

WICKENDEN MANOR,

Landscape Masterplan
2026

The Team



- Architecture



- Landscape Architecture



- Arboriculture

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The Site and Background

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The site is located some 6.5km south of East Grinstead. The closest village is Sharpthorne, some 1km north west of the site, with Horsted Keynes south of the site at a distance of some 3.5km.

The subject site is within the landscape designation of the High Weald National Landscape. Ashdown Forest is some 1.2km to the east of the subject site. Numerous areas of surrounding woodland are allocated as Ancient Woodland and Semi-Natural Woodland. A small portion of Ancient Woodland is retained on the subject site, which is part of Sandpit Wood, and is found on the southern boundary of the site. There are a number of trees within the site which are not allocated as Ancient Woodland, however they still create a strong landscape character and provide numerous biodiversity opportunities for a number of fauna and flora across the site.

The site itself is part of a wider landscape character area, which is rural in character and consists of villages, farmsteads, and scattered large detached properties.

Design Objectives

The site is within the High Weald National Landscape. The High Weald AONB Management Plan 2019-2024 describes the landscape as-

'an intricate mosaic of small fields interspersed with farmsteads and surrounded by hedges and abundant woods, all arranged around a network of historic routeways.'

The High Weald AONB management plan explains any development in the area should be 'landscape-led' and contribute to conserving and enhancing natural beauty. The intention of the landscape design is to retain as much of the existing landscape as possible and enhance the existing mature landscape character by providing new trees, shrubs and hedges to reinforce and maintain the longevity of the landscape.

The landscape strategy carries forward the following ecological and green infrastructure principles set out in the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (2013):

- Embracing landscape setting and topographical qualities of the site,
- Retention of existing wooded boundary features.



Fig 01: Site context plan

The Biodiversity Action Plan for Sussex sets out objectives for the most threatened habitats and species in Sussex. The site currently has High Weald Woodland, one of the habitats which is included in this action plan.

The following is a brief assessment of the findings of the Landscape Appraisal of the site and its surroundings. The findings of this report has informed the Landscape Masterplan to ensure that the site proposals reinforce, reflect and support the landscape character and setting of the subject site.

The site is located within the High Weald National Landscape. The 'High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan (published by the High Weald Joint Advisory Committee, 2019-2024) describes the area as:

"At first glance the High Weald appears to be a densely wooded landscape but closer examination reveals a detailed agricultural tapestry of fields, small woodlands and farmsteads. Wildflower meadows are now rare but the medieval pattern of small fields with sinuous edges surrounded by thick hedges and shaws (often surviving remnants of ancient woodland) remain."

"Woodland is extensive covering nearly a third of the area in an intricate network of small wooded shaws, pits and gills; farm woods and larger wooded estates. Most of the woodland is ancient, managed in the past as coppice and swept with bluebells and wood anemones in the spring but of the mature oaks for which the Weald was once famous, few remain. The drier sandy soils favour pine and birch within a patchwork of lowland heath."

Natural England - National Character Area

The 'National Character Area Profile' (prepared by National England, 2013) locates the site within the landscape character area of: High Weald. This is identified as:

"The High Weald National Character Area (NCA) encompasses the ridged and faulted sandstone core of the Kent and Sussex Weald. It is an area of ancient countryside and one of the best surviving medieval landscapes in northern Europe. The High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) covers 78 per cent of the NCA. The High Weald consists of a mixture of fields, small woodlands and farmsteads connected by historic routeways, tracks and paths. Wild flower meadows are now rare but prominent medieval patterns of small pasture fields enclosed by thick hedgerows and shaws (narrow woodlands) remain fundamental to the character of the landscape."

The environmental opportunity of the Wealden Greensand includes; Increasing the viability of woodland habitats for wildlife by determining the area of appropriately managed woodland necessary to link and enhance isolated habitats and species to provide better connectivity between woodlands and encourage species' resilience to climate change.

Natural England have provided the following information regarding trees and woodland within this area:

In 2003 the proportion of established, eligible National Inventory of Woodland and Trees woodland stock was about 18 per cent. About 65 percent of the woodland cover is on an ancient woodland site. The proportion of these sites covered by Woodland Grant Scheme agreements has changed since 1999 from 12 per cent to 23 per cent.

habitat including woodland, scrub, and trees during the breeding season (March to August inclusive). There are opportunities within the development to provide and enhance habitats for: Bats, badgers, dormice, reptiles and breeding birds.

District Landscape Character

The site lies within the High Weald Landscape Character Area 6, identified as 'Mid Sussex Landscape Character Assessment'. Key characteristics of this area include:

- Woodlands - ancient woods, gill woodlands and shaws.
- Pattern of small, irregular-shaped assart fields, some larger fields and small pockets of remnant heathland.
- Dense network of twisting, deep lanes, droveways, tracks and footpaths.
- Designed landscapes and exotic tree scapes associated with large country houses.
- The mosaic of small hedged fields and sunken lanes.

Landscape Management Objectives

- Maintain and restore the historic pattern and fabric of the woodland.
- Plan for long-term woodland regeneration, the planting of new small broadleaved farm woodlands, and appropriate management of existing woodlands, and reduce rhododendron invasion and backen cover in woodlands and on heathland.
- Extend existing woodland areas rather than creating new woodland features, reinforcing existing, distinctive landscape patterns.
- Conserve and replant existing oaks in hedgerows to maintain succession, and replant parkland trees.
- Conserve, strengthen and manage existing hedgerows and hedgerow trees and re-plant hedgerows where they have been lost.

High Weald Housing Design Guide November 2019 provides a number of recommendations to ensure "higher quality and landscape-led design that reflects intrinsic High Weald character". This document has been reviewed in detail and has positively informed the proposed scheme.

The High Weald Land Manager's Pack covering a number of habitats proposed across the subject site has also informed species, shape, management and connectivity within the scheme.

Planning Consent for application ref : DM/20/4179 include the following Landscape Planning Condition which form part of our appointment on this subject site.

Condition 5

No development shall commence unless and until there has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority full details of both hard and soft landscaping, annotated to show materials and including details of any new or altered boundary treatments and any new external lighting, which shall include indications of all existing trees and hedgerows on the land, and details of those to be retained, together with measures for their protection in the course of development, plus details of replacement tree planting (size, species, maintenance and aftercare (planting, support and feeding)), and these works shall be carried out as approved. Native, locally sourced plants should be used for any additional landscaping to support local wildlife and avoid contamination by invasive non-native species or plant diseases (Management Plan objective FH3) and lighting controls should take account of the Institute of Lighting Professionals recommended light control zone E1, to protect the intrinsically dark night skies of the High Weald (Management Plan objective OQ4). The works shall be carried out prior to the occupation of any part of the development or in accordance with the programme agreed with the Local Planning Authority. Any trees or plants which, within a period of 5 years from the completion of the development die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased, shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species unless the Local Planning Authority gives written consent to any variation.

Reason : In the interests of visual amenity and of the environment of the development and to protect the biodiversity of the area and to accord with Policies DP16, DP26, DP37 and DP38 of the Mid Sussex District Plan.

Design Team Recommendations

The following is a brief summary of some of the recommendations prepared by other consultants within the design team which has influenced the Landscape Masterplan



Ecology - Urban Edge Environmental Consulting

- Buffer zones to Hang Wood Ancient Woodland of a minimum of 15m from the construction footprint.
- Removal of nesting bird habitats carried out outside of bird nesting season.
- External lighting to be minimised to prevent impacts to nocturnal species.
- The use of seed and fruit bearing species of tree such as cherry, rowan, birch and crab apple to provide a foraging resource for birds and insects.

Arboriculture - Canopy Consultancy

A number of important oak trees and other species were identified within the Tree Report. Many of these were able to be retained. A number of native and climate change resilient species should be proposed across the scheme to reflect the existing site character and provide the next 0-100 years of tree canopies across the site.



Fig 03: Extract of Landscape Opportunities and Constraints Plan from Boon Brown Landscape Appraisal

Landscape Appraisal - Boon Brown

Following the desk study assessment and site visit where each viewpoint has been assessed against the proposed development, the development is recommended to be located in the existing clearing due west of the Manor House. This is due to the sites lower topography in this area and existing wooded belts that will help to screen the development. This should be retained and re-inforced with the proposed development. The proposed extension has been lowered to reduce the visual impact of the proposed scheme.

Where tree removal is required, this must be kept to a minimum and mitigation planting incorporated to main the landscape character across the site.

**LANDSCAPE
MASTERPLAN**

2

Aims and Objectives

A wide range of proposed improvements to the landscape within the subject site will provide an enhanced and robust site reflective of the High Weald National Landscape recommendations. The thoughtful design will ensure landscape and ecology features will add value to the setting of the site. Sensitive management of the retained features such as trees and scrub will ensure the landscape character is maintained and the integration of the proposals will be successful. Appropriate management of the additional landscape and ecology features such as new woodland, scrub, wildflower meadow and parkland trees will retain

The permitted development of this land provides an opportunity to manage the land to offer increased biodiversity opportunities. The landscape design responds to the character area opportunities by increasing Woodland, protecting Ancient Woodland, increased connectivity with mixed native hedgerows offering ecological connectivity around the site.

Aims and Objectives :

Scrub
Create a tiered habitat from woodland, through scrub, to underscrub and grassland. This will be achieved through mixed native shrubs.

Grassland
Wildflower Meadow- the aim is to create a biodiverse wildflower meadow with a mixture of native wild flowers and slow growing grasses, using a Wealden Seed Mix. These areas are to be managed to ensure that the habitats support

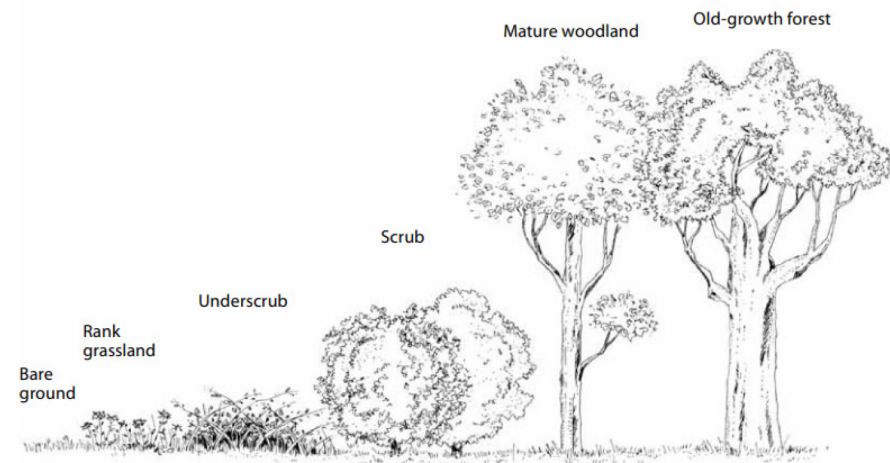
and strengthen the existing landscape character of the site.

The ecological and arboricultural key aims of this report are:

- a) To ensure the protection of any species on site that may be present,
- b) To enhance existing ecological, arboricultural and landscape features on site and further create additional ecological, arboricultural and landscape enhancements,
- c) To comply with the relevant British wildlife legislation

Mixed Native Hedgerows
The aim of the hedgerow creation is to reflect the landscape character of the area, increase foraging corridors, retain and enhance existing boundaries whilst providing habitats to attract a diverse variety of wildlife.

Parkland Trees
Additional planting of a mix of native and ornamental oak trees to provide the next 50-100 years of oaks on the site.



Landscape Masterplan

Trees, shrubs and ground flora

Extract from 'Woodland in the Weald'



Puss Moth

All woodland is special; its beauty, calm and the essential role it plays in creating the air we breathe, are hard to dispute. If you own or have access to woodland in the High Weald, you are living alongside woodland that is really special.

An incredible 70 per cent of the woods in the High Weald are “Ancient Woodland” – land that has been continually wooded since at least 1600 – and this makes up an equally amazing 7 per cent of all the ancient woodland in England.

However, ancient woodlands are **not static, historic relics**, to be preserved as they were in a specific period. The woodlands in this area have morphed alongside human activity – industry, politics and economics – and are still changing today.

One constant is the **rich natural habitat** offered by these woodlands which are home to more rare and threatened species than any other habitat in the UK.

Extract from 'High Weald Housing Design Guide' - Reinforcing Local

PLANTING

Plant species, along with sizes and locations, within new housing schemes in the High Weald are critical to support the rich biodiversity and landscape character of the local area. A detailed planting guide⁹ has been produced to assist developers and landowners with selecting appropriate plants for the High Weald.

A multi-layered planting strategy is required across the site; trees, hedgerow boundaries, open spaces, gardens, and grassland verges, to allow for a range of vegetation heights and habitats across the development informed by published and site specific landscape character assessments.

- Native hedging plants and shrubs which can be coppiced, such as hazel, hawthorn, guelder rose, dogwood, and field maple.
- orchard type trees such as apples, crab apples, and cherries
- 'structural' hedgerow and specimen trees such as oak, hornbeam, field maple, and birch, including new mature trees.

Front garden hedges adjacent to footways can be successfully created from a mixture of hornbeam, beech and hazel for example, to maintain a locally distinctive, semi-rural character in village developments.

9. Responsible planting in the High Weald AONB

High Weald-native wildflowers are an integral part of the area's ecosystems, and should be included in landscaping schemes to also embed a sense of place and local character in a new development, for example; English bluebells and wood anemones under trees and in grass verges at the base of hedgerows, and wildflower mixes in open spaces, sourced from suppliers using products of local provenance. Wild flora mixes need to be selected according to the ecology of the site, informed by ecological surveys of the site and surrounding area.

Areas of the ubiquitous, 'estate' planting of ornamental ground-cover shrubs (such as Berberis, Pyracantha, Photinia and Mahonia) are not appropriate in developments within the High Weald.

Locally non-native or invasive species such as laurel, leylandii, buddleia, European bluebells, rhododendron and cotoneaster should also be avoided, as should imported topsoil and other mechanisms which could **introduce pests and diseases**.



Key

- Mixed native trees and shrubs
- Proposed trees
- Ground flora enhancement



Extract from 'High Weald Land Manager's Pack - Hedges'

Extract from 'Hedges in the Weald'

Selecting the right species for your hedge

Whether you are planting a new hedge or gapping up (filling in gaps in an existing hedge) it is important to plant the right species. This not only maintains the landscape character, but also increases the likelihood of the new plants surviving and creating a good hedge. Commonly, a large proportion is hawthorn (>40%) for rigidity and strength but a wide variety can be used.

If you are considering planting a new hedge in the High Weald then thick hedges with oak standards (or occasionally shaws) is the preferred type of hedge for this area. Suitable species for a hedge in the High Weald and recommended proportions of each to include in your hedge are as follows:

Hawthorn	40%
Blackthorn	15%
Field Maple	20%
Hazel	15%
Hornbeam	5%
Penduculate oak	5%

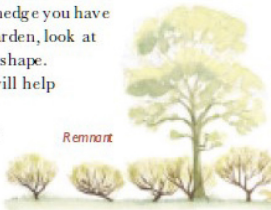


Exotic trees and shrubs – in particular Leyland Cypress, (*XCupressocyparis leylandii*), a hardy and fast growing conifer popular as a hedging plant – can thrive on Weald soils. However, exotics tend to be suburban features which support little wildlife and detract from the Weald's local character.

Hedge types

What type of hedge do I own?
To determine the type of hedge you have on your farm or in your garden, look at the hedge's structure and shape. Knowing the hedge type will help you to decide the most appropriate management.

Hedge structures



Trimmed stockproof



Untrimmed stockproof



Trimmed with gaps



Overgrazed



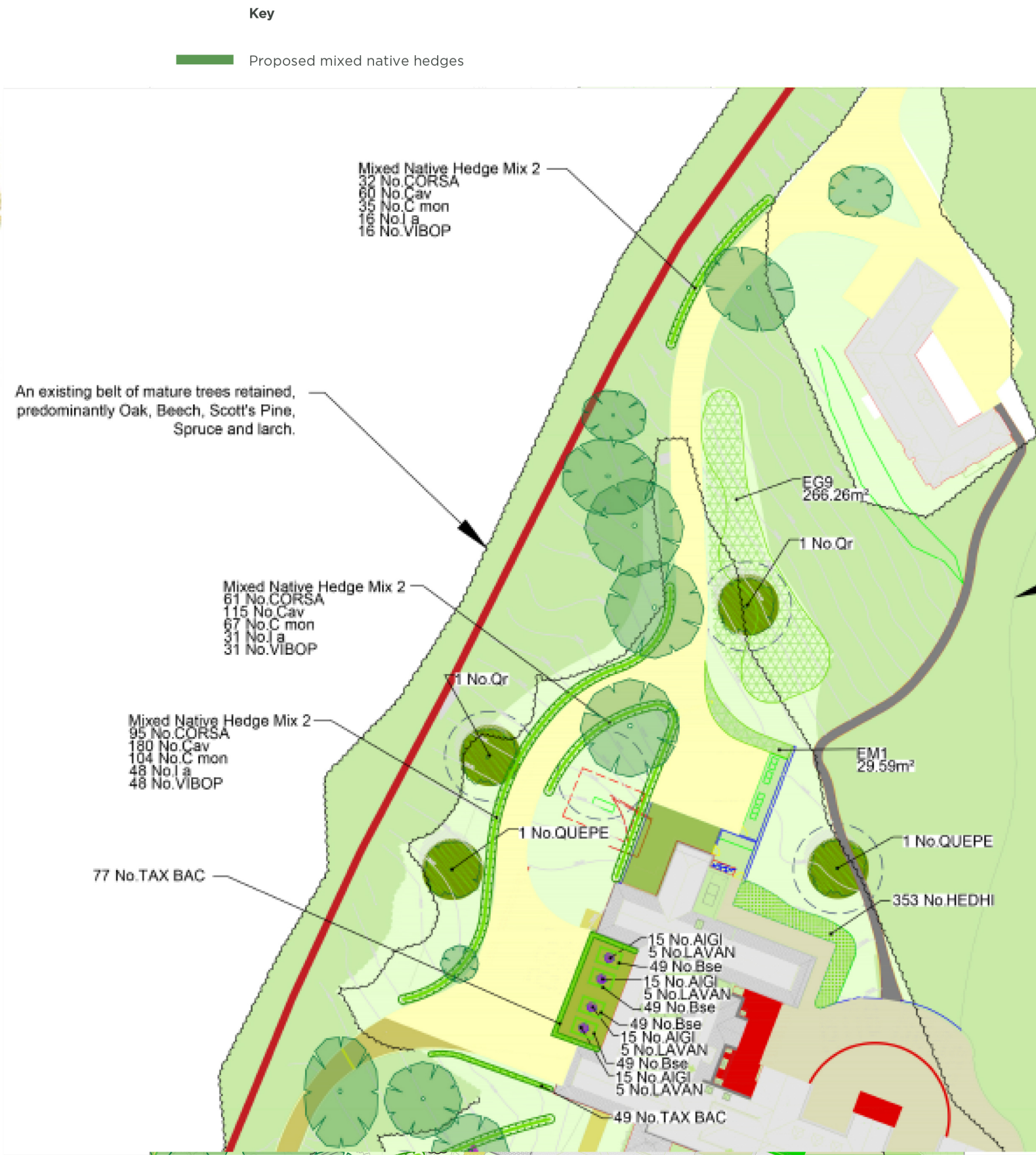
Overgrown

Other boundary features

Shaws/Rews – strips of broadleaved woodland, often 9-12 metres wide, between fields or along roadsides. Managed as woodland, they remain a distinctive feature of the High Weald landscape.

Hedgerow trees – mature trees, normally Oak or Ash, often found punctuating hedgerows where the traditional pattern of shaws between fields does not exist. These are a particular feature of the Low Weald.

Shelter belts – tall hedges, often of Poplars and Alders, that have been planted as wind breaks, particularly around orchards and other fruit crops.



Extract from 'Wildflower Grasslands in the Weald'

Understanding wildflower grasslands is the key to their conservation, restoration and creation.

Vanishing Wildflower Grasslands

- **Unimproved grasslands** can contain 50 or more different plant species including rare or scarce species.

- 'Semi-improved' grasslands may have been ploughed once or twice many years ago, or had some fertiliser applied in the past, but they still retain a valuable number of wild grass and flower species, typically between ten and twenty five.

- Improved grasslands contain few wild grasses and only a few vigorous wildflower species such as buttercups, and are of little conservation value.

Unimproved grasslands are glorious places in summer alive with colourful flowers and butterflies and literally buzzing with the activity of bees, grasshoppers and other creatures.

These grasslands of the Weald, which occur on the area's neutral and acid soils, represent an irreplaceable and vanishing aspect of the Weald countryside and heritage.

Species-rich grasslands have evolved from ancient origins and been maintained by a continuity of traditional low-intensity grazing (pastures) or hay making (meadows) by generations of farmers. *Sadly the economic reality of agricultural intensification has meant that nationally less than 3% of grasslands remain unimproved.*

Nowadays the few remaining species-rich grasslands are still being lost as a result of:

- conversion to arable
- ploughing and re-seeding (with a high yielding grass mix)
- use of inorganic fertilisers, slurry, herbicides or excessive lime
- silage-making replacing the hay cut
- lower water levels through drainage and abstraction
- overgrazing
- undergrazing
- lack of or inappropriate management
- planting trees

The greatest threat is thought to be where landowners are not fully aware of the value of their site and make inappropriate management decisions.

The wildflower seed harvester

To assist the Weald Meadows Initiative, government bodies have purchased a wildflower seed harvesting machine to generate supplies of seed from Weald grasslands. The sale of Weald Native Origin grass and wildflower seed is seen as a way of generating much needed income to support traditional management of hay meadows. In addition, the use of Weald Native Origin seed in habitat creation or enhancement schemes is essential to meet our national obligation to maintain local biodiversity as published in 'Biodiversity in the UK Action Plan' in 1994.

Overgrazing can lead to poaching and the creation of bare ground in which weeds such as Thistles, Ragwort and Docks can become established.

Restoration of neglected or inappropriately managed sites to their former glory is possible, but specialist advice should be sought.

Grants are available for grassland restoration, maintaining or introducing traditional management, creating new species-rich grassland to extend or buffer existing areas, and the restoration of associated hedges, trees and ponds to benefit wildlife and enhance the landscape.

If grassland has limited wildlife interest
how can it be enhanced?

To enhance *species-poor grassland* and encourage wildlife the most appropriate option will depend on soil fertility, the type of grasses present, any perennial weeds such as thistles and docks, and existing wildlife. An important prerequisite is to reinstate traditional meadow or pasture management.

Enhancement. It is possible to introduce wildflowers into species-poor grassland containing only a few *wild* grasses. The grass may need to be cut or grazed short and even harrowed before broadcasting Weald Native Origin seed or planting in plant plugs or both. The growth is then kept short for at least a year before adopting a traditional management regime.

Creation. To reseed improved grassland or arable land a weed-free seed-bed with a fine tilth is essential. Naturally shallow and poor soils, and fields with slopes or poorly drained areas are *particularly suitable*. Preparations need to be started well in advance. Weald Native Origin grass and wildflower seed should be broadcast in late summer and the growth then kept short for at least a year. This approach is more expensive but can give particularly good results in the longer term.

Key

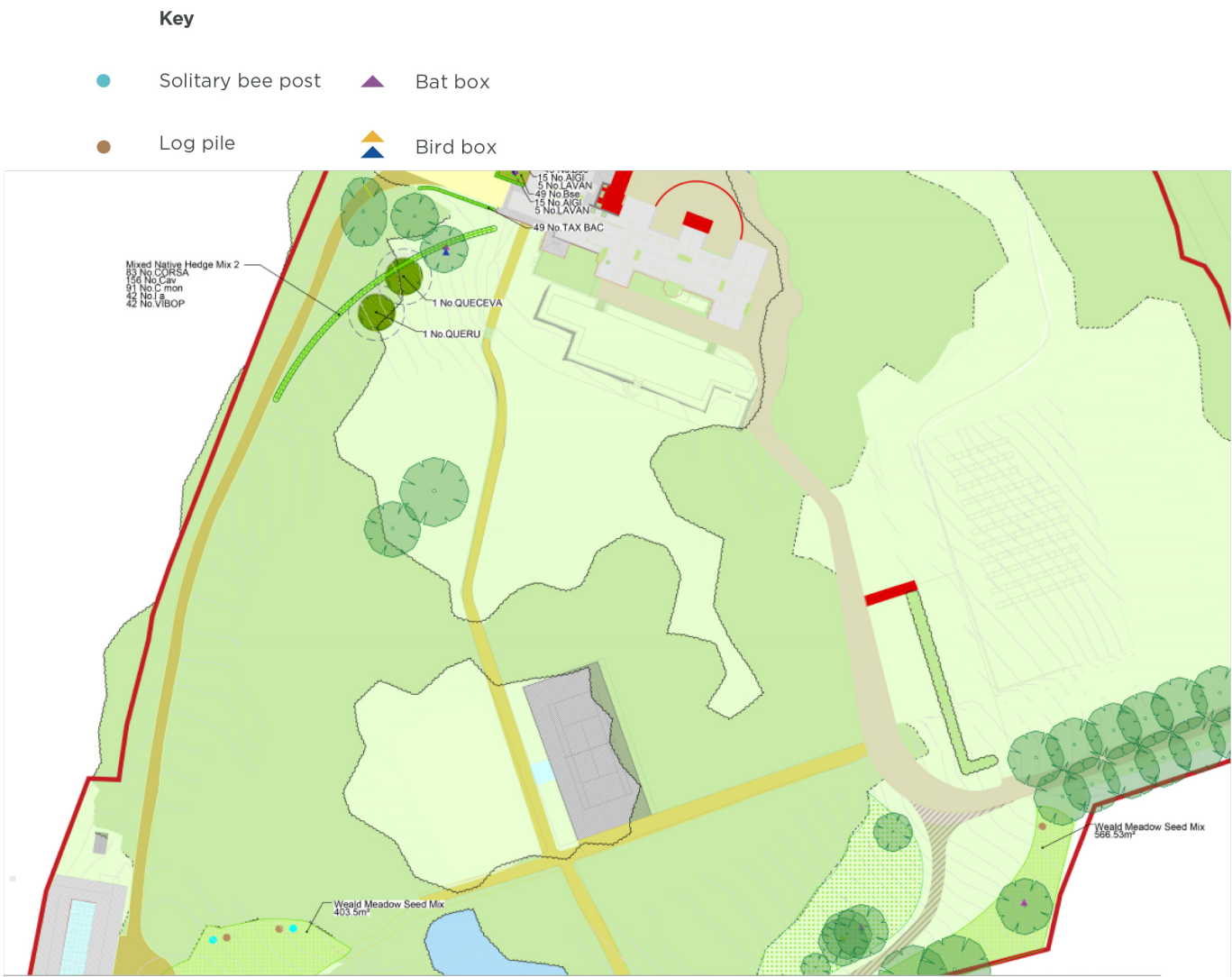
Proposed Wealden Meadow Areas



Landscape Masterplan

Biodiversity Enhancements

Reference images for proposed biodiversity enhancements and some of the fauna and flora that they would support.



Log piles -
Log piles to be created using logs from trees felled on site or sourcing of suitable logs from off-site. Each log to be approximately 1-1.5m in length and 15-30cm diameter. Logs stacked in large enough piles that the interior of the pile is protected. Log piles will be at least 2-3m in length, 1m in width and 0.5m height.
Arising's from on site management and maintenance will be added to the log piles annually. Log piles and hibernaculum will be inspected annually to ensure that they are maintained to the specification above.
If remedial works are required, these will be undertaken between March and October in order to avoid the hibernation season.

Bat boxes-
Schwegler 2F bat boxes to be installed on existing trees being retained. Schwegler 1FR Bat tube integrated into properties. All installed at a south

or west elevation, above 3m from ground and not illuminated by artificial lighting.

Bird boxes-
Mix of Schwegler Open fronted Nest Box and Schwegler 1B Nestbox installed on trees. All installed at a north or east elevation, above 2m from ground or close to eaves and not illuminated by artificial lighting.
Bird and bat boxes to be sourced from an approved supplier.

Hedges -
The mixed native species hedgerows will be cut no lower than 1.5 meters tall in January or February each year. They will be cut with a slight taper from bottom to top, ensuring that the base of the hedge remains dense to the ground. This will protect the wildlife using the base of the hedge as a corridor to move around and increase the connectivity of habitats surrounding the site.



LANDSCAPE DETAILS

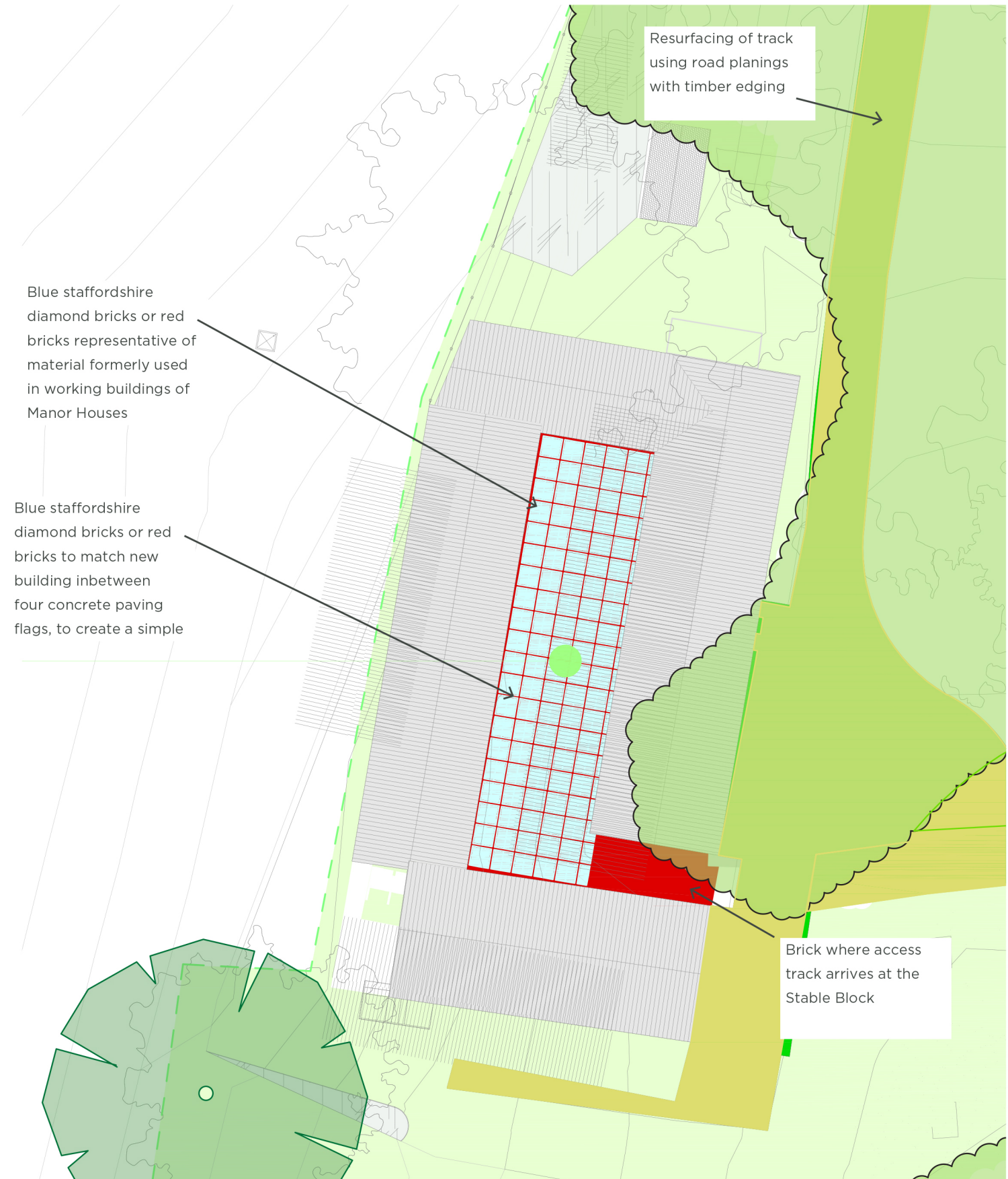
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Landscape Details

Staff Block



Stable Block



Landscape Details

Planting Palette

Tree Planting - within Parkland setting



Quercus cerris Variegata



Quercus rubra



Quercus petraea



Quercus robur

Mixed Native Hedge Planting



Carpinus betulus



Corylus avellana



Ilex aquifolium



Ilex aquifolium

Landscape Plant Schedule

Trees

Number	Abbreviation	Species	Common Name	Girth	Specification
1 -	QUECEVA	Quercus cerris 'Variegata'		18-20cm	RB :Feather :Clear Stem min. 200
2 -	QUEPE	Quercus petraea	Sessile Oak	18-20cm	RB :Feather :Clear Stem min. 200
2 -	Qr	Quercus robur	Common Oak	18-20cm	RB :Feather :Clear Stem min. 200
1 -	QUERU	Quercus rubra	Red Oak	18-20cm	RB :Feather :Clear Stem min. 200

Conifers

Number	Abbreviation	Species	Height	Specification	Density
10 -	P sy	Pinus sylvestris	100-125cm	Standard	4Ctr
77 -	TAX BAC	Taxus baccata	80-100cm	RB ;CG	0.35Ctr

Shrubs

Number	Abbreviation	Species	Height	Pot Size	Specification	Density
196 -	Bse	Buxus sempervirens	20-30cm	2L	CG	0.2Ctr
20 -	LAVAN	Lavandula angustifolia	30-40cm	3L	CG	3/m²

Bulbs

Number	Abbreviation	Species	Bulb Size	Density
60 -	AIGI	Allium 'Globemaster'	10	10/m²

Grass Areas

Area	Weight	Seed Mix Name	Seed Mix Supplier	Density
970.0237m²	3881 g	Weald Meadow Seed Mix	British Wildflower Seeds	4g/m²
266.2644m²	1332 g	EG9	Emorsgate Seeds	5g/m²

Mixed Native Trees and Shrubs

Number	Abbreviation	Species	Height	Specification	Density
22 -	Ac	Acer campestre	1.2-1.5 m	OG	1Ctr
58 -	CORSA	Cornus sanguinea	60-80cm	OG	1Ctr
202 -	Cav	Corylus avellana	60-80cm	OG	1Ctr
404 -	C mon	Crataegus monogyna	1.2-1.5 m	OG	1Ctr
29 -	la	Ilex aquifolium	40-60cm	RB	1Ctr
8 -	Qr	Quercus robur	1.2-1.5 m	OG	1Ctr

Total :723 -

Mixed Native Hedge Mix 2

Number	Abbreviation	Species	Height	Specification	Pot Size	Density
281 -	CORSA	Cornus sanguinea	80-100cm	OG	5L	0.3Ctr Double Staggered at 0.3m offset
532 -	Cav	Corylus avellana	80-100cm	OG	5L	0.3Ctr Double Staggered at 0.3m offset
310 -	C mon	Crataegus monogyna	80-100cm	OG		0.3Ctr Double Staggered at 0.3m offset
142 -	la	Ilex aquifolium	60-80cm	CG	5L	0.3Ctr Double Staggered at 0.3m offset
142 -	VIBOP	Viburnum opulus	80-100cm	OG	5L	0.3Ctr Double Staggered at 0.3m offset

Landscape Details

Hard Landscape Palette

Main Driveway



Natrutex Cotswold Tarmac

Main Driveway - edging



Conservation Kerb

Main Driveway - rumble strip



Granite setts 100x100x100

North western track to be surfaced and new track to south



Road planings

Timber edging to track



Timber edging to track

Rumble strip



Granite setts 100x100x100

Parking



Pea shingle 10-20mm aggregate size

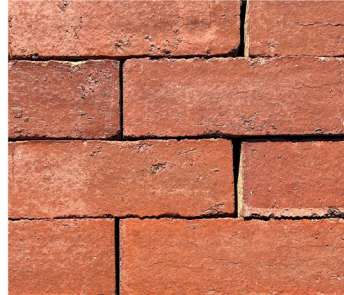


Conservation Kerb

Stable Block



Staffordshire Blue Brick - Diamond



Red Brick



Concrete paving flag 450x450mm

Staff Courtyard



Staffordshire Blue Brick - Diamond



Natrutex Cotswold Tarmac

