</i>
Common nettle	<i>Urtica dioica</i>
Hazel	
Couch grass	<i>Elitrigia repens</i>
Creeping buttercup	<i>Ranunculus repens</i>
Creeping soft grass	<i>Holcus mollis</i>
Sycamore	
Daisy	<i>Bellis perennis</i>
False oat grass	<i>Arrhenatherum elatius</i>
Fescue sp	<i>Festuca sp.</i>
Foxglove	<i>Digitalis purpurea</i>
Hawkbait sp	<i>Leontodon autumnalis</i>
Hawkweed	<i>Hieracium sp.</i>
Hedge Bindweed	<i>Calystegia sepium</i>
Meadow buttercup	<i>Ranunculus acris</i>
Meadow vetchling	<i>Lathyrus pratensis</i>
Meadowsweet	<i>Filipendula ulmaria</i>
Perennial Rye Grass	<i>Lolium perenne</i>
Pineappleweed	<i>Matricaria discoidea</i>
Red dead nettle	<i>Lamium purpureum</i>
Redshank	<i>Persicaria maculosa</i>
Ribwort Plantain	<i>Plantago lanceolata</i>
Rosebay Willowherb	<i>Chaemerion angustifolia</i>
Silverweed	<i>Potentilla anserina</i>
Sow Thistle	<i>Sonchus arvensis</i>
Spear thistle	<i>Cirsium vulgare</i>
Timothy	<i>Phleum pratense</i>
Willowherb sp	<i>Epilobium montanum</i>

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SPECIES LIST – Birds

Common Name	Scientific Name
Blue tit	<i>Aegithalos caudatus</i>
Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>
Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>

SPECIES LIST – INVERTEBRATES

Common Name	Scientific Name
Wasp	
Honey Bee	
Gnat	

SPECIES LIST – MAMMALS

Common Name	Scientific name

APPENDIX 2 QUALIFICATION AND EXPERIENCE OF ECOLOGISTS

One suitably qualified and experienced Ecologist carried out the surveys of the site (Shea O'Neill). A further Ecologist is insured to survey on behalf of Adapt Environment. The qualifications and experience of these Ecologists are outlined in the survey report.

The two Ecologists insured to work on behalf of Adapt Environment Ltd are:

- Mrs Shea O'Neill Director of Adapt Environment Ltd.
Qualifications Bachelor of Arts Honours Degree (BA Hons) in Landscape Architecture from Manchester Metropolitan University.
Post graduate Diploma in Landscape Architecture (DIP LA) from Manchester Metropolitan University.
Chartered Landscape Architect – registered with Landscape Institute CMLI.
Member of Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management MCIEEM.

- Mr Derek Richardson Principal Ecologist.
Qualifications Bachelor of Science Hons Degree (Bsc Hons) in Ecology from Oxford Brookes University.
Master of Philosophy in Plant Sciences (Mphil) from Newcastle University.

Shea O'Neill is working towards her Level 1 and Level 2 NE and NRW licences under the supervision of two licenced bat trainers Jim Mulholland and Sean Shereston. She has undertaken training in Bat surveying, use of a torch, hand netting, use of an endoscope, BRP assessment of trees and buildings and Bat handling with Neil Middleton Batability, NE Bat licence holder level 4 trainer and Sue Searle licenced trainer Ecology Training UK, Richard Compton Team Bat Licenced Bat trainer and Steve Parker licenced Bat trainer South Lancashire Bat Group. A sample of her completed training certificates are included below.



Overview of Course Content: 20th to 21st May 2025

2 dusk trapping/handling sessions
5 roost visits
1 online classroom session
Handling techniques relating to the identification of bats in the hand
Use of hand nets / Use of endoscopes
Use of supplementary equipment
Extraction, processing & release of bats
Licensing considerations
Health & Safety considerations
Harp trapping/Mist Netting (demonstration only)

Roost visits (5) for this event as follows:
Myotis nattereri / *M. mystacinus*
Plecotus auritus / *Pipistrellus pygmaeus*

Species caught & handled (4) during this event as follows:
Pipistrellus pipistrellus / *P. pygmaeus*
Myotis nattereri / *M. daubentonii*

Important Note

Attending this course in isolation, without any other practical training, would not be deemed as being enough training/experience to enable a person to apply for or receive a bat licence.

About Neil Middleton (Lead Trainer)

Substantial experience in business management, consultancy, people development, training and skills associated with running SME businesses. As well as being the owner and managing director of BatAbility Courses & Tuition, Neil also owns Time For Bespoke Solutions Ltd. In the past Neil was the founder and MD of Echoes Ecology Ltd, and has also been a Scottish Natural Heritage Bat Case Officer.

NatureScot licensed bat worker and trainer. Also holds Natural England (NE) bat licences (Class 1, Class 2, Class 3 and Class 4). Neil has also held, as/when appropriate, bat training licences from Natural England (NE), Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) and National Parks & Wildlife Service (NPWS), Ireland.

A total of 457 training events (4,885 attendees) (as at 31.12.24) designed and delivered across a wide range of customer types and industry sectors, including training workshops/courses covering a variety of subjects to the Bat Conservation Trust's National and Regional Conferences, as well as for NatureScot, Northern Ireland Environment Agency, The National Trust, The National Trust for Scotland, Wildlife Acoustics (USA) and >100 ecological consultancies operating in the UK, Ireland and further afield.

Beyond the UK, Neil has delivered bat training to delegates carrying out research, or working in, the Republic of Ireland, Channel Islands, UAE, USA, East Africa, Malta, Spain, France, The Netherlands, Norway, Denmark, Sweden, South Korea, Turkey and Cyprus.

For more information email: neil.middleton@batability.co.uk

BatAbility Courses & Tuition
www.batability.co.uk

46 Union Place, Brightons, Scotland, FK2 0FH

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**Big Bats or Bust
Training Course**

01st to 02nd September 2025

Trainers: Neil Middleton / Aaron Middleton

Course Content / Important Information: See back of certificate

NTS Threave Estate & Gardens
Dumfries & Galloway, Scotland



Certificate of Course Completion

Shea O'Neill

Signed & Dated by Lead Trainer



Neil Middleton ACIEEM
03.09.2025

BatAbility Courses & Tuition
www.batability.co.uk

46 Union Place, Brightons, Scotland FK2 0FH

Overview of Course Content: 01st to 02nd September 2025

*2 dusk trapping/handling sessions
4 roost visits*

Handling techniques relating to the identification of bats in the hand

*Use of supplementary equipment
Extraction, processing & release of bats
Harp trapping/Mist Netting (demonstration only)*

Roost visits (4) for this event as follows:

Nyctalus noctula / Myotis mystacinus

Plecotus auritus / Pipistrellus pygmaeus

Species caught & handled (6) during this event as follows:

Nyctalus noctula / N. leisleri / Pipistrellus pygmaeus

Myotis mystacinus / M. nattereri / Plecotus auritus

Important Note

Attending this course in isolation, without any other practical training, would not be deemed as being enough training/experience to enable a person to apply for or receive a bat licence.

About Neil Middleton (Lead Trainer)

Substantial experience in business management, consultancy, people development, training and skills associated with running SME businesses. As well as being the owner and managing director of BatAbility Courses & Tuition, Neil also owns Time For Bespoke Solutions Ltd. In the past Neil was the founder and MD of Echoes Ecology Ltd, and has also been a Scottish Natural Heritage Bat Case Officer.

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Beyond the UK, Neil has delivered bat training to delegates carrying out research, or working in, the Republic of Ireland, Channel Islands, UAE, USA, East Africa, Malta, Spain, France, The Netherlands, Norway, Denmark, Sweden, South Korea, Turkey and Cyprus.

For more information email: neil.middleton@batability.co.uk

BatAbility Courses & Tuition
www.batability.co.uk

46 Union Place, Brighton, Scotland, FK2 0FH

**Experience with the application of the NVC and plant communities including Phase 1 Surveys – Derek Richardson
Ecologist insured to work on behalf of Adapt Environment.**

I hold a BSc Hons degree in Ecology and an MPhil in plant sciences. I have worked as a professional ecologist for 25 years and I am currently the Principal Ecologist of the Greater Manchester Ecology Unit (GMEU), in addition to working as a Principal Ecologist with Adapt Environment Ltd.

I first received training in the use of the NVC from botanist and ecologist Peter Gateley in 2000, including field surveys of woodlands and grasslands in Cheshire. Peter was a member of the BSBI's training and education committee. The training was applied to the preparation of management plans for nature reserves and designated nature conservation sites across Cheshire (using the NVC to set 'target NVC communities' and to direct site management towards these target plant communities).

From 2001-2003 I worked with John Rodwell on the application of the NVC to the development of an Ecological Network in Cheshire (the Cheshire EcoNet LIFE project).

With Natural England, I helped to survey Flaxmere Moss SSSI in Cheshire to NVC standards. The surveys were subsequently used to help to restore this lowland raised bog to become an active bog.

I advised and oversaw the restoration of a lowland raised bog at Acornfield Plantation Local Nature reserve in Knowsley, UK, part of the former Simonswood Moss complex.

As part of my work with the Greater Manchester Ecology Unit (GMEU) I survey sites for possible designation as Sites of Biological Importance (SBIs) in Greater Manchester. These surveys involve the use of the NVC to identify notable and important plant communities, and include both lowland and upland peatlands (blanket mires, raised mires, valley mires, heaths and fens).

I have presented expert witness advice to several planning public inquiries for developments on peat substrates, including evidence on whether or not plant communities on peat represent active mire communities and/or priority habitats, or are capable of restoration. These have included work on inland wind turbine arrays on upland peat in the South Pennines (at Scout Moor, Crook Hill and Reaps Moss), and a major inquiry which halted peat extraction on lowland mire sites on Chat Moss in Greater Manchester. I oversaw and directed the work on Crook Hill to restore peatland habitats following construction of the wind turbine array.

I have recently (2020-21) been involved in surveying and assessing planned new developments on peat substrates on behalf of local planning authorities (a planned new motorway service station on the M62 in Warrington on lowland peat and a planned solar array on upland peat in Burnley).

I am a member of the Scout Moor Wind Farm Habitat Enhancement Fund Grant Panel ([Scout Moor Habitat Enhancement Fund \(gmwildlife.org.uk\)](https://gmwildlife.org.uk)). I am an expert advisor on the Panel with regards to projects aimed at restoring upland habitats on peat.

I have been actively involved for some years in the long-term multi-partner Carbon Landscape Project, aimed at restoring lowland peatland habitats on Chat Moss in Salford, Wigan and Warrington in North West England ([Home Page | Carbon Landscapes](#)).

I am currently an advisor to Rochdale Council on Natural Flood Management Schemes, advising on upland peat restoration to mitigate downstream flooding.

Shea O'Neill BA Hons Landscape Architecture, Post Grad Diploma in Landscape Architecture. Member of CIEEM.

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

Experience-

Head of Landscape- Sefton Met Borough Council 7 years.

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

Projects surveying to NVC/ Phase 2- Most recent

- Monaincha Solar Farm PV on 253 ha of peat substrate and raised bog in Kilrea, County Tipperary - February 2019 to March 2021;
- South Holt Farm site of Telecommunications Mast- Phase 2 of Chalk Grassland July 2021 South Downs National Park, Hampshire;
- Wylds Farm site of Telecommunications Mast- Phase 2 Heathland Site adjacent to SAC May 2021 South Downs National Park;
- Highfield Farm site of Telecommunications Mast- Phase 2 September 2021 South Downs National Park;
- Woodcroft Farm site of Telecommunications Mast- Phase 2 Chalk Grassland adjacent to Ancient Woodland July 2021 South Downs National Park; and,
- Head Down Junction site of Telecommunications Mast- Phase 2 Plantation Woodland adjacent to ancient woodland July 2021 South Downs National Park.

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



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

Monaincha Wind Farm – Solar PV Extension Planning consent.

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



Monaincha Solar PV Farm Co Tipperary 253h

Kilrue Solar PV Farm County Meath

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



Kilrue Solar PV Farm Co Meath 650 ha

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

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

Ballyroe Sub Station and Infrastructure

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

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



Wind Turbines and infrastructure Co Tyrone

Single Wind Turbines on agricultural sites

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

Habitat Restoration – West Tyrone.

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



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

Tourism ECO-Pods-Ancient Woodland Assessment- Co Derry

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



Ancient woodland assessment.

Lancashire Wind Turbine Habitat Restoration

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



Lancashire Wind Turbine Habitat Restoration

Ecological Assessment for replacement dwellings

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

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

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



South Downs National Park 10 number Telecommunications Masts

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

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

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



We are Adapt Environment, a consultancy of Landscape Architects, Ecologists and Planners working together to connect people and place through landscape. Partnered with experienced contractor, Contract Ground Services (CGS), we also design and construct high quality gardens and outdoor spaces for home- owners, nursing homes and schools. We are fully insured and chartered members of the Landscape Institute (LI) and Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM).

Our origins lie in landscape architecture, and this strengthens all the services we offer. For us, landscape is where memories are made and life enjoyed, especially during ongoing lockdowns.

Whether the project is a barn conversion, private garden or a solar/wind renewable energy project, we focus on the needs and hopes of the people affected. By leading with the landscape, and by putting people first, we create better connected, healthier and happier places.

I am Shea O' Neill, Adapt Environment's Director of Planning and Regeneration. As a Landscape Architect and Ecologist with over twenty five years of experience in both the private and public sectors, I have been honing the company's Planning

offer over the past few years to deliver our wide range of Landscape and Ecology services. I have extensive experience of landscape and visual impact assessment and strategic landscape scale studies. I have led LVIA's for numerous infrastructure and onshore wind and solar projects and our team have been involved in supporting a number of these through Public Inquiries.

I take a positive approach to planning and plan-making, working with the development team to secure consents and delivering implementable development schemes. I am passionate about creating urban and rural regeneration solutions that benefit people and wildlife.

SERVICES WE OFFER:

Ecology:

- Phase 1 and Extended Ecology Surveys;
- Bat Surveys- Potential and Emergent for building subject to development and demolition.
- Protected species surveys including Great Crested Newts, Otters and Birds ;
- Badger surveys and mitigation for construction projects ; and,
- Tree Surveys to BS 5837.

Through survey we can identify the potential ecological constraints to a development. Our design team can provide advice and details on how constraints can be mitigated.

Landscape:

- Landscape design and construction drawings;
- Public Realm;
- Private gardens design and construction; and,
- Landscape Visual Impact Assessment LVIA.

Planning:

- Submission of planning applications;
- Environment Statement preparation ;
- Landscape character assessments;
- Discharge of planning conditions ; and,
- Habitat Regulation Assessments HRA.

Contact **07702 916908** | shea.adaptenvironment@outlook.com

[www:adaptenvironment.com](http://www.adaptenvironment.com)

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