

COYNE ENVIRONMENTAL LTD

**Parkfield Farm
Hophurst Lane
Crawley Downs
RH10 4LN**



Ecological Report

April 2025

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INTRODUCTION

Coyne Environmental Ltd has been instructed by Squires Planning Ltd to provide ecological advice for a proposed new warehouse with parking for Croydon Fireplaces, at Parkfield Farm, Hophurst Lane, Crawley Down, RH10 4LN. A planning application will be submitted to Mid Sussex District Council (MSDC) and the client has already obtained ecological advice from another ecological consultant. Coyne Environmental Ltd will review these and produce a Landscape Proposal to incorporate the required mitigation.

The BNG metric has achieved a **23.46%** habitat net gain requiring the following enhancements:

- **29m²** mixed copse of field maple, hazel, hornbeam, hawthorn, guelder rose
- **3no** native trees of whitebeam, gean, hawthorn
- **484m²** wildflower meadows from Emorsgate, mix EM10

The client has now a proposed location for the mandatory mitigation. This will be set out in a landscape design this Report along with a specification.



From the analysis of this study, it will be possible to review the ecological assessments, to ascertain what measures are needed to achieve a satisfactory environmental result for the site. This should enable MSDC to consider the impact of the proposal on the environment. It can then discharge its legal obligations under the “Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2018) and any” Outline Mitigation and Compensation Strategy” if required

I am a qualified Ecologist, with over 40 years’ experience in the environmental field. This includes being a license bat worker (Bat License 2015-15943-CLS-CLS). The PEA Survey was carried out on t2024. This was undertaken by others, in accordioneing to the CIEEM guidelines.

LOCATION

The site is to the west of Crawley Downs, in a rural wooded (Furnace Wood) landscape with higher ground (Hophurst Hill) to the west. The farmhouse is 15C but has substantially been altered in Victorian /Edwardian time. This is an industrial unit adjacent to the Parkfield Farm, which is now a private residence. These former farm buildings are now part of Croydon Fireplaces Company, where a new warehouse is proposed on a vacant area near the boundary.

AREA DESIGNATION

Management and protection of biodiversity within the UK planning system is set out through European and UK legislation. The Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) is the main protection for wildlife, including bats (European Protected Species). There is also legislation for specific species, Bats, WCA (1981), Protection of Badgers Act 1992, EU Habitats and Birds Directive and more general guidance, EU Biodiversity Strategy 2011-2020. This study and report have also taken into account BS 42020 (2013) Biodiversity -Code of practice for planning and development.



At the local level Mid Sussex District Council has its own Local Plan (2012-31). The site is in the high Weald Landscape Character Area and within the Network Enhancement Zone 2. Cuttlinglye Wood, a designated Ancient Wood (AW), is adjacent to the site and Hedgecourt, a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) is 1.6km away

PEA REVIEW

The former consultants undertook a full Phase 1 Habitat survey of the site. This found no evidence of bats (European Protected Species) in any of the existing building or trees on the site. So, in accordance with the Bat Conservation Trust (BCT) guidelines the site is assessed to be a habitat with a **negative** probability as a roost site.

No nesting birds or evidence of nest building was observed on the survey. On the precautionary principle, no work near trees should take place in the breeding season March-August. If this is required, an Ecological Clerk of Works (ECoW) must be present to undertake a bird nesting survey and if necessary, a watching belief if active nests are found, until the fledglings have flown.

There are ponds near the site but no evidence of Great crested newts (EPS) was found on site. Although the other consultants have recommended that a GNC licence should be considered, before this is instructed, I recommend an eDNA pond inspection and from the results of the laboratory assessment, only then should a GNC licence be applied for, if the results are positive. If they are negative, the site

can be assessed as a habitat unsuitable for GCN and no further studies are necessary.

No evidence of badgers or other wildlife was found on the survey. It was noted that the hedgerows could be suitable habitats for hazel dormouse, although none were actually found on the survey. As well as being protected under the WCA (1981), they are also a priority species, under the European Habitats Directive and the Conservation of Habitats & Species Reg (2017). It is recommended that if any work is being considered near to existing hedges, on the precautionary principle, these should be fenced off in accordance with BS 5837 (2012) Trees in relation to Design, Demolition & Construction with 1.8m Heras Fencing (or similar) and maintained in good condition until all works are completed.

Landscape Design (incorporating BNG enhancements)

The former consultants have a number of recommended ecological enhancements as well as the results of the Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) mitigation assessment. These will now be incorporated into a Landscape Design scheme. A detailed Landscape Specification, of the proposals is now set out in this Report.

SCOPE OF WORKS

The landscape proposals have a number of elements which will be set out in the Report. These include:

- Protection of retained trees.
- Specification for tree, scrub and wildflower seeding,
- Specification for implementation.
- Defects period /replacements.
- Details of aftercare.

This document only covers the soft landscape works and any hard works details will form part of the architect's specifications. However, the overall design needs to be coordinated with the detailed design and will form a comprehensive proposal, for all the external works.

BRITISH STANDARDS

All works and operations are to conform to relevant British Standards and Codes of Practice.

BS 3926 (1992) Nursery stock to be true to character, well developed with uniform shoot and foliage, typical for the species or type, of local provenance,

BS 3882 (2015) Imported topsoil of low fertility grade, slightly stony texture, pH 7.0, maximum stone size of 50mm. Topsoil free from an excessive weed seed, perennial weeds roots, subsoil and extraneous matter. Do not handle topsoil in heavy rainfall or frosty conditions.

BS 3936:1992 Part 1 Nursery Stock - Specification for trees and shrubs

BS 4428:1989 - Code of Practice for General Landscaping Operations (excluding hard surfaces)

BS 4043 (1989) Plant Stock: 3. "Plant Handling" (Horticultural Trades Association)

BS 8545 (2014) Trees: from nursery to independence in the landscape

The Code of Practice for Plant Handling 2002 (Horticultural Trades Association) Plant Stock: to be in accordance with size, description, plant schedule, healthy, vigorous, free from pests/diseases, suitably hardened off and lifted in accordance with good nursery practice, with well-formed fibrous root system, free from perennial weeds, particularly any in the Weed Act (1959)

Control of Pesticides Regulations 1986, ESCC Pesticides Policy and Code of Practice and any other relevant legislation

PLANTING SCHEME

The approved landscape proposals, as set out in this specification, consist of detailed planting around all the external areas of the house and circulation space (paths, patio, drive). Care should be taken to ensure that the areas not part of the planning application area are not affected in any way.

The landscape plan should be followed along with this planting specification. This should include adhering to specific species and plant sizes. Changes to the scheme and planting numbers will not be allowed unless approved by the client or their representative.

Tree planting

Trees are to be all Selected Standards 1-3 m ht. (12-14cm girth) planted in the agreed locations:

Code	Species	Container Grown (CG)	Size (girth /cm)	NUMBER
Cp	Crataegus prunifolia	CG	60/90 1-3m ht.	1
Pa	Prunus avium	CG	60/90 1-3m Ht.	1
Si	Sorbus incana	CG	20/30 0.5m ht.	1

Shrub planting

Plant individual stock in prepared beds, dug to minimum 0.75m deep, incorporating 25mm Westland peat -free multi-purpose compost, into the beds and topped with Melcourt compost fine bark mulch. Planting should follow the landscape plan and no substitutes are acceptable, unless agreed with the client or their representative. All stock should be set at same level as in the pots, firmed in and watered immediately. All beds should be kept weed free. Mulch should be regularly checked to ensure the 25mm level is maintained.

Code	Species	CG -container grown -Size	NUMBER
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Ac	Acer campestre	CG 1 lt.pot	5
Ca	Corylus avellna	CG 2lt.pot	3
Cp	Crataegus monogyna	CG 2 lt.pot	3
Vo	Viburnum opulus	CG 2 lt.pot	5

Wildflower seeding

The wildflower areas will be seeded with the following Emorsgate, EM10 seed mix to manufactures specification. This is to be on prepared beds cultivated to produce a fine tilth of 50mm loam topsoil, containing no weeds or other arisings (stones). Seeding should only take place in spring or autumn, when the soil is warm and not in wet conditions. Water immediately on seeding with light rose spray hose. Important to ensure areas are kept moist until the area is past seedling stage. Any occurring weeds are to be removed on a regular basis, with regular watering in dry periods, to ensure continued growth and flowering.

Mix	Code	Area (m2)
Emorsgate	EM10	484

IMPLEMENTATION

Preparation The works are to be undertaken in accordance with this specification and the landscape drawings. If any aspect of this needs clarification the client is to be consulted. The landscape contractor, when handling stock, shall ensure that plants retain a moist fibrous root system and that by appropriate treatment plants are protected from the effects of drying out, heat, waterlogging or physical damage during the period between lifting and planting on site.

Topsoil Any imported topsoil is to conform to BS 3882 (2015). This shall be laid to the following minimum depths: 150mm herbaceous beds, 300mm hedge planting ,500mm tree pits,

Tree planting Selected Standard stock are to be pit planted in prepared to 800 x 800 x 800mm or 75mm larger than root ball and 1.5x1.5x 1.0. Sides of the pit are to be scarified if they have become compacted during excavation. Excavated material of usable quality to be retained in separated topsoil and subsoil for reuse where possible. Trees to be staked using a 2m stake (50mm dia.), driven into ground 300mm below bottom of pit. Trees to be centrally located in the pit and stem placed in an upright position. Pit to be back-filled with original subsoil and topsoil to match previous levels, to 50mm above previous ground level (settlement allowance) Fix 2no adjustable biodegradable tree ties to each stake with galvanised nails. Protect trees from deer /rabbits with 120cm spiral tubes and complete with a medium grade bark mulch 50-100mm deep, 1m diameter.

Shrub planting Stock is to be planted in prepared selected beds dug to 75mm, incorporating well-rotted manure (WRM) in the base. Each plant root-ball placed to the same as in the nursery and firmed in. Apply 30mm coarse bark mulch to all beds. Upon completed water immediately and maintain weed free.

Wildflower areas. These areas are to be left natural and only mown, ideally by scything or Hayter mower, or similar, set at the highest level to leave at least 75mm of sward intact. Mowing should be in late spring and again in autumn when the seed has been allowed to disperse, into the soil. All arisings must be removed from the site, to ensure the soil fertility remains nutrient poor.

AFTERCARE

General Maintenance Planting shall be maintained for one full season from the date of completion. Throughout the aftercare period, keep all planting areas weed free, particularly any defined in the Weeds Act 1959. This may be achieved by the use of an approved herbicide or by regular cultivation.

Hand weed planting areas, tree bases

Top-up mulch as necessary

Re-firm plant stock as necessary

Adjust stakes and ties as necessary

Check plants for signs of pests, disease, death and damage

Water as necessary

Replacements

Within 1 year of completion, plants that fail to thrive, are removed, uprooted, destroyed or die during the aftercare period, will be replaced with equivalent plants as soon as possible during the following planting season at no cost. Replacements shall be of the same size and species as that originally specified. Defects shall be made good by the end of the planting season of the year in which the defect is identified.

Completion

On completion of the planting and any replacements, the scheme will be handed to the client for future maintenance. From this date the contractor has no further liability.

CONCLUSION

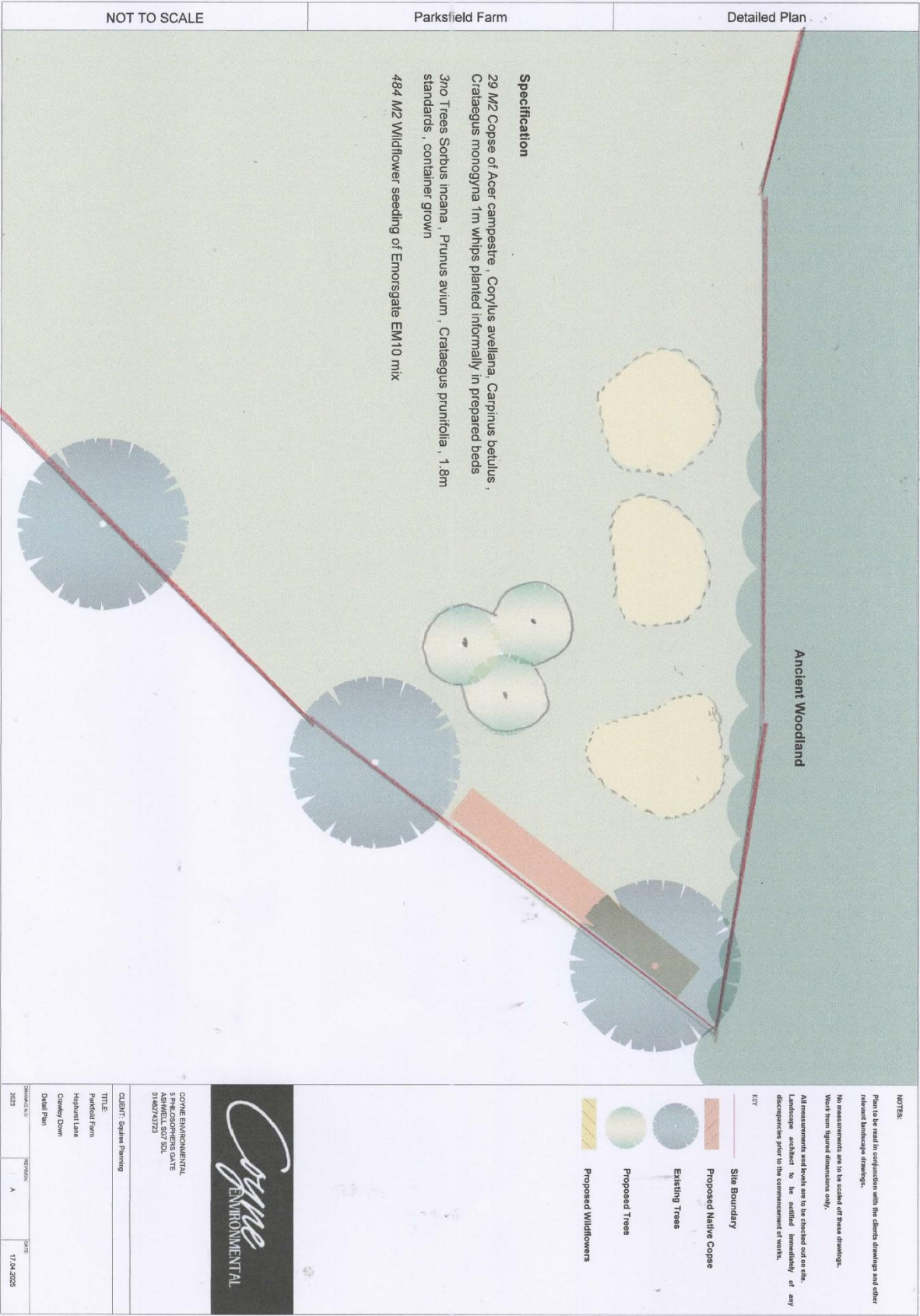
Squires Planning Ltd has instructed Coyne Environmental Ltd to provide ecological advice for a proposed new warehouse at Parkfield Farm, Hophurst Lane, Crawley Down, RH10 4LN. This study has taken into account a previous ecological study by another ecological consultant and includes a landscape scheme incorporating the required mitigation under the Environment Act 2021.

Therefore, in my professional opinion I assess that the proposal on the site will have minimal impact on the overall ecology of the area and bats (EPS) in particular. I conclude that, no further environmental studies are required and that the proposal can be determined by Mid Sussex District Council on this basis.

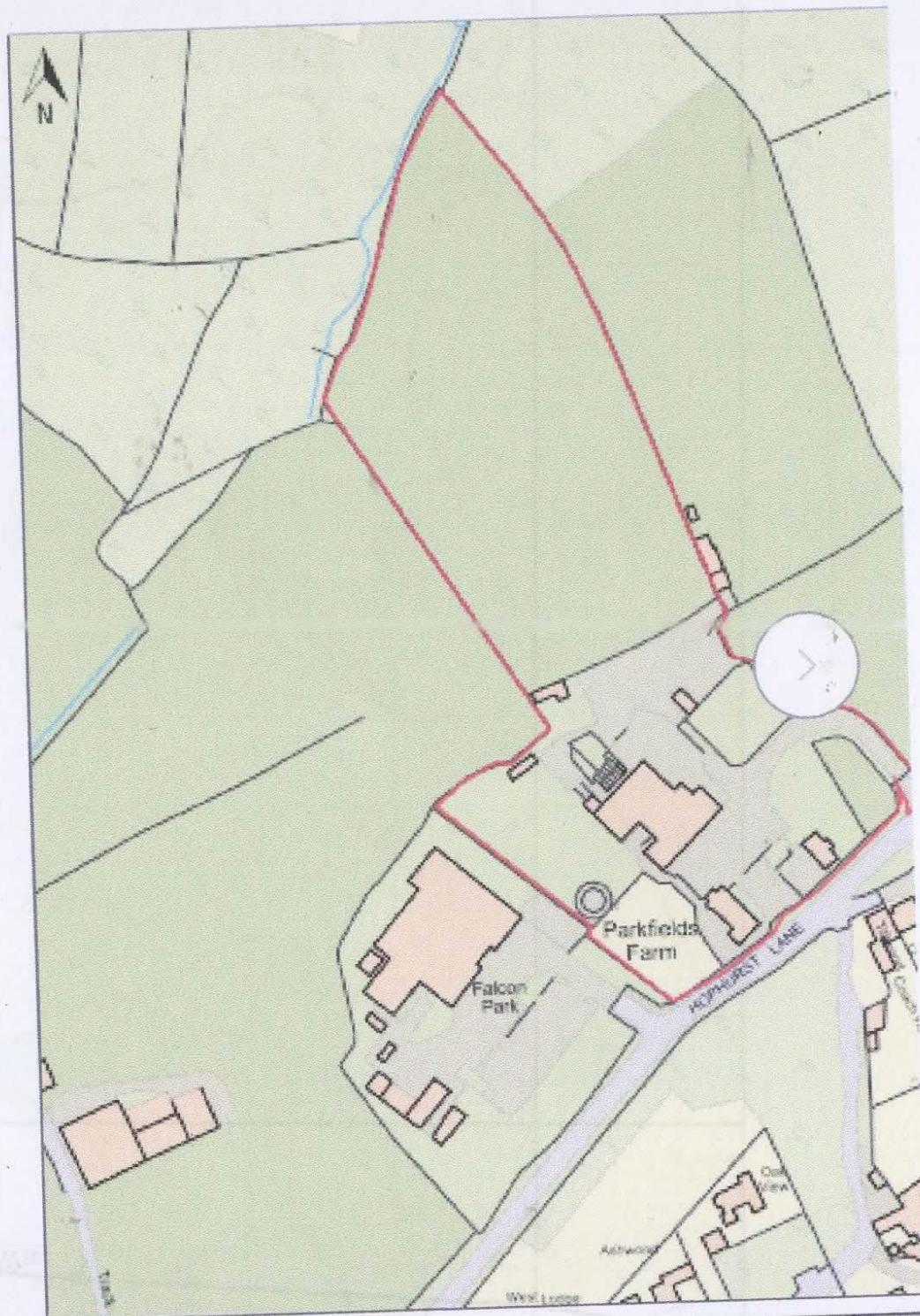
REFERENCES

Site Plan
Area Plan
Proposals Plan
Nation Habitat Network
Surrounding Ancient Woodlands
Landscape Plan
Detailed Plan





PARKFIELDS FARM, HOPHURST LANE, CRAWLEY DOWN, WEST



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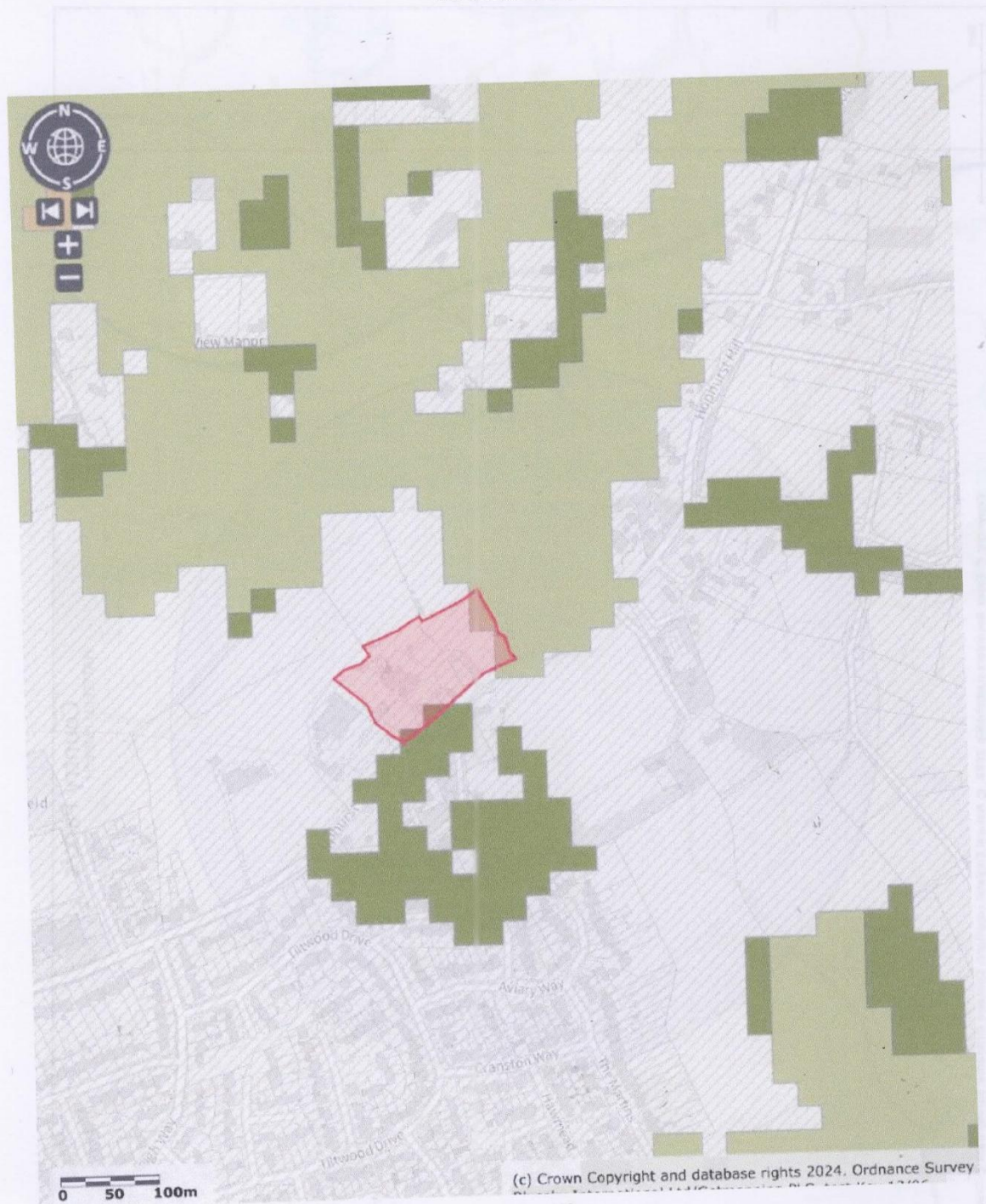
 Site Area

Scale: 1:2500





APPENDIX 5 – NATIONAL HABITAT NETWORK



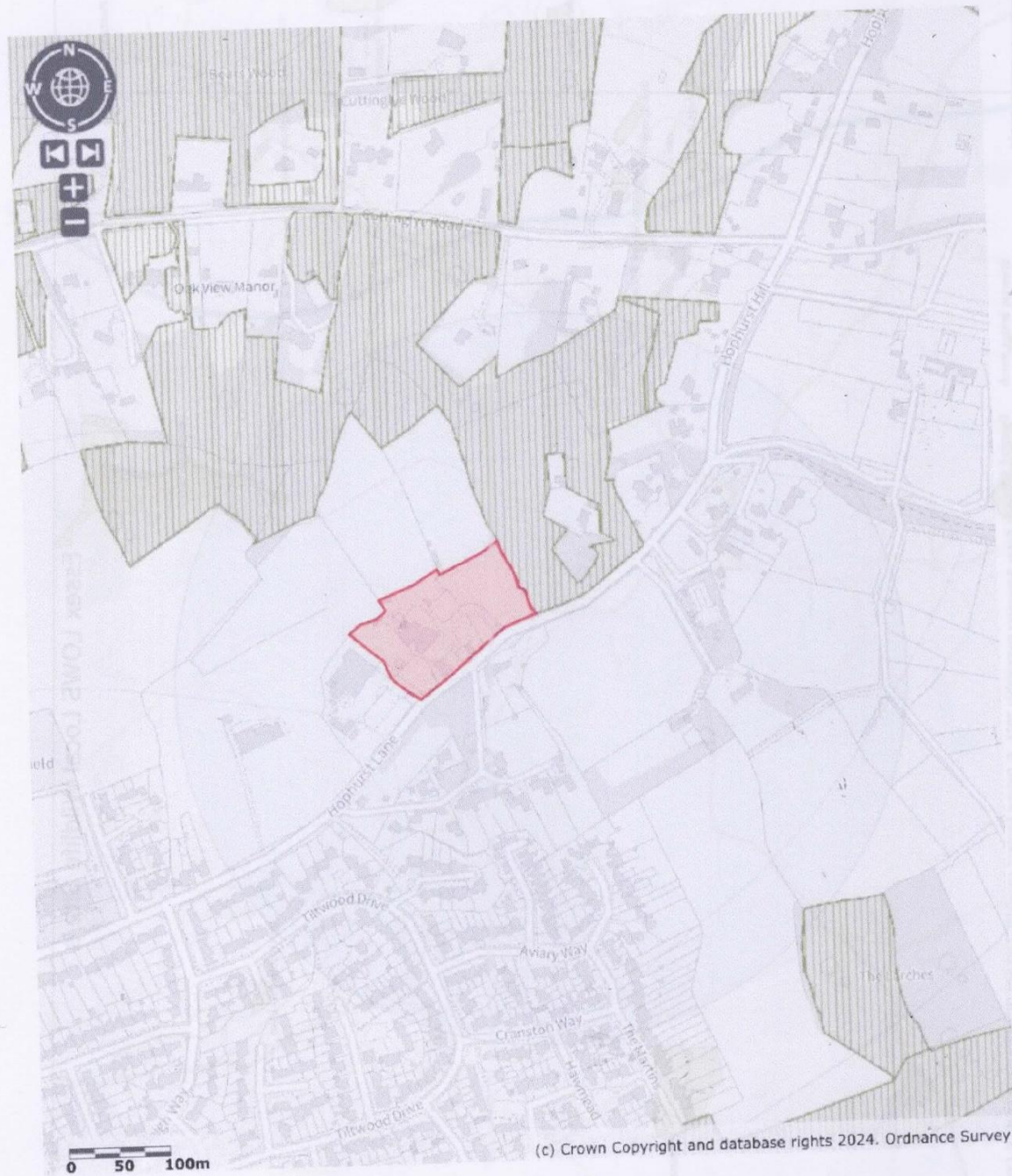
Legend:

Site (in red)

Network Enhancement Zone 2 (diagonal brown stripes)

Priority Woodland (dark green)

APPENDIX 4 – SURROUNDING ANCIENT WOODLAND



Legend:

Site (in red)

ASNW (vertical green stripes)