



Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

Survey site:

Shripney Manor, Shripney Lane, Bognor Regis, West Sussex, PO22 9NU

Client:

Mrs Marya Draper

Survey date:

24/03/2026

Project:

This report is prepared to inform a planning application with Arun District Council. This proposal can be described as the installation of 100 solar panels

The survey results and recommendations contained within this report are valid for 18 months. An updated site visit may be required if the report is to be used any longer than 18 months after completion

Executive Summary

The following is work you will need to commission to obtain planning permission and to comply with legislation. Further information, along with opportunities for biodiversity enhancement, are outlined in Tables 1, 3 & 4 of this report.

Key Findings

- A Construction Ecological Management Plan (CEMP) will be required, outlining best practice measures delineate the construction zone and to minimise the possibility of pollution and habitat damage during construction.
- The proposed development may require a Biodiversity Net Gain assessment, to calculate the value of habitats on site and ensure the delivery of a minimum of 10% measurable biodiversity net gain.
- Precautionary working method for amphibians, badgers, hedgehogs and reptiles.

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Introduction and Context

Introduction

The aim of the PEA was to obtain data on existing ecological conditions, and to conduct a preliminary assessment of the likely significance of ecological impacts on the proposed development.

No previous ecology reports have been produced for this site by Arbtech Consulting Ltd or, to the author's knowledge, by any other consultancy.

Methodology

PEA survey methodology and legislation can be found in the Arbtech Supplement: [PEA Methodology and Legislation - 2024.](#)

Limitations

Whilst every effort has been made to describe the baseline conditions within the survey area, and evaluate these features, this report is a preliminary assessment and does not provide a complete characterisation of the site. Nor does it represent a full botanical assessment. It assesses the likelihood of protected, notable and important habitats and species being present, based on a site and landscape level habitat value-based risk assessment. This is based upon the ecology, biology and known distribution of species as currently understood.

A biological records data search has not been undertaken. However, given the location of the site, the nature of the habitats present and the assessed suitability of the site for protected or notable species, it is not anticipated that the purchase of biological records data will add any significant weight or alter the conclusions and recommendations outlined in this report.

The survey was completed outside of the optimal survey period (April to October) for ground flora, and as such the accuracy of botanical assessment and condition assessment data may be limited in terms of species visible and ground conditions at the time of survey.

Results, Impacts and Recommendations

Site Location and Landscape Context

Table 1: Site location and landscape context

Site Location
The site is located at National Grid Reference SU 93677 02099 and has an area of approximately 0.17ha comprising modified grassland. The site comprises land associated with a rural residential property and its surrounding grounds, situated within a predominantly agricultural landscape. The surrounding land use is characterised by a predominantly agricultural matrix, comprising a mix of arable farmland and improved grassland, interspersed with hedgerows, mature trees, and small woodland blocks. The wider landscape is typical of the West Sussex coastal plain, comprising a mosaic of farmland, rural properties, and small pockets of semi-natural habitat. Connectivity to surrounding habitats is present via field boundaries and linear features such as hedgerows. Field boundaries in the vicinity are typically defined by managed hedgerows, some of which are well-established and include occasional mature standard trees. These linear features provide ecological connectivity, linking areas of woodland and semi-natural habitat across the agricultural landscape. Scattered woodland copses and tree belts occur within the surrounding area, contributing to structural diversity and offering potential habitat for a range of protected and notable species. The presence of these features, in combination with hedgerows and watercourses, forms a well-connected green infrastructure network.
Priority Habitats and Designated Sites
Summary of Survey Findings <u>Priority Habitats</u> There are 2 priority habitats located within 2 km of the site. These comprise deciduous woodland and coastal and floodplain grazing marsh. The closest priority habitat comprises deciduous woodland, located ~40 m south of the site.

Designated Sites

There is 1 statutory site within 2 km of the site. This is listed below:

Table 1a: Statutory sites within 2km of the site.

Designation	Reason for designation	Distance from site
The Brooks Local Nature Reserve (LNR)	The Brooks has extensive grassland, reedbeds, ponds and newly planted woodland. One area has been turned into a dog-free wildlife sanctuary for ground-nesting birds. The site is flooded every winter, which makes it a good habitat for wetland flora and fauna.	460m SW

The site does fall within the impact risk zone for Felpham SSSI however, the proposed development type is not listed as possible high risk with regard to this designation.

The presence of non-statutory designated sites within 2km of the site cannot be established without data from the local records centre. Whilst some habitats in the wider landscape may host designations, the immediate environs of the site do not host habitats likely to be of designable quality.

Impacts

No direct impacts to any designated sites will occur as a result of the proposed development, due to the small scale and low overall impact of the development from such sites (where known), alongside additional factors such as distance in combination with connectivity disrupting barriers.

Recommendations

No recommendations.

Habitats and Flora

The site survey was undertaken by Romany Poole BSc (Hons) MSc, Consultant Ecologist.

Table 2: Survey weather conditions

Date of survey	Temperature (°C)	Humidity (%)	Cloud Cover (%)	Wind (km/h)	Rain
24/03/2026	11.9	79	100	12.9	None

Table 3: Habitats and flora

Habitats and Flora: Conclusion, Impact or Recommendations <i>This table may include further work you will need to commission (if any) to obtain planning permission or comply with legislation for other consent. All clients are expected to read and understand this section, or to contact the lead surveyor for advice.</i>
Onsite habitats
Summary of Survey Findings <u>Modified grassland (g4) - Horse grazed (103)</u> The site comprises an area of modified grassland of relatively low botanical diversity. The sward is short and regularly managed, and is subject to grazing by horses, which contributes to its uniform structure and limited floristic diversity. The grassland is dominated by common grass species, with very limited representation of herbaceous flora. The grassland shows clear signs of disturbance and compaction, including poaching, bare ground, and an uneven surface, consistent with regular equestrian use and grazing pressure. These conditions further reduce the ecological value of the habitat. In accordance with the Statutory Biodiversity Metric Condition Assessment Matrix, the modified grassland was assessed to have a poor condition value.

Table 3a: Modified grassland species abundance.

Abundance	Species
Dominant	Perennial rye-grass (<i>Lolium perenne</i>)
Frequent	White clover (<i>Trifolium repens</i>), daisy (<i>Bellis perennis</i>)

Impacts

No direct impacts to any notable habitats will occur as a result of the proposed development. However, indirect effects such as pollution or habitat damage could occur during construction, whilst encroachment on the grassland and garden areas by contractors and machinery could result in plants and biodiversity value being dug up or trampled on.

Recommendations

Best practice measures to minimise the possibility of pollution must be implemented during construction. This should include the following measures:

- Remove only the minimum of habitat required to facilitate the development
- Use of Heras or other appropriate fencing to prevent encroachment by contractors onto retained habitats.
- Protect retained turf and soil resource from destruction and compaction using plastic matting and wooden boarding. Do not store skips and other heavy materials on retained turf.

A Construction Ecological Management Plan (CEMP) will be required, outlining best practice measures delineate the construction zone and to minimise the possibility of pollution and habitat damage during construction.

The proposed development may require a Biodiversity Net Gain assessment, to calculate the value of habitats on site and ensure the delivery of a minimum of 10% measurable biodiversity net gain.

Invasive / Non-native species

Summary of Survey Findings

No non-native invasive or otherwise problematic plants were recorded on site or are considered likely to be on site.

Impacts

None

Recommendations

None.

Fauna

Table 4: Fauna

Fauna: Conclusion, Impact or Recommendations

This table may include further work you will need to commission (if any) to obtain planning permission or comply with legislation for other consent. All clients are expected to read and understand this section, or to contact the lead surveyor for advice.

Roosting Bats

Summary of Survey Findings

A review of the MAGIC database for European Protected Species Licences (EPSL) for bats within a 2km radius of the site has been completed. 1 EPSL was identified, as detailed below:

Table 4a: EPSL records within 2km of the site - bats

EPSL reference	Bat species affected	Distance from site	Impacts allowed by licence
2014-4435-EPS-MIT	Common pipistrelle	700m northwest	Destruction of a resting place

No buildings or trees were present on site with suitable roosting features for bats to utilise.

Impacts

No lighting will be installed to facilitate the solar panels therefore no impacts on roosting bats are anticipated.

Recommendations

None.

Foraging and Commuting Bats

Summary of Survey Findings

Habitats recorded on site are assessed to provide foraging and commuting opportunities for bats in the form of modified grassland and hedgerows. The hedgerows on site are mature and extend beyond the site adding to the continuity of vegetated linear features present in the wider landscape. The grassland is currently managed and contains a lack of structure that could create high value opportunities for invertebrates, thus is of low foraging and commuting value to bats. Due to the extent of these habitats they are not assessed to provide a significant resource within the landscape.

Impacts

The proposed development will result in the loss of modified grassland. Given the presence of more extensive areas of foraging and commuting habitat in the locality, this is likely to be inconsequential for bats.

Recommendations

The following habitat creation and enhancement opportunities could be incorporated into the proposed development which would be beneficial for foraging bats:

- Planting of locally characteristic trees to increase foraging opportunities.

Amphibians

Summary of Survey Findings

A review of MAGIC database found no granted EPSL for great crested newts (GCN) within 2km of the site. A check was also completed for great crested newt class survey license returns and historic pond surveys. No records were identified.

No ponds are located on, or adjacent to, the site. A review of aerial imagery shows there is one site located off-site but within the ownership boundary. The pond is well connected to the development area through woodland, scrub and grassland.

Impacts

Whilst it is acknowledged that there is a pond located 200m south-west, there are no records of GCN within 0.5km of the site. Impacts associated with the proposed development are limited to short modified grassland that lacks any refuge/hibernation opportunities. As a result, no habitats that represent breeding sites or resting places will be impacted, which reduces the potential risk to GCN and other common amphibians to a low level. It is therefore assessed that this risk can be suitably mitigated for through precautionary working methods to be applied during construction activity

Recommendations

Owing to the nature of the proposed development and the low potential for impacts to great crested newts, further surveys are considered to be disproportionate. A precautionary working method will be implemented for common amphibians during construction, including the following measures:

- Vegetation will be maintained at a short sward (5cm) to discourage reptiles.
- Any rubble piles will be dismantled by hand and debris and brash will be stored on pallets or removed from the site to prevent amphibians from utilising these areas.
- Best practice pollution prevention measures will be implemented to minimise impacts to nearby aquatic habitats that amphibians could use.
- Any chemicals or pollutants used or created by the development should be stored and disposed of correctly according to COSHH regulations.
- If any common amphibians are found in the working area these should be allowed to disperse of their own accord or, if at immediate risk, should be moved by hand to a sheltered, vegetated area away from disturbance.
- In the unlikely event that a great crested newt is identified, works must cease and advice must be sought from a suitably qualified ecologist.

Reptiles

Summary of Survey Findings

The grassland on site is assessed to provide suboptimal value for reptiles due to an absence of refuge opportunities, however it is noted the adjacent hedgerows can provide opportunities for reptiles. Furthermore, the arable land surrounding the site is not suitable to support reptiles due to frequent disturbance and coverage of bare ground. This landscape is likely to significantly limit dispersal opportunities onto the site for reptiles from the wider landscape.

However, the nearby sections of woodland are of elevated ecological value within the wider landscape and may represent important resources for local reptile populations. These habitats provide optimal foraging, commuting, and refuge opportunities for reptiles and are well connected to further suitable habitat in the wider landscape. The presence of reptiles utilising these adjacent habitats cannot be discounted.

Impacts

Modified grassland will be removed during construction. The loss of such habitats is likely to be inconsequential to local reptile populations owing to their low value and the presence of more extensive habitat locally. However, site clearance could result in the death or injury of reptiles, if present.

Recommendations

Owing to the nature of the proposed development and the low potential for impacts to reptiles, further surveys are considered to be disproportionate. A precautionary working method will be implemented for widespread reptiles during construction, including the following measures:

- Vegetation will be maintained at a short sward (5cm) to discourage reptiles.
- Any excavations will be covered overnight, or a ramp will be installed to enable any trapped animals to escape.
- Best practice pollution prevention measures will be implemented to minimise impacts to nearby habitats.
- Any chemicals or pollutants used or created by the development should be stored and disposed of correctly according to COSHH regulations.
- If any reptiles are found in the working area these should be allowed to disperse of their own accord or, if at immediate risk, should be moved by hand to a sheltered, vegetated area away from disturbance.

Riparian animals	
Summary of Survey Findings	There are no riparian habitats on or adjacent to the site.
Impacts	No impacts are anticipated on riparian animals as a result of the proposed development.
Recommendations	None.
Hazel dormouse	
Summary of Survey Findings	There are no suitable habitats on site to support hazel dormice.
Impacts	No impacts are anticipated on hazel dormice as a result of the proposed development.
Recommendations	None.
Invertebrates	
Summary of Survey Findings	The site provides limited habitat value for a variety of commonplace species but is unlikely to support important species and assemblages.

Impacts

The proposed development will result in the loss of modified grassland. The loss of such habitats is likely to be inconsequential to local invertebrate populations owing to the presence of more extensive habitat locally.

Recommendations

None required.

Birds

Summary of Survey Findings

No evidence of nesting birds was identified on the site. There are no suitable habitats within the site boundary which provide habitat for nesting birds.

Impacts

No impacts are anticipated on nesting birds as a result of the proposed development.

Recommendations

None.

Other e.g. small mammals

Summary of Survey Findings

The grassland onsite provides limited foraging and commuting opportunities for hedgehogs, with woodland habitat nearby.

Impacts

The proposed development will result in the loss of modified grassland. The loss of such habitats is likely to be inconsequential to local small mammal/hedgehog populations owing to their low value and the presence of more extensive habitat locally. However, construction activities could result in the death or injury of hedgehogs, if present.

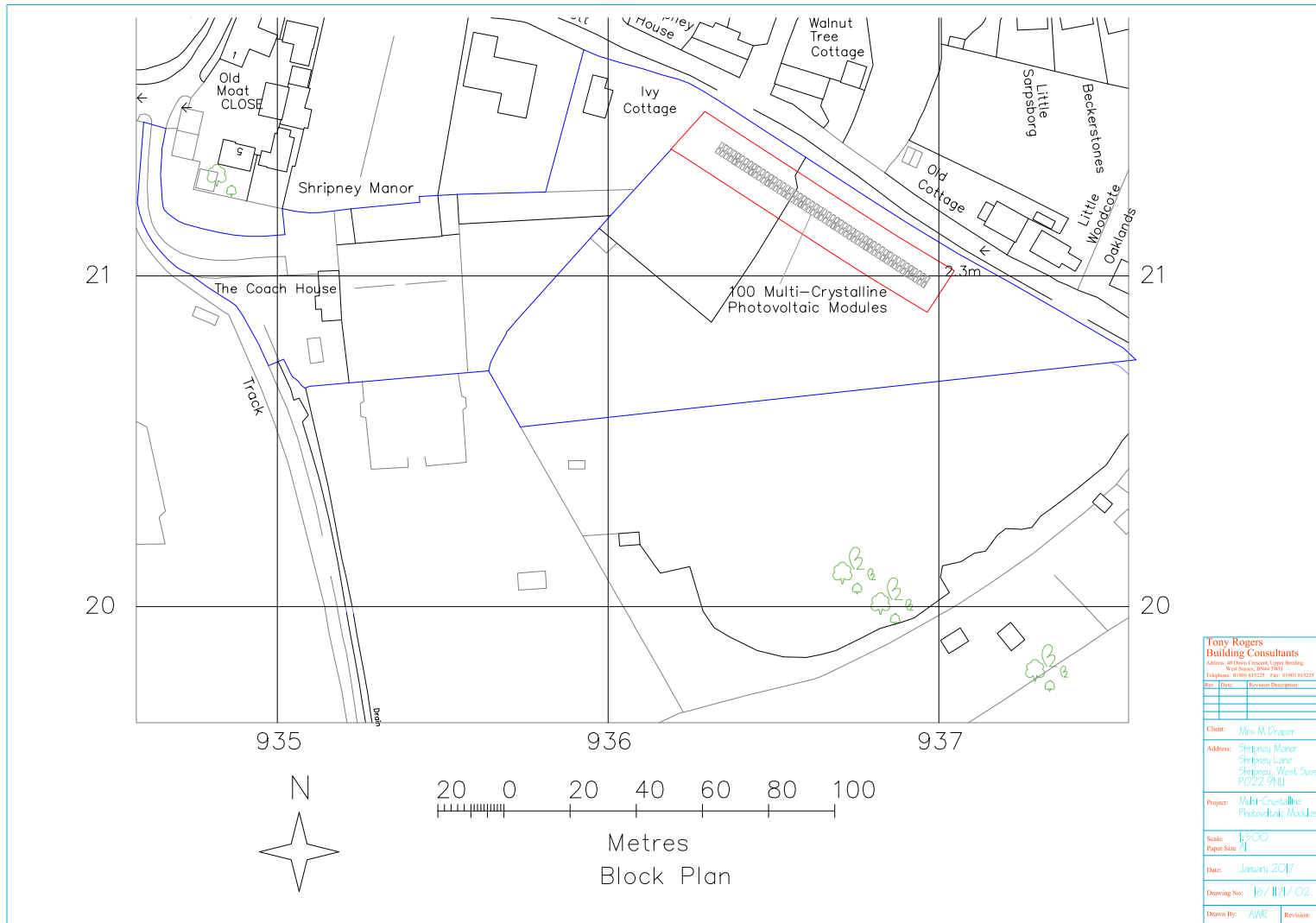
Recommendations

A precautionary working method will be implemented during construction, including the following measures:

- Any excavations will be covered overnight, or a ramp will be installed to enable any trapped animals to escape.
- Any pipework exceeding 100mm will be capped overnight.

- The use of night-time lighting will be avoided, or sensitive lighting design will be implemented to avoid light spill on to retained habitats which hedgehogs could use.
- Any chemicals or pollutants used or created by the development should be stored and disposed of correctly according to COSHH regulations.
- If any small mammals are found in the working area these should be allowed to disperse of their own accord or, if at immediate risk, should be moved by hand to a sheltered, vegetated area away from disturbance.

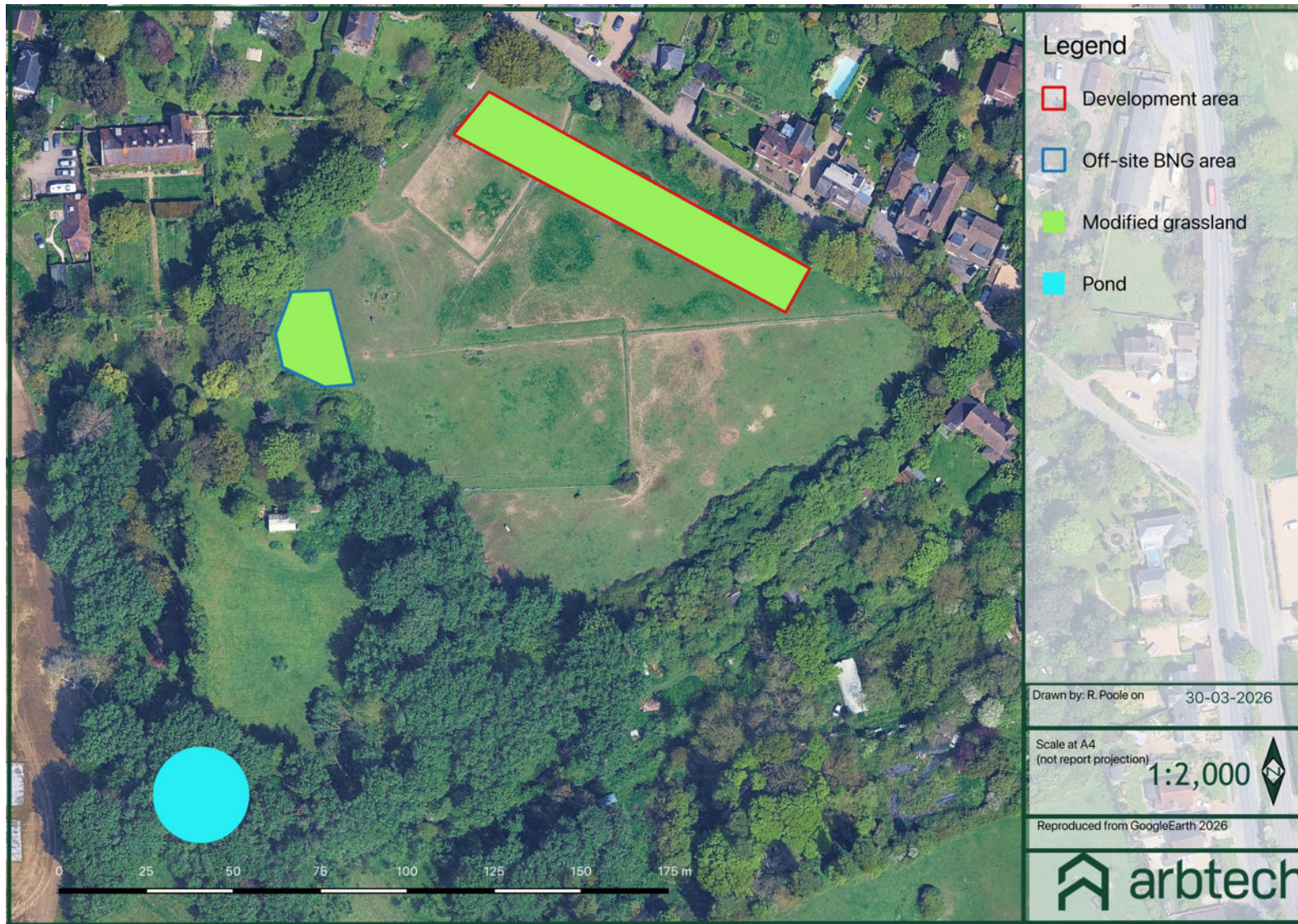
Appendix 1: Proposed Development Plan



Appendix 2: Site Location Plan



Appendix 3: Habitat Survey Plan



Appendix 4: Site Photographs



Photo 1: Modified grassland



Photo 2: View north across the site



Photo 3: Off-site pond

Appendix 5: Baseline Condition Assessments

Table 6a: Modified grassland condition assessment.

	Criteria Description	Criteria Passed?
A	There are 6-8 vascular plant species per m2 present, including at least 2 forbs. Note - this criterion is essential for achieving Moderate or Good condition.	N
B	Sward height is varied (at least 20% of the sward is less than 7 cm and at least 20% is more than 7 cm) creating microclimates which provide opportunities for vertebrates and invertebrates to live and breed.	N
C	Any scrub present accounts for less than 20% of the total grassland area. (Some scattered scrub such as bramble <i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg. may be present). Note - patches of scrub with continuous (more than 90%) cover should be classified as the relevant scrub habitat type.	Y
D	Physical damage is evident in less than 5% of total grassland area. Examples of physical damage include excessive poaching, damage from machinery use or storage, erosion caused by high levels of access, or any other damaging management activities.	N
E	Cover of bare ground is between 1% and 10%, including localised areas (for example, a concentration of rabbit warrens). For example, this could include small, scattered areas of bare ground allowing establishment of new species, or localised patches where not exceeding 10% cover.	Y
F	Cover of bracken <i>Pteridium aquilinum</i> is less than 20%.	Y
G	There is an absence of invasive non-native plant species (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA).	Y
		Total 4/7
	Condition Poor due to failing one or more essential criteria.	

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Version Control

Status	Issue	Name	Date
Proof	0.1	Romany Poole BSc (Hons) MSc, Consultant Ecologist	29/03/2026
Final	1.0	Romany Poole BSc (Hons) MSc, Consultant Ecologist	30/03/2026