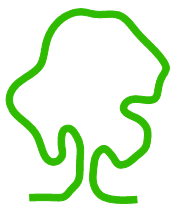


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**LOWER PADDOCK, EAST WOOD FARM, SHAVES WOOD LANE,
ALBOURNE, WEST SUSSEX**

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

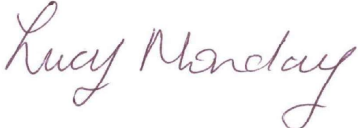
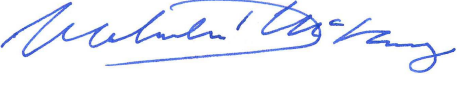
December 2024



eas ltd

Environmental Assessment Services Ltd

REPORT DATA SHEET

Requirement	Data
Report Reference	768/GB/Cullum/EastWoodFarm/LowerPaddock/PEA
Date	December 2024
Client	Mr T Cullum
Report type	Preliminary Ecological Appraisal
Purpose	Submission to Planning
Revisions	N/A
Prepared by	Lucy Monday BSc (Hons), ACIEEM  Signed
Approved by	Eur Ing Malcolm McKemey BSc (Hons), CEng, CEnv, MICE, MIEAust, MCIWEM, MIEnvSc  Signed

MR T CULLUM

**LOWER PADDOCK, EAST WOOD FARM, SHAVES WOOD LANE,
ALBOURNE, WEST SUSSEX**

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MR T CULLUM

**LOWER PADDOCK, EAST WOOD FARM, SHAVES WOOD LANE,
ALBOURNE, WEST SUSSEX**

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

December 2024

NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

Environmental Assessment Services Ltd has been appointed to prepare a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal in relation to the proposed development of a parcel of land at East Wood Farm in Albourne, West Sussex.

The proposed development site (as existing) comprises two former crop fields located within the wider site known as East Wood Farm. The wider site comprises a residential dwelling with surrounding garden, a small barn complex with yard areas, areas of woodland and crop fields, and a series of inline lakes/ponds. It is proposed to develop an equestrian centre with menage and associated infra structure (including a balancing pond and reed bed) within the crop fields located to the east of the inline (one offline) ponds.

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

The assessment comprised consultation with the Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre to obtain records of protected, rare and notable species within 1 km of the site, consultation with Mid Sussex District Council regarding Tree Preservation Orders for trees within and adjacent to the site, and a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (walkover survey) undertaken on 24 July 2024 to identify features of ecological value and the site's likely potential to support protected and other notable species.

Consultation with Mid Sussex District Council has confirmed that there are no trees within or adjacent to the site which are protected by Tree Preservation Orders and the site does not lie within a conservation area. The proposed development area lies immediately outside of the South Downs National Park, however, adjacent land (within the same ownership) including the route of access does lie within the National Park.

Assessment of the site, along with a review of consultation data provided by Sussex Biodiversity Records Centre, found the wider site to be of significant ecological value, however, the proposed development area is generally of lower ecological value.

Protection measures for notable and protected species will be required in relation to the proposed development of the site, and a licence and/or further surveying should be sought/completed in relation to the potential impact on great crested newts. Where compensation and enhancement measures are implemented through design, it is concluded that the ecological functionality of the site may be retained and improved.

MR T CULLUM

LOWER PADDOCK, EAST WOOD FARM, SHAVES WOOD LANE,
ALBOURNE, WEST SUSSEX

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

December 2024

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 The following report, prepared by Environmental Assessment Services Limited, is a preliminary assessment of the baseline status of ecology of a parcel of land at East Wood Farm in Albourne, West Sussex.
- 1.1.2 The site comprises a former crop field located within the wider site known as East Wood Farm. The wider site comprises a residential dwelling with surrounding garden, a small barn complex with yard areas, areas of woodland, crop fields, pasture and a series of inline lakes/ponds (one of which is offline). The Ordnance Survey map reference for the approximate centre of the site is TQ 24735 15006. See Appendix A for the site location and existing site plans.
- 1.1.3 It is proposed to develop an equestrian centre with indoor arena, stables, outdoor arena and covered horse walker, to re-surface the existing track to be used for site access, and to create a balancing / ecology pond, together with associated earthworks and soft landscaping within the crop field located to the east of the ponds. See Appendix B for the proposed site plans.

1.2 Aim of the Report

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

1.3 Legislation

The legislation relevant to this study is:

- i. Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), which transposes into UK law the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (known as the “Bern Convention”) and the Birds Directive 2009.
- ii. The Countryside and Rights of Way Act (CRoW) 2000, which strengthens the legal protection for threatened species.
- iii. The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (NERC) 2006, which through Section 41 provides a list of habitats and species of principal importance for biodiversity conservation (Priority Habitats and Species) in England.
- iv. The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. These consolidate all the various amendments made to the Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994, which transposed the Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora (EC Habitats Directive) into national law.
- v. Protection of Badgers Act 1992, which safeguards both the animals and their setts.
- vi. The Hedgerow Regulations 1997 (made under section 97 of The Environment Act 1995), which make provisions for the protection of important hedgerows.
- vii. National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which makes requirements for the protection and enhancement of biodiversity through the planning system.

1.4 Assessment Method

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

The assessment was undertaken in two stages:

- a) Consultation: comprising data searches by Sussex Biodiversity Records Centre (SxBRC) and Mid Sussex District Council.
- b) Preliminary ecological appraisal (walkover survey) carried out on 24 July 2024 to:

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

2. CONSULTATION AND BASELINE DATA SEARCH

2.1 Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre Data Search

- 2.1.1 Data obtained from Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre (SxBRC) provided information on statutory and non-statutory designated sites and records of protected and notable species within the search area. The search was conducted for a 1 km radius surrounding the Ordnance Survey grid reference TQ 24737 14983. The search area was selected based on the scale and likely impacts of the proposed development.
- 2.1.2 The statutory and non-statutory designated sites identified by SxBRC within 1 km of the site are set out in section 3.2 below, together with an assessment of the potential impact of the proposed development on these sites. Mitigation, where appropriate, is recommended in section 4.
- 2.1.3 Records of protected and rare species within 1 km of the site have been provided by SxBRC. These records are discussed under the protected species headings in Section 3.3 below, together with an assessment of the potential impact of the proposed development on these species. Mitigation, where appropriate, is recommended in section 4.

2.2 Mid Sussex District Council

- 2.2.1 Mid Sussex District Council's TPO (Tree Preservation Order) mapping was used to identify trees subject to TPO and conservation area protection. The site does not lie within a conservation area and there are no trees, groups or woodland subject to a tree preservation order within or immediately adjacent to the site. It is noted that trees within land to the south of the site (which forms part of Wickwoods Country Club) are subject to a planning condition.

3. SITE ASSESSMENT

The Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (walkover survey) was carried out on 24 July 2024. The following is based on the findings of that assessment, together with a review of information provided by the Sussex Biodiversity Records Centre (SxBRC) and Mid Sussex District Council. Photographs taken during the site survey are provided in Appendix C.

3.1 Habitat Assessment

- 3.1.1 The proposed development area is located towards the centre of the wider site known as East Wood Farm. The wider site (identified by the blue line boundary shown on plans provided in Appendix A) comprises a residential dwelling with surrounding garden habitat, areas of woodland and crop fields and a series of inline ponds/lakes, together with a standalone pond on the boundary of the development area.

Proposed Development Area

- 3.1.2 The proposed development area comprises a former crop field, located to the east of the lakes. The field lies on a west facing slope, and is divided by an access track. The track extends east up to a yard area adjacent to Shaves Wood Lane, the proposed site access route (which lies within the South Downs National Park). The track also extends a short distance west of the proposed development area before heading south and then west, where it crosses the inline ponds to provide access to a further crop field and woodland on the western side of the inline lakes/ponds.
- 3.1.3 The crop field to the south of the access track has not been sown this season and currently comprises common weeds including dock, silver weed, sow thistle, buttercup, and mayweed.
- 3.1.4 The crop field to the north of the access track currently comprises three distinct areas including modified grassland, an area of clover and an area of straw.

Pool – immediately adjacent to the proposed development area

- 3.1.5 The proposed development area lies up to the eastern margin of a 'D' shaped pool located within the northwest corner of the southern crop field. The pool and land to the south of the pool (but within the southern crop field) is excluded from the site development area (as shown by the redline boundary on plans provided in Appendix A).
- 3.1.6 Whilst the pool is excluded from the development area, land regrading works are to be undertaken within the immediate vicinity which are considered likely to impact this habitat and the fauna which use this habitat.
- 3.1.7 This pool is used by Canada geese (observed), deer (footprints observed), ducks (observed) and a heron (observed). Water quality appears to be (very) poor, with high turbidity, likely to be a result of faecal matter from high numbers of water fowl. Swarms of water edge flies and one water lily stand covered in flies were noted. No other invertebrate life was observed at this pool. Vegetation is limited to the western edge where trees / shrubs overhang the water. There is no other vegetation within the pool.

Lakes – to the west (outside the redline boundary)

- 3.1.8 There is a row of three inline lakes, and a fourth on land to the north of the site. These lakes support a fish stock.
- 3.1.9 The lake to the north of the site was viewed from within the boundary of the site, which extends along half of the western lake edge. This lake is heavily overshadowed by trees (90% southern end, clearer to north).
- 3.1.10 The northern pond (which is smaller than the water bodies to its north and south) lies to the west of the northern crop field. This pond is fairly narrow, with limited access to the water's edge due to dense vegetation along the banks.
- 3.1.11 The middle lake, which lies to the west of the southern part of the crop field, is the largest within the site (although smaller than the lake to the north of the site). There are dead oak trees within the lake suggesting, at least the southern end, has been artificially flooded. Man-made nesting platforms have been created around the lake and there is a boat house with clay tile roof at the northern end of the lake.
- 3.1.12 The southern most lake, which lies to the southwest of the crop field, is the smallest and is an elevated fishing lake which discharges to a water course south of the site. Crop fields lie either side of this lake and access to the waterside is restricted by dense vegetation.

Target notes (including adjacent habitats):

- Garden pond to the north of the access drive – smooth newt observed.
- Garden pond to the rear (west) of the house – used by a significant number of water fowl.
- Ornamental pond surrounded by tarmac driveway to the front of the dwelling – dominated by lilies.
- Ancient woodland present within the wider site.
- Lakes to the west of the property – fish stock present. Butterflies, dragonflies and damselflies active.
- Pool to the east of the inline lakes – very poor water quality, little vegetation, Canada geese present.
- Bamboo and cherry laurel stands within the woodland adjacent to the dwelling.

3.2 Designated Sites and Priority Habitats

- 3.2.1 Part of the wider site, including the existing dwelling, outbuildings and surrounding garden, together with a plot of woodland to the east and south lies within the South Downs National Park, however, the crop field proposed for development lies

wholly outside the National Park. There are no other statutory or non-statutory sites within 1 km of the study site.

3.2.2 The site has been assessed for its potential to include or be part of (BAP) Priority Habitat as listed on Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (NERC Act).

3.2.3 Section 41 Habitats recorded within 1 km of the site include:

- Deciduous woodland
- Ancient woodland
- Ghyll woodland
- Waterbodies

3.2.4 The wider site includes ancient and deciduous woodland, together with ponds and lakes and a small area of orchard planting (to the northeast of the house).

3.2.5 It is proposed to develop an equestrian centre with menage, together with associated infrastructure across the crop field. The potential impact on adjacent habitats and species associated with those habitats is considered further in section 3 below.

3.3 Protected and Controlled Species

3.3.1 *Trees and Woodland Habitat*

There is no woodland habitat or individual trees within the proposed development area. However, there is ancient woodland to the east and south.

The proposed development is divided from the woodland by a track to the east and is to include a new area of woodland buffer planting to the south of the development area.

St Aubyn Tree Consultancy have been appointed to provide arboricultural advice on the management of the existing woodland and new planting for the protection and enhancement of the existing woodland.

3.3.2 *Plants*

There are a small number of records of protected and/or rare flowering plants within 1 km of the site, including some species associated with arable fields.

The crop field was assessed in July, during peak season for botanical surveying. The field area to the south of the access track was found to support common herbaceous species including bristly oxtongue, white clover, creeping buttercup, creeping thistle, cinquefoil, mayweed, trefoil, greater plantain, medic, and clumps of Yorkshire fog. Grasses were notably sparse. Silverweed, common fleabane and tall flat sedge dominated the area surrounding the 'D' shaped pond. The northern section of the field comprised fewer/ less abundant herbaceous species and a greater dominance of grasses which have been mechanically cut to provide an even

height sward. The northern part of this field included a planted strip of clover and crop to be cut for straw.

No notable plants or plant communities were observed within the former crop fields during the site walkover assessment.

3.3.3 *Invertebrates*

Large blue butterfly, fisher's estuarine moth and lesser whirlpool ramshorn snail are protected under Schedule 2 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. Other protected invertebrates are protected under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

There are records of protected and rare invertebrate species within 1 km of the site including a beetle species (*Atheta liliputana*), four butterflies, three moths, two dragonflies and one grasshopper (woodland grasshopper).

The wider site has potential to support a number of notable invertebrate species and communities associated with ancient woodland, mature trees, grassland and aquatic habitats (ponds and lakes). During the site walkover assessment an abundance of butterflies were noted across the site, and damsel and dragonflies were noted particularly around the lakes to the west of the property.

The crop field is considered to be of lower value for invertebrates compared to the wider habitat, however, the herbaceous 'weeds' that have grown within the ploughed field (bare ground) are likely to provide a nectar source utilised by some invertebrates. As a result of the fields redevelopment there will be some loss of invertebrate habitat which should be compensated for. See section 4.4 below.

3.3.4 *Amphibians*

Great crested newts (GCN) and natterjack toads are fully protected under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and Schedule 2 of The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, making them a European Protected Species. Both the individual and its place of shelter or protection are protected.

There are records of GCN, common toad (a Priority Species), palmate newt, smooth newt and common frog within 1 km of the site. All records are from surveying undertaken at Shaves Wood and Singing Hills Golf Course in 2011. That we are aware, no further amphibian surveying has been undertaken within the area since this time.

In accordance with current best practice, further surveying for GCN is recommended where:

- There are records of GCN in the wider area.
- There is a suitable water body (static or slow-moving water) within 500 m of the proposed development.
- There is suitable terrestrial habitat within 500 m of suitable aquatic habitats.

The site and the surrounding area are considered to have good habitat for amphibian species. There are more than 20 ponds and lakes within 1 km of the site, including the D shaped pool at the site boundary, the adjacent inline lakes/ponds, the two ponds and water features within the garden area to the east.

During the site walkover, a newt (likely palmate) was observed coming up for air within the ornamental pond to the east of the house.

The proposed redevelopment lies within an area considered likely to be used by GCN (and other amphibian species). The proposed development will cause significant ground disturbance during development and may impact newts' ability to move across the site post development.

A licence will be required in this case. This may either be sought through Natural England following further surveying for GCN, or may be obtained under a district licence, for which an application should be made through Nature Space. See section 4.5 below.

3.3.5 *Reptiles*

The more widespread reptiles; grass snake, slow-worm, viviparous lizard and adder, are protected under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 (as amended). It is an offence, amongst other things, to intentionally kill or injure any individual. The more restricted species; sand lizard and smooth snake, are fully protected under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and Schedule 2 of The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, making them European Protected Species.

All four of the more common reptile species have been recorded present within 1 km of the site. It is considered likely that the more common species of reptiles may use the garden area, grassland and marginal land around the wider site. The crop fields are likely to provide varying levels of cover through the season, for some time offering no potential suitable habitat and other times may provide some foraging habitat, when species present within the adjacent habitats may move into the fields.

The proposed redevelopment of the crop fields is not considered likely to have a significant impact on the local reptile population, however, measures to protect reptiles should be implemented and habitat compensation provided through design. See section 4.6 below.

3.3.6 *Birds*

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

There are numerous records for birds recorded within 1 km of the site, including (but not limited) to species which may use cropland as part of their habitat.

The following birds were noted during the site walkover:

- Red kite - observed flying over the woodland area to the west of the site.
- Wren – foraging through the building materials within the yard to the west of the barn complex, east of the proposed development area.
- Cormorant – at the lakes to the west of the site.
- Heron – at the pool and lakes to the west of the site.
- Canada geese – at the pool east of the lakes.
- Mallards – at the garden pond west of the house.

The site, as a whole, is considered likely to be of importance to birds notably in relation to the significant area of ancient woodland, the hay meadow (on the eastern side of Shaves Wood Lane), the lakes, pool and ponds, crop fields and margins.

No birds were observed to be using the cropland during the site walkover assessment; however, birds were noted to be using habitat immediately adjacent to the proposed development area, including the D shaped pool. It is considered likely that the value of the cropland to birds varies through the year, but birds are likely to use the fields to forage.

The proposed development will result in disturbance during development and the loss of some foraging potential, which should be minimised and compensated for. See section 4.7 below.

3.3.7 *Bats*

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

It is illegal to:

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

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

There are records of 10 species of bat including Western Barbastelle, serotine, Daubenton's bat, Whiskered bat, Brandt's bat, Natterer's bat, noctule bat, common and soprano pipistrelle and long-eared bats within 1 km of the site. Habitat within the wider site and surrounding area comprising ancient, deciduous and ghyll woodland, areas of grasslands with treelines connecting to the woodlands,

numerous ponds/lakes and scattered old buildings, are considered to be of high value to bats.

Bat surveying has been completed at the wider site by Batscan and Co-Ecology. Brown long-eared bats, Soprano pipistrelle, common pipistrelle and Myotis bats have been confirmed roosting within buildings on the wider site. It is also considered likely that trees within the wider site are also used for roosting.

It is considered likely that the crop fields form part of the wider habitat used by bats, but they offer no roosting or navigation habitat. The proposed development will result in a reduction of planting area, however, the proposed scheme is to include new planting likely to be of benefit to bats.

In this case, no further surveying is recommended in relation to bats, however, lighting will need to be controlled to avoid impacting bat habitat, and enhancement measures for bats should be included within the design. See section 4.8 below.

3.3.8 *Badgers*

Badgers are protected in the UK under the Protection of Badgers Act, 1992 (as amended). It is an offence, amongst other things, to take, injure or kill a badger, or interfere with a badger sett (this includes intentionally or recklessly disturbing a badger when it is occupying a badger sett). To avoid committing an offence a permit must be obtained to damage, destroy, obstruct or disturb a badger when it is occupying a badger sett.

SxBRC do not disclose records of badgers, however, the wider site and the area surrounding the site is considered to have high potential for badgers.

No evidence of the presence of badgers was observed within or within close proximity to the proposed development area, however, it is considered possible that badgers may be present.

The proposed development will result in a reduction of soft landscaping within the site. Compensation for this loss should be provided with the enhancement of other grassland within the site, which may be used by badgers to forage.

Compensation habitat and standard mitigation for the protection of badgers should be implemented in this case. See section 4.9 below.

3.3.9 *Common/Hazel Dormice*

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

There are records of hazel dormice within 1 km of the site. This species is considered likely to use the ancient, deciduous and ghyll woodland within the area and may use this habitat within the site.

The redevelopment of the cropland within the site is not considered likely to impact dormice or their habitat. All adjacent planting is to be retained and protected and new habitat, together with the improved management of the existing woodland, is likely to be of benefit for this species.

3.3.10 *Other Protected and Notable Species*

Hedgehogs have been recorded within the area and are considered likely to use the wider site. However, hedgehogs are not considered likely to use the crop area and are unlikely to be impacted by the proposed development.

There are no other records of notable species considered likely to be impacted by the proposed development within 1 km of the site.

3.3.11 *Non-native Invasive Species*

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

Sussex Biodiversity Records Centre has records of 10 plant and three animal Schedule 9 species within 1 km of the site.

Cherry laurel stands are growing within the woodland along the northeast boundary of the site, and a stand of bamboo is growing within the treeline along the boundary of Shaves Wood Lane to the east of the house.

Canada geese use the 'D' shaped pool at the western boundary of the proposed development area.

No other non-native invasive species were noted during the site walkover, however, this does not confirm absence. See recommended action in section 4.10.

4. MITIGATION

The preliminary ecological appraisal identified some habitats and features that may be impacted by the proposed development. The following recommendations are given in relation to the proposed development of the equestrian centre, menage and associated infrastructure in the former crop fields.

4.1 **Tree and Woodland Habitat**

All trees, woodland habitat and the area of orchard within the northeast corner of the site are to be retained and protected in accordance with the recommendations given by St Aubyn Tree Consultancy.

4.2 Ponds and Lakes

Protection measures will be required to avoid impacting the ponds and lakes adjacent to the site. The site lies on a west facing slope. The ponds and lakes are likely to be fed by surface water runoff from the proposed development area. It will therefore be necessary to ensure that water quality is not impacted during the redevelopment of the site, and while the site is in use.

Surface water protection measures should be agreed with the Council and implemented during and post development.

Post development, it is considered likely that the redevelopment of the site may result in an improvement of water quality within the 'D' shaped pool immediately adjacent to the development area.

4.3 Planting

The existing planting within the proposed development is considered to offer some foraging potential to a variety of wildlife, including protected and notable species. The proposed development will result in the loss of cropland habitat.

It is proposed to enhance the habitat within the development area to the north and south of the proposed buildings to compensate for this loss. The area to the south is to include a new area of woodland. The area to the north is to comprise permanent pasture.

4.4 Invertebrates

The proposed development will result in a loss of potential invertebrate habitat which should be compensated for. This may be achieved with new planting within the site including meadow species with a high diversity of flowering plants and grasses managed for the benefit of wildlife. This would support the local invertebrate community and other species, such as amphibians and reptiles, also likely to be present.

4.5 Amphibians

There is high potential for GCN to be present. There are currently two options where GCN may be impacted by development. Either licencing through Natural England (for which further surveying will be required to confirm the presence / likely absence and population size of GCN), OR a District Licence may be sought through Nature Space (in association with Mid Sussex District Council). The benefit of a district licence, amongst other things, is that pre-application surveying will not be needed.

Further surveying, for a Natural England Licence would include an assessment of all water bodies within 250 m of the site (in some instances 500 m), plus bottle trapping (or other suitable method) of all suitable ponds during the breeding season to confirm the presence / likely absence of GCN and, where present, ascertain a population estimate in order that the likely impacts of the proposed development may be considered.

We understand that it is the applicants preference to obtain a licence through Nature Space. The application through Nature Space should be made as early as possible, and the preferred route should be agreed with the Council, set up and implemented as appropriate.

4.6 Reptiles

Measures will need to be taken to ensure that no reptiles are harmed during the redevelopment of the site and compensation measures, including a new and/or enhanced habitat suitable for reptiles, should be provided for the benefit of reptiles (and other species).

Prior to development, vegetative cover should be kept low to avoid the gradual improvement of the site which is likely to occur (for a short while) with a lack of management, i.e. cover would increase and reptiles would be able to use the site during the full active season.

Subject to the condition of the site prior to the start of ground clearance works, it may be necessary to install reptile exclusion fencing and remove any reptiles that may be contained within the development area. It is considered that there is ample suitable habitat surrounding the site into which any reptiles which have entered the crop fields, may be returned to.

Additional features for reptiles, such as log piles and buried refugia, may be provided within the recommended compensation habitat, i.e. species rich grassland, to offset and enhance the site for reptiles.

4.7 Birds

Habitat in the form of good quality, species rich grassland should be provided within the site to compensate for the loss of foraging habitat. This habitat should be managed for the benefit of wildlife and should not be turned over to grazing land associated with the equestrian centre.

4.8 Bats

The site supports species considered likely to be sensitive to artificial lighting. Bats, and other species, may be significantly impacted where artificial lighting is installed and used as part of the site's development. Artificial lighting may prevent bats from using foraging and navigational routes which can directly impact the species ability to survive. For this reason, it is recommended that a sensitive lighting plan is designed and approved.

4.9 Badgers

Badger are considered likely to be present within the area and may start to use the habitat close to the proposed development zone at any time. A check of the habitat within 30 m of the proposed development zone should be undertaken for the presence of badger sett/s prior to site clearance. If any badgers have excavated a

sett/s within 30 m of the proposed development area, a disturbance licence may be required before works can commence.

All excavations should be covered overnight to prevent animals becoming trapped and, if excavations are too large to cover, alternative methods of egress should be provided.

4.10 Non-native Invasive Species

All non-native invasive species should be appropriately dealt with to restrict their spread into the wild. This should include the removal of bamboo and cherry laurel, as noted within the woodland to the east and north of the dwelling.

All non-native plant material should be removed from site.

4.11 Other Protected and Notable Species

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

5. ENHANCEMENT

Some ecological enhancement should be included within the development scheme to secure biodiversity improvement beyond that of the existing (pre-developed) site.

5.1 Planting

Planting should be used to enhance the ecological value of the site. Planting should be sensitive to the site's location. Native planting should be used and the use of species known to spread, including schedule 9 non-native invasive species and Sussex invasive species, which include cherry laurel, should not be included within the planting scheme for the site.

A planting scheme and long-term management plan should be prepared and approved by the Council.

5.2 Bats

Roosting provisions for bats should be incorporated within the new buildings. This should include provision for species such as long-eared bats that require a flight loft to warm up before emerging, as well as features for crevice dwelling bats such as roosting bricks and tile sets to be built into the fabric of the building.

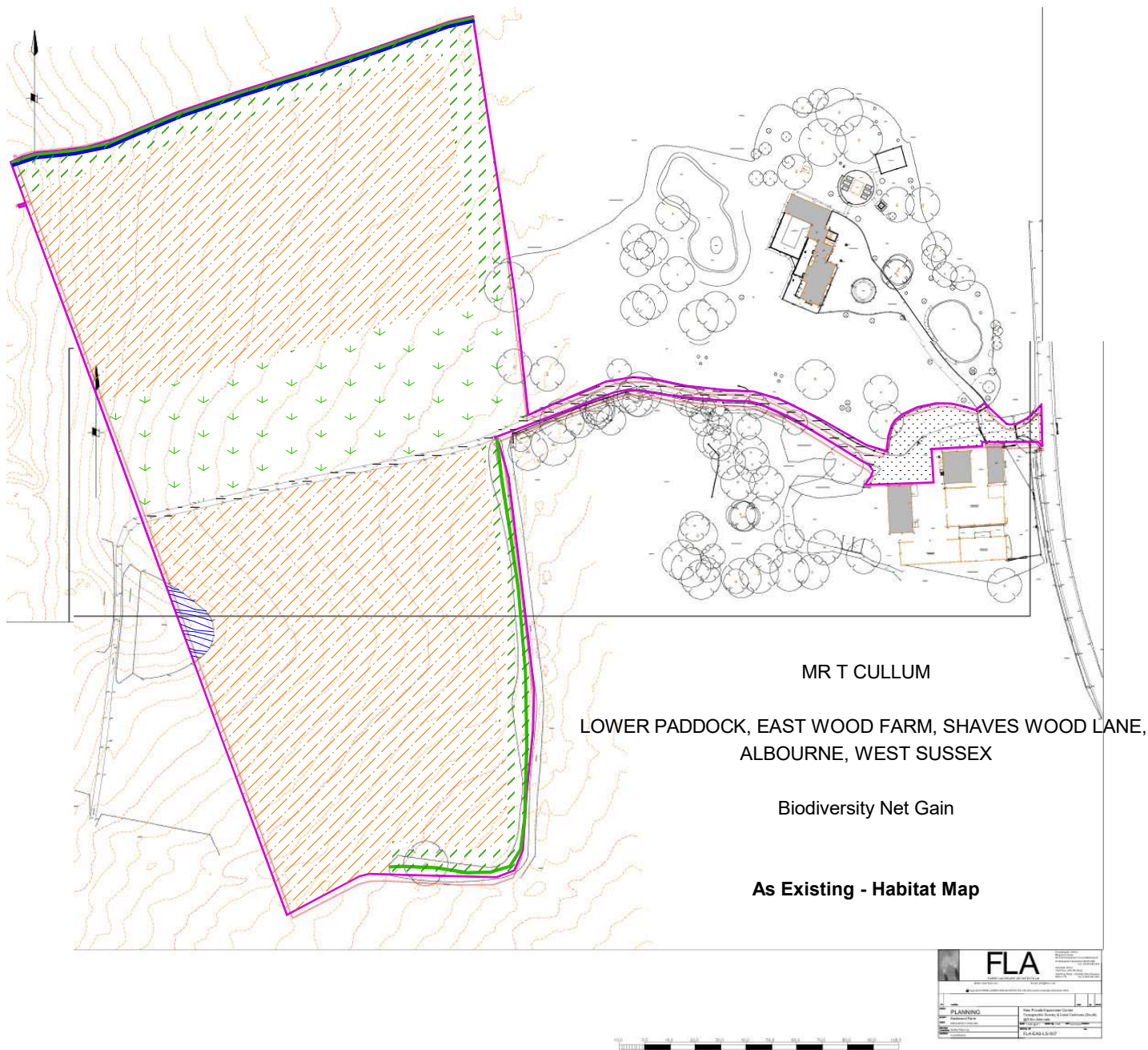
6. CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 The proposed development area lies immediately adjacent to the South Downs National Park, and Priority Habitat including ancient woodland and waterbodies which may support notable and protected species including, but not limited to great crested newts, birds and bats, may be affected by the proposed development, where appropriate mitigation is not implemented.
- 6.2 It is proposed to develop an equestrian centre, menage and associate infrastructure on the disused cropland located towards the centre of the wider site. This habitat is considered to be of lower ecological value to that of the wider site. Whilst the proposed development will result in the loss of a low distinctiveness habitat, protection and compensation measures will still be required.
- 6.3 Further surveying and/or a District Licence should be secured in relation to the potential impacts of the proposed development on great crested newts. In addition to this, recommendations have been made for the protection of reptiles, birds, bats and badgers, and for the enhancement of the site for these species and others including invertebrates.
- 6.4 A planting schedule, which is both sensitive to the site's location (avoiding the use of invasive species which may degrade adjacent habitats) and which will deliver distinctive, species rich habitat that will benefit local wildlife, should be prepared and agreed by the Council. A management plan should also be prepared for the long-term management of new and enhanced habitats for the benefit of wildlife.

☆☆☆☆☆☆

APPENDIX A

Site Location and Existing Site Plans



Developed Land: Sealed Surface

Area = 1126.16



Non cereal crops

Area = 32991.47



Artificially unvegetated: Unsealed Survey

Area = 1050.07



Temporary grass and clover leys

Area = 8167.33



Pond: Non-priority

Area = 265.24



Arable field margin

Area = 5460.68

APPENDIX B

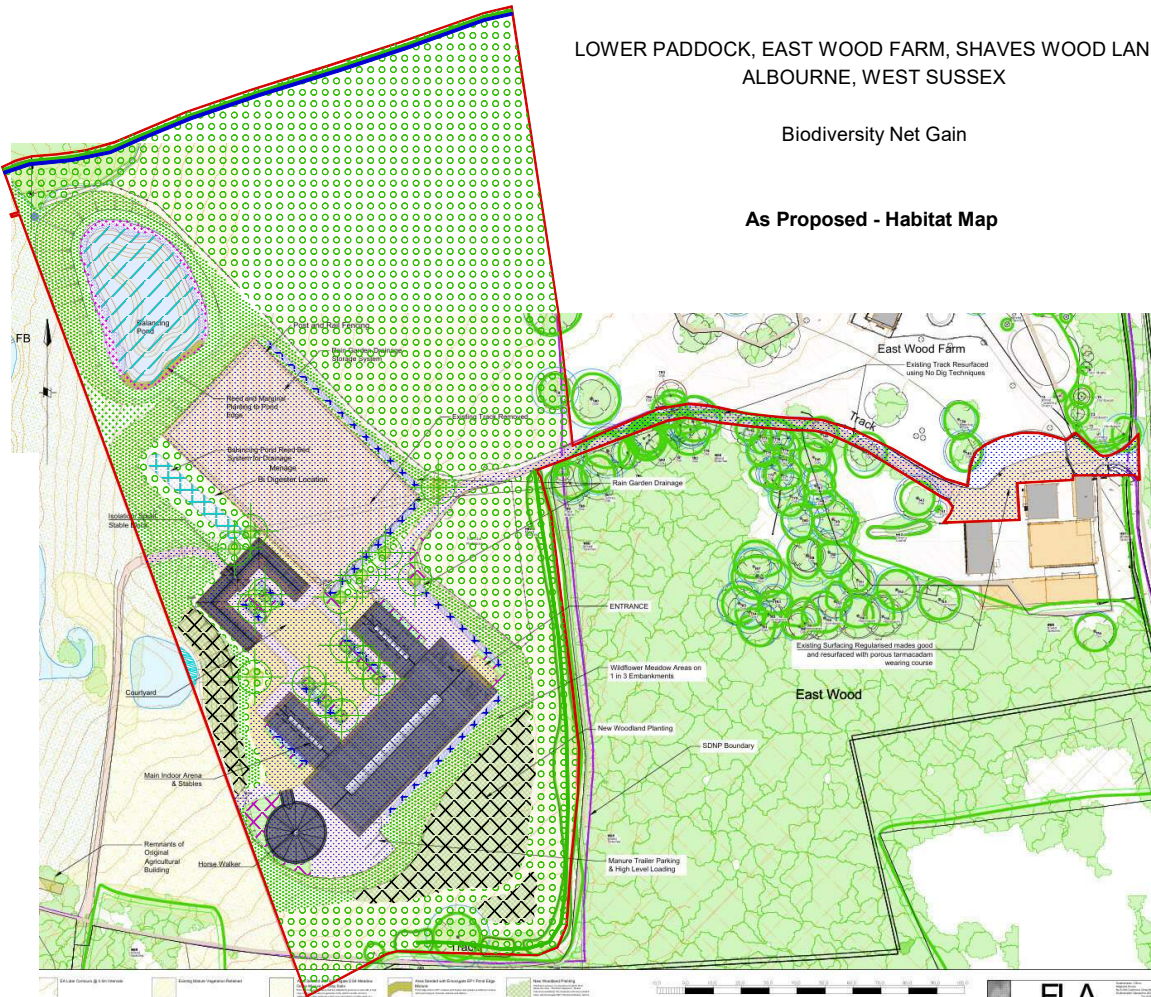
Proposed Site Plans

MR T CULLUM

LOWER PADDOCK, EAST WOOD FARM, SHAVES WOOD LANE,
ALBOURNE, WEST SUSSEX

Biodiversity Net Gain

As Proposed - Habitat Map



Habitats:

Ground level planters (Native and Orn. shrubs & ground cover)

Area = 451.7 m2

Rain Garden

Area = 527 m2

SuDS - Bioswale / Reed bed

Area = 235 m2

Balancing pond

Area = 1642.4 m2

Existing pond (retained and enhanced)

Area = 43.4 m2

Rural trees - Small - No. 16

Grassland (EM4 Meadow Mix)

Area = 11619.7 m2

Grassland (EG4 - grass only)

Area = 18359.46

Grassland (existing retained)

Area = 255.2 m2

Grassland (marginal mix)

Area = 292.2 m2

Woodland Planting (Mixed deciduous)

Area = 2862.5 m2

Developed Land: Sealed surface

Area = 13022.5 m2

Linear Features:

Native Hedgerow with associated ditch and hedgerow trees
Length = 191.31m

Native Hedgerow
Length = 218.51 m

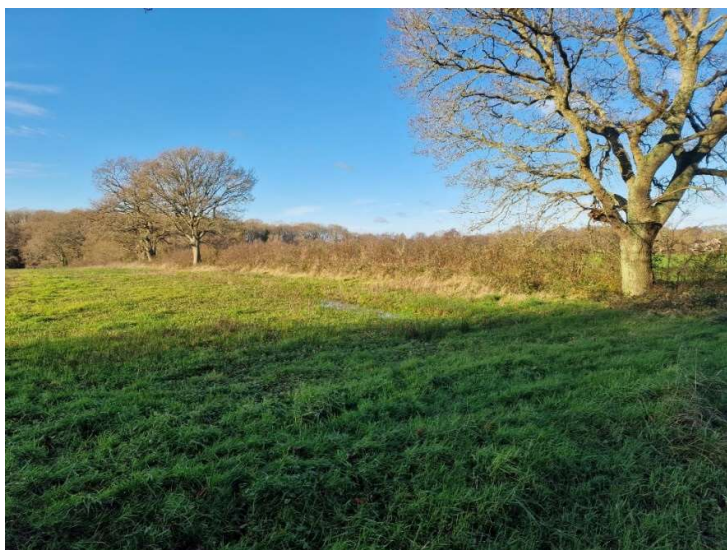
APPENDIX C

Photographs



Photograph 1:

Eastern boundary of the northern field.



Photograph 2:

Hedgerow along the northern boundary of the northern field.



Photograph 3:

Ditch associated with the hedgerow situated along the northern boundary of the northern field.



Photograph 4:

Access track which extends from the entrance to Eastwood Farm to the west.



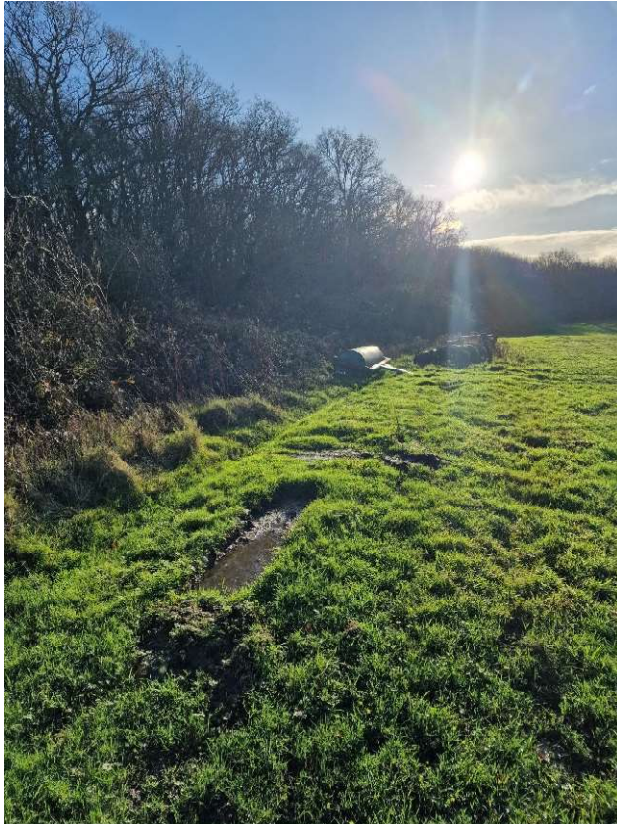
Photograph 5:

Southern section of the field looking southwest from the northeast corner.



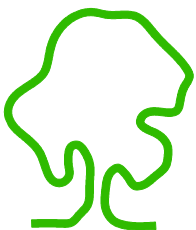
Photograph 6:

'D' shaped pond situated to the west of the southern section of the field.



Photograph 7:

Hedgerow along the eastern boundary
of the southern section of the field.



eas ltd

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