

Tree survey for Balcombe Cricket Club for site for replacement cricket nets

Henry le Fleming

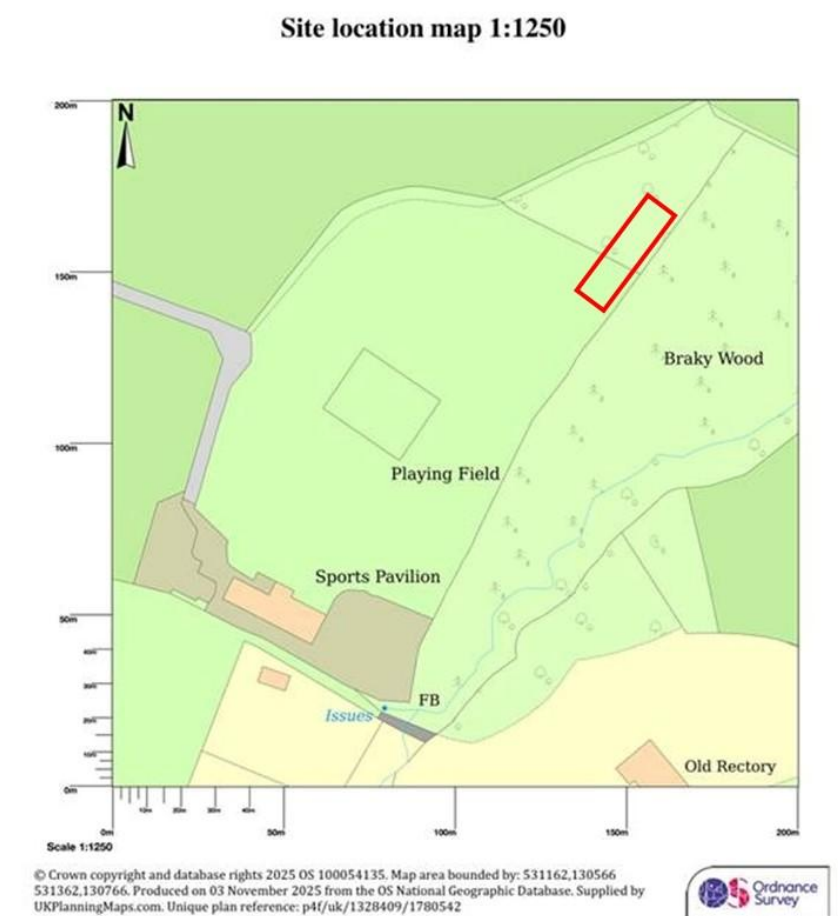
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Introduction

Balcombe Cricket Club want to build some replacement cricket nets. They wish to extend the area of the existing nets into the woodland behind the existing facility. We were asked to survey the woodland to determine the impact on the trees in that area.

We surveyed the area indicated on the planning documents for Balcombe Cricket Club to assess the impact of the proposal on the trees in the area proposed for the extension of the cricket nets.

Figure 1: copy of the location plan showing the site



Description of the site

The photographs below show the habitat as surveyed.

Figure 1: View of the woodland from end of proposed nets towards existing nets



Figure 1 shows the view from the end of the proposed site back towards the existing nets. The area is largely clear of trees. There is a group of trees on the boundary of the cricket field. The species are holly and ash. These trees would need to be removed to complete the work.

The existing habitat comprises an area of bramble and bracken, together with 6 mature holly and ash trees, the latter suffering from ash dieback (*chalara fraxinea*). A pre-development habitat survey of the area suggests that it is in a moderate condition and that the area is of level 2 significance.

Figure 2 below shows the view from the boundary towards the proposed site with the group of ash and holly and the left of the picture.

Figure 3: View from the existing nets towards the proposed site



Further to the North East of the proposed area is an opening in the canopy. Some planting of mixed deciduous trees could occur in this area to replace the trees removed on the boundary.

The right hand side of the photo shows the trees in the neighbouring woodland called Braky wood. The photo shows limited canopy growth from the woodland over the site. There are some lower growth holly trees and some branches, but the canopy is not closed above the proposed site.

Impact on the neighbouring woodland

To the south east of the area is Braky wood. This is designated Ancient Woodland. It is not directly impacted but the work is in the buffer zone to this woodland.

The adjoining woodland is designated as a Plantation on Ancient Woodland Site (PAWS). The current forestry crop is Norway Spruce, approximately 30-40 years old; there is little to no ground flora, aside from the occasional bramble, and limited shrub layer other than a small amount of rhododendron ponticum at the southern end.

The woodland is extensively used by members of the public, on foot and on bicycles, with substantial numbers of dog walkers on a daily basis.

Any environmental benefit provided by this woodland is at canopy level and that will soon be lost due to the presence of Ips Typographus (European eight-toothed spruce bark beetle) in the local area which would result in an enforced clear fell should an infestation occur, or the proactive felling by the landowner.

None of the canopies from any of the trees in Braky Wood reach over the area of the proposed work. It is therefore unlikely that the excavation and installation of light concrete pad will not significantly impact the root zone of the trees in Braky Wood. Figure 4 shows the canopy above the proposed site.

Figure 4: canopy above the proposed site



The proposed development will be located adjacent to the existing facilities and will have no detrimental impact on the PAWS.

Conclusion

There are 6 trees that need to be removed to complete this work. Two of these trees are ash that might need to be removed anyway.

Whilst the work is in the buffer zone for the ancient woodland, the canopy from this woodland does not cover the site of the proposed work. The work on the site will not impact the coniferous plantation on the adjacent site

There is sufficient space in the canopy to the North East where felled trees could be replaced with native deciduous species to replace trees felled to complete the work.