THOMAS WHITE

COOPERS NURSERY, WOODSIDE LODGE, PICTS LANE, COWFOLD, HORSHAM, WEST SUSSEX RH13 8AT

Preliminary Contamination Risk Assessment

March 2026

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Environmental Assessment Services Ltd

REPORT DATA SHEET

Requirement	Data
Report Reference	892/NJA/TWhite/CoopersNursery/PCRA
Date	March 2026
Client	Thomas White
Report type	Preliminary Contamination Risk Assessment
Purpose	Planning Submission – DC/26/0220
Revisions	-
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1. CAUTION

1.1 This investigation relies largely on a superficial examination of the site plus a review of information from Horsham District Council Planning Department (and Environmental Management), plus the Environment Agency (EA). Even where no previous contaminating activity has been identified, it is possible that the site could be contaminated due to fly tipping or other unrecorded events. The age of a building may indicate probability but cannot be treated as proof of the absence or presence of asbestos. This report does not attempt to comment on the commercial value or viability of the site.

2. THE SITE & PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

2.1 The site comprises a single storey timber dwelling (Woodside Lodge) with adjoining machinery store located to the west of Picts Lane, north of the A272, northeast of Cowfold, in West Sussex. The site area is approximately 0.26 ha. The Ordnance Survey (OS) map reference for the site is TQ 23226 23194. The site elevation is approximately + 25 m OD.

2.2 It is proposed to demolish the existing dwelling and machinery store, and erect a three-bedroom, single storey replacement (self-build) dwelling with access from Picts Lane to the east, with surrounding garden.

2.3 See Appendix A for existing and proposed site plans.

3. GEOLOGY & HYDROGEOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

3.1 According to the British Geological Survey (available online), the site lies on Weald Clay Formation - mudstone.

3.2 The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) online mapping (MAGIC) shows the site to lie within an area of Unproductive Strata (Weald Clay - Mudstone), with bands of Secondary A Aquifer (associated with bands of sandstone) to the north and south. The site does not lie within a groundwater Source Protection Zone (SPZ). The site is not deemed to be hydrogeologically sensitive.

3.3 According to the EA's online Flood map for planning, the site lies within Flood Zone 1 (low risk of flooding from rivers and/or the sea).

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4. SITE DEVELOPMENT HISTORY

4.1 The site development history is derived from a review of historic maps and other references. Historic maps centred on the site are provided in Appendix B, and a summary of the relevant information provided in these maps is given in Table 4.1 below.

TABLE 4.1
SITE DEVELOPMENT HISTORY

Map date (Scale)	Features on site	Features within surrounding area (<250 m)
1875 (1:2500)	• The site comprises part of an undeveloped field to the west of a roadway (Picts Lane).	The area is characterised by regular shaped fields divided by tree lines and wooded shaws. • There is a watercourse extending east-west immediately north of the site and a pond within a depression within the southwest corner of the field in which the site lies. • Upper Barn lies ~100 m to the southeast and there is a large pond adjacent to these buildings. • There is an excavation ~ 200 m southwest of the site which appears to include scrub or trees. • Coopers Farm lies over 250 m to the west-southwest.
1897 (1:2500)	• Site remains undeveloped.	• No significant change.
1911 (1:2500)	• Site remains undeveloped.	• A lodge has been built to the south of Upper Barn and Barnfield (a large residential dwelling) has been built to the east ~200 m from the site.
1956 (1:2500)	• The site remains undeveloped, but now part of a larger field.	• The boundary line of trees to the west of the site has been removed to create one large field. • The excavation to the south west is now identified as a pond.
1978-82 (1:2500)	• Site remains undeveloped.	• No significant change.
1993 (1:2500)	• Site remains undeveloped.	• The pond to the south is shown as pond and marsh as to is the pond to the southwest of the site.
2003 (1:1250)	• Site remains undeveloped.	• No significant changes.

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4.2 The post war development history may also be traced from the planning history of the site. The significant applications relating to the site are summarised in Table 4.2 below.

TABLE 4.2
A SUMMARY OF RECENT PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Ref. Nos.	Description	Decision & Date
DC/15/0793	Prior approval for the change of use from agricultural building to dwellinghouse.	✓ 01/06/2015
DC/14/2488	Prior notification for change of use of 55 sqm of agricultural building to Class C3 (dwellinghouse) and associated operational development.	× 14/01/2015
DC/06/2582	Prior notification to erect a building for the storage of Christmas trees and agricultural machinery, together with staff facilities and office.	Approval not required 04/12/2006
DC/05/1085	Retention of gates, track, storage shed, and hardstanding for use of the land for forestry.	✓ 01/03/2006

Key: ✓ planning permission granted × planning permission refused *r* registered

4.3 More recent development history and land use can also be observed from recent aerial photographs. Aerial photographs centred on the site are provided in Appendix D, and a summary of the relevant information provided in these photographs is given in Table 4.3 below.

TABLE 4.3
A SUMMARY OF RECENT AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHS

Photo date	Features on site	Features adjacent to the site
04/09/1999	The site forms the northeast corner of an undeveloped field, which appears to be cropped (not pasture).	Pasture and crop fields surround the site, with residential development to the southeast.
17/04/2005	A surfaced yard area has been developed within the northeast corner of the site and there appears to be a small structure within the southwest corner of the yard. The remaining area has been planted with trees.	The tree plantation extends to the west and a short distance to the south. The southern half of the field also appears to have been planted, but the crop is smaller.

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13/09/2012	Yard area now partially vegetated, and the existing lodge has been developed. Vehicles and items of a similar size present around the site.	Some trees removed / thinned from land to the east. Three small sheds(?) and two mobile homes present on the land to the south.
24/04/2021	Some change but unclear.	Fewer tree to the east, land to the south does not appear managed as previous.

5. THE EXISTING SITE

5.1 The site was visited on 17 March 2026. Photographs of the site are provided in Appendix C.

5.2 The site is accessed from Picts Lane to the east of the site. The site is set within a rural area to the north of the A272. The area is characterised by small irregular shaped fields with boundary hedgerows and tree lines, and areas of woodland and scrub. Development within the immediate area includes Coopers Farm to the west of the site and a large house with grounds to the east, together with smaller residential dwellings.

5.3 The site comprises a single storey, wooden clad building with single pitched roof used for residential and workshop use. The southern half comprises an open plan lounge/bedroom/dining and kitchen area, and a lobby with ensuite. The northern half comprises the adjoining machinery area, which is a single open space with work benches and tools. To the rear (west) is a garage/car port and covered area which runs the full length of the building.

5.4 The habitable section of the building is accessed from the southern façade, where there is a covered patio, and via a doorway from the workshop to the north. The flooring within the residential section of the building is internally raised.

5.5 There is a covered area to the southwest of the building which is used to store an old Land Rover Ambulance, behind which (in the northwest corner of the building) is the garage / car port currently used to store a trailer and domestic waste bins. The flooring throughout this area is concrete.

5.6 To the rear (north) of the habitable area is the machinery area. At the time of the site visit this area was being used to store maintenance tools. The flooring is concrete.

5.7 The area surrounding the building comprises a levelled and reinforced (with road planings) driveway and parking area. The soil scrapped aside to level this area has been left in bunds along the edge. A very small amount of ash residues (thought to be from green waste) from a bonfire were noted on the surfacing. There is an access route along the eastern boundary of the site which extends

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south. A single old van has been left in this area. There is another track which extends west along the northern boundary of the site. The remaining area is used as garden space.

5.8 Overhead lines lie immediately northeast of the building, crossing the site northwest to southeast.

6. RECORD DATA SEARCH RESULTS

6.1 An environmental records search (Enviro-Insight Report) has been prepared for the site. The GroundSure EnviroInsight Report is provided in Appendix D and any items of potential contamination significance highlighted below.

6.1.1 *Past Land Use*

There are six records of potentially contaminative land uses recorded from standard 1:10,000 and 1:10,560 scale historic mapping within 500 m of the site. These include an unspecified tank 286 m east (to the east of Barnfield House), an unspecified pit 352 m southeast (to the southeast of Barnfield House), gravel pit 423 m north, two unspecified ground workings 442 and 445 m northwest, and an unspecified pit 448 m east.

There are no other records of historical tanks, historical energy features, historical petrol stations or garages, or historical military land from 1:1,250 and 1:2,500 scale historic maps within 500 m of the site.

6.1.2 *Waste and Landfill*

There are no records of Environment Agency (EA) or BGS historic or recent landfill sites or Local Authority landfill or historical waste sites within 500 m of the site. There are, however, three licensed waste sites within 500 m. These are listed below:

i. Barnfield House – deposit of waste to land as a recovery operation – 363 m south, dated 23/02/2018.
ii. Barnfield House – deposit of waste to land as a recovery operation – 423 m south, dated 23/02/2018.
iii. Barnfield House – deposit of waste to land as a recovery operation – 423 m south, dated 23/02/2018.

There are records of nine activities involving the storage, treatment, use or disposal of waste within 500 m which are exempt from needing a permit. The closest is for Barnfield House, 205 m east, for the use of waste in construction. None of the activities listed are considered likely to have impacted the site.

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6.1.3 *Current Industrial Land Use*

There are no records of current potentially contaminative industrial sites or NGD current or recent tank records within 250 m of the site.

There are no records of current or recent petrol stations, electricity transmission, or gas pipelines cables within 500 m of the site.

The site has not been determined as Contaminated Land under Part 2a of the Environmental Protection Act 1990, and there are no such sites within 500 m of the site.

There are no records of Control of Major Hazards (COMAH) sites, regulated explosive sites, hazardous substances storage/usage sites, historic licensed industrial activities, licensed industrial activities, licensed pollutant release, radioactive substance authorisations, pollutant release to surface waters, pollutant release to public sewer, list 1 or 2 dangerous substances within 500 m.

There are five records of licenced discharges to controlled waters. These are for the discharge of final / treated sewerage from properties within 500 m of the site, the closest being Barnfield Lodge, 38 m to the southeast of the site.

There are no records of pollution incidents or pollution inventory records within 500 m of the site.

6.1.4 *Hydrogeology, Hydrology and Flood Risk*

The site does not lie within a superficial aquifer.

The site lies within an area of Unproductive strata (Weald Clay - Mudstone), however, there are bands of Secondary A bedrock aquifer to the north and south of the site. The Weald Clay on site is identified to be of low to very low (fracture) permeability.

There are no groundwater or potable water abstraction licences within 2000 m of the site, however, there are five surface water abstraction licences. These are for spray irrigation. The nearest surface water abstraction licence is for a tributary of the Cowfold Stream 1537 m northeast of the site.

The site does not lie within a groundwater Source Protection Zone (inner or outer catchment).

There are a number of water features within 250 m of the site including ponds and watercourse. There is a recorded watercourse / inland river, part of the Cowfold Stream (containing water all year round in normal circumstances) located within the southwest corner of the site which extends west before joining up with a further watercourse which extends along the northern boundary of the site. There are a number of ponds (seven recorded), the closest within land approximately 60-70 m to the south of the site, and 100 m to the southeast and 160-170 m southwest of the site.

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The site lies within Flood Zone 1 (low risk of flooding). There is an area to the north of the northern site boundary which is impacted by surface water flooding, this is associated with the watercourse which extends east-west to the north of the site boundary. There is no recorded surface water flood risk for land within the site.

There is an area identified as high risk of groundwater flooding to the north of the site, bordered by an area of moderate to high risk which extends into the northern boundary of the site. The remaining area of the site is identified to be at moderate risk of groundwater flooding.

6.1.5 *Environmental and Habitat Designations*

There are records of 71 designated environmentally sensitive sites within 2000 m of the site. These all relate to ancient woodland, the closest recorded 424 m southeast of the site.

The site lies within a SSSI Impact Zone. The site lies within the Sussex North Water Supply Zone. On 31st October 2025, Natural England withdrew its position statement. It is their advice that Horsham District Council does not need to undertake a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) or consult on water scarcity issues affecting the Arun Valley sites.

The site lies within a Nitrate Vulnerable Zone. Nitrate Vulnerable Zones are designated as being at risk from agricultural nitrate pollution and were introduced in order to reduce the levels of nitrates in water. The proposed development, from agricultural to residential use, is not considered likely to increase the risk of nitrate pollution.

The site does not lie within an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty but does lie within 250 m of such a designated area.

There are eight records of Priority Habitat within 250 m of the site. These are all for deciduous woodland, the closest recorded 20 m southeast of the site, on the eastern side of Picts Lane.

6.1.6 *Natural Hazards Findings and Mining*

There is low, very low or negligible risk rating for natural hazards (shrink-swell, landslide, soluble rocks, compressible ground, collapsible rocks and running sand) within 50 m of the site as identified from BGS GeoSure Data.

There are 13 records of BritPits within 500 m. The closest, Upper Barn Pit, located 86 m south of the site, Barnfield Pit 134 m southeast and 308 m east, and Cooper's Farm Pit 221 m southwest.

The site is not within a radon-affected area. No radon protective measures are necessary.

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7. POTENTIAL SOURCES OF CONTAMINATION

7.1 Land use history at the site has comprised undeveloped land followed by the use of the site and wider field (which extends south and west) for a Christmas tree planation. The site later forming the yard areas for this operation with associated buildings, later converted for residential use ca 2015:

- Christmas tree plantation from ca 2000.
- A surface yard area is located within the northeast corner of the site and a small structure within the southwest corner of the yard appears on site between 1999 and 2005.
- In 2006 planning permission was approved for the retention of gates, track, storage shed and hardstanding used for forestry. Later the same year prior notification to erect a building for the storage of Christmas trees and agricultural machinery, together with staff facilities and office was also recorded by the Council.
- In 2015 planning permission was approved for the change of use from agricultural building to dwelling house.

7.2 Aerial imagery shows hard standing within the northeast corner of the site, where the site is accessed from Picts Lane. It is understood that vehicles and machinery have been stored on site in the past, but not in notable numbers. We are not aware of any fuel storage tanks on site now or in the past. The site has mains electric.

7.3 The potential contamination risk associated with past land appears to be minimal but may include fuel and maintenance fluids, and possibly bonfire residues and heavy metals (from the former and other common land uses). Significant contamination of the ground at the site is deemed unlikely.

7.4 It is not known if the building or any past buildings on site have contained asbestos, but the current building does not appear to include materials likely to contain asbestos.

8. RISK ASSESSMENT

8.1 The risk to future site users can be assessed using the Conceptual Model. This comprises three elements, all of which must be present for there to be a risk. The three elements of the model are; a *source* of a potentially hazardous contaminant, a *pathway* by which the contaminant can be transmitted and a *receptor* on which the contaminant may have a harmful effect. See Appendix E for the site Conceptual Model.

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8.2 Source

8.2.1 From a review of available information, it is considered that the potential for contamination at the site is low. There may possibly be some residues of fuels and/or maintenance fluids from vehicles stored on site, and some ash residues from bonfires used to clear vegetation, but no significant source/s of contamination have been identified.

8.3 Receptor

8.3.1 It is proposed to redevelop the site for residential including surrounding garden. In this case, potential *receptors* may include site workers (during the development and future maintenance of the site), future site users (considered to include children), buildings and services (including underground water mains) and the wider environment (considered not to be particularly hydrogeologically sensitive).

8.4 Source – Receptor Pathway

8.4.1 Site workers (notably demolition and ground workers) may come into contact with contaminated soil, if present, during the development of the site. Appropriate industrial hygiene measures will be required to reduce the risk of exposure to workers during the development phase.

8.4.2 Future site users / maintenance workers are likely to come into direct contact with soils on site and may grow edible produce on site. The risk posed to future site users / maintenance workers (e.g. gardeners) from significant contamination is generally thought to be low in this case.

8.4.3 Underground services and buildings may be at risk where contamination of the soil and/or groundwater is present. The risk of significant contamination likely to impact buildings and services in the case is deemed to be low.

8.4.4 There is a watercourse which lies along the northern boundary of the site. This watercourse, and the wider environment, is not deemed to be at risk of contamination from existing or proposed land use.

8.5 Potential contaminant linkages between source, pathway and receptor for the site are summarised in Table 8.1 below.

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TABLE 8.1
POTENTIAL CONTAMINANT LINKAGES

Source		Pathway	Receptor	Risk
Contaminated soil	**Contaminated groundwater**			
Minor contamination risk	Minor contamination risk	Contact with contaminated soil, groundwater or soil gas	Existing and future site users	?
		Ingestion of or skin contact with contaminated soil, dust or groundwater	Maintenance or construction workers engaged in groundworks on the site	?
		Contact with contaminated soil or ground water	Building & services	×
		Leeching of site contaminants into groundwater	Wider environment	×

Key: ✓Significant risk × No significant risk ? Uncertain risk

8.6 In this case, the potential for contamination associated with past and existing land use is deemed to be low. Whilst contaminative fluids (fuels and maintenance fluids) have been used and are likely to have been stored on site, these would have been mainly restricted to presence in vehicles and in small quantities stored within the buildings on site. There is some evidence of a bonfire located within the northern section of the yard area, but this appears to be limited to organic material (not waste). The risk of significant contamination in this case is deemed to be low.

9. CONCLUSIONS

9.1 The site lies on Weald Clay Formation – mudstone, which is an Unproductive Strata. The site does not lie within a groundwater Source Protection Zone and is not considered hydrogeologically sensitive.

9.2 The site is not considered to be at significant risk of ground gas at this time, and does not lie within a radon affected area.

9.3 The land use history at the site includes a small commercial Christmas tree farm with associated buildings, since ca 2000, and later residential use (since ca 2015).

9.4 Known past land use and current activities at the site are not thought to pose a significant contamination risk. Whilst fuel and maintenance fluids may have

been used and stored on site, the building has a thick concrete floor which will act as a suitable barrier.

9.5 The building on site is fairly modern, and no materials likely to contain asbestos were noted on site.

9.6 The overall environmental risk for the site is rated according to the risk assessment matrix in Table 9.1 below:

TABLE 9.1
RISK ASSESSMENT MATRIX

PROBABILITY OF IMPACT	CONTAMINATION POTENTIAL		
	SEVERE	MODERATE OR UNCERTAIN	MINIMAL
High	4	3	2
Medium	3	2	1
Low	2	1	1

1 = low risk, 2 = low to moderate risk, 3 = moderate to high risk, 4 = high risk.

9.7 In this case, no significant risk of contamination has been identified. The overall risk rating for the site is 1, low.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 Should any previously unidentified contamination be identified at any time prior to or during the redevelopment of the site, the Council should be notified, and remediation implemented as part of the site's redevelopment to ensure that the site is considered fit for residential use.

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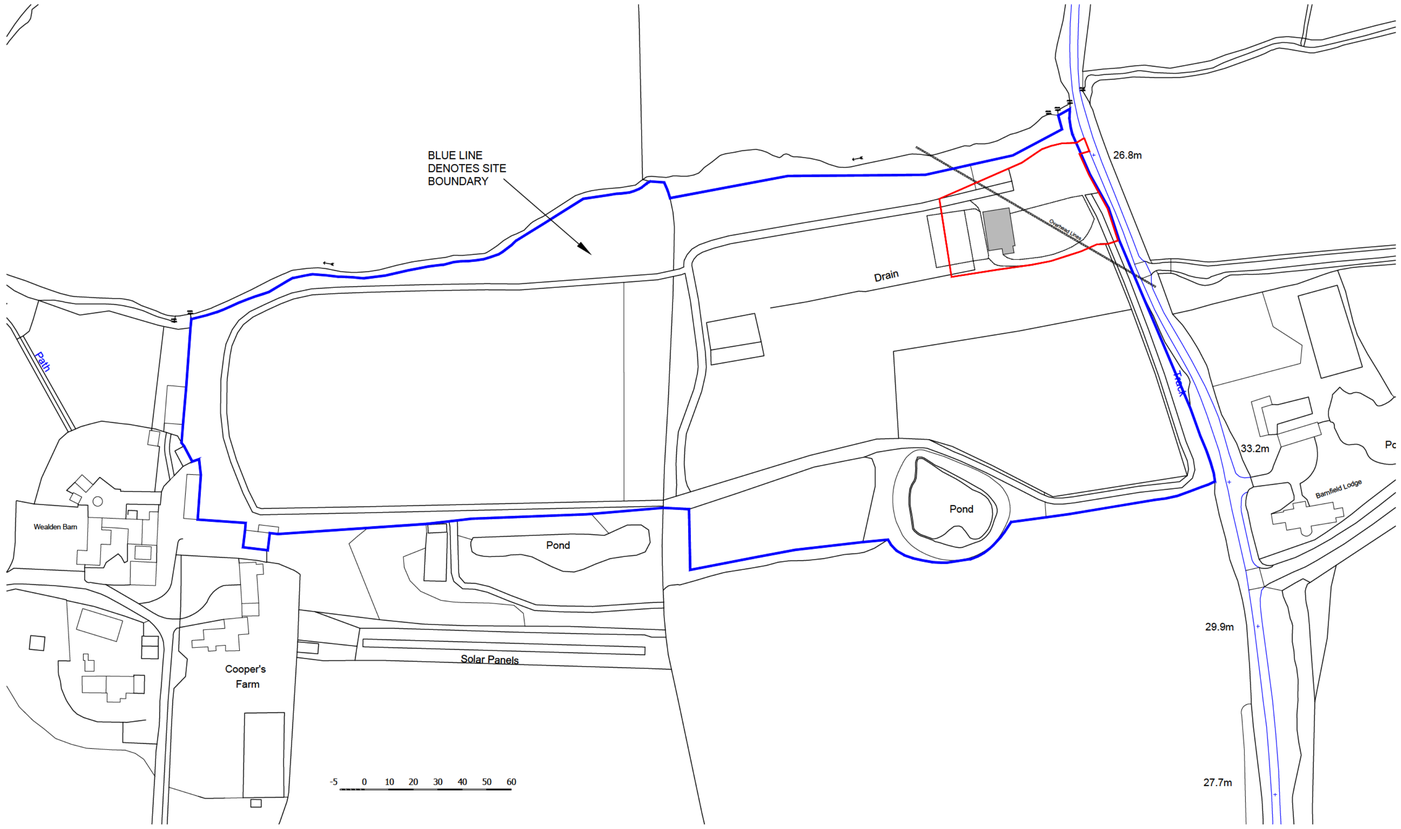
APPENDIX A: **Site Plans**



Site Location Plan 1:1250

-10 0 10 20 30 40 50 60

N

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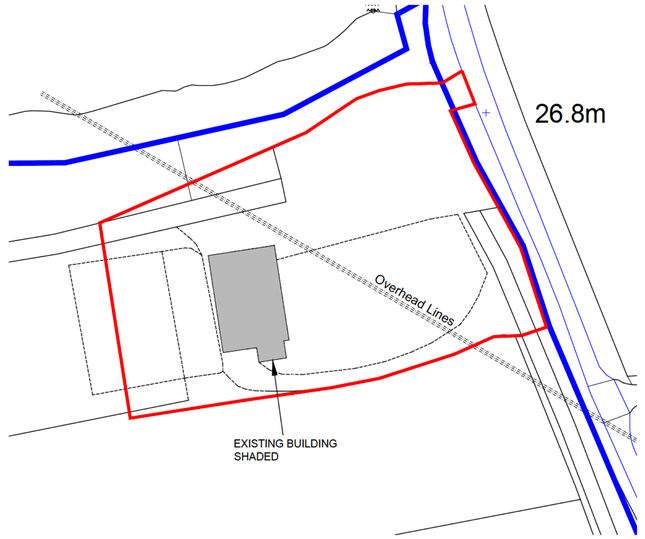

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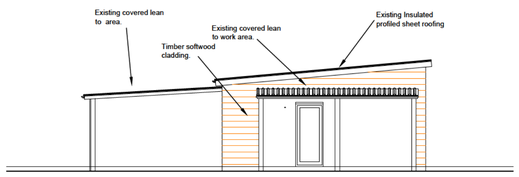
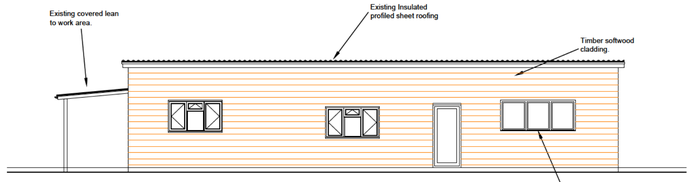
Block Plan 1:500

-5 0 10 20

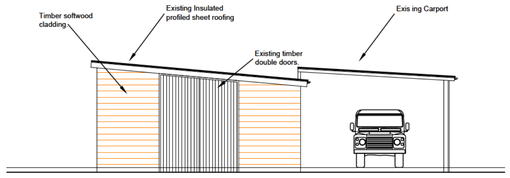
N



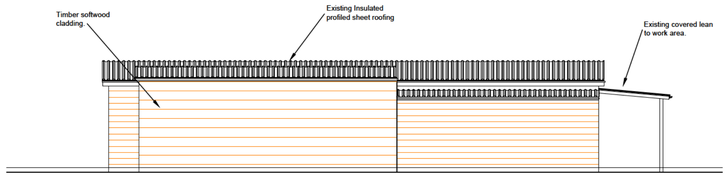
EXISTING SIDE ELEVATION (SOUTH)



EXISTING FRONT ELEVATION (EAST)



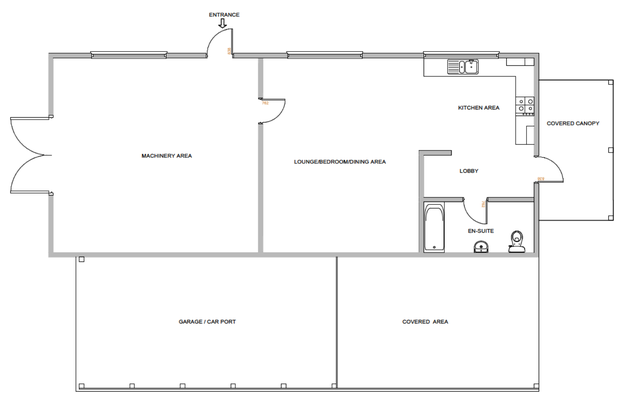
EXISTING SIDE ELEVATION (NORTH)



EXISTING REAR ELEVATION (WEST)

0m 1 2 3 4 5

Scale Bar 1:100



EXISTING FLOOR PLAN

This drawing is to be read in conjunction with all other relevant drawings and specifications.
Do not scale from this drawing. Use figured dimensions only. All levels and dimensions to be checked on site. All dimensional discrepancies are to be brought to the immediate attention of DMA BUILDING DESIGNS.
Responsibility cannot be accepted for alteration and/or deviation from this design without prior knowledge of DMA BUILDING DESIGNS.
Copyright reserved. This drawing may only be used for the client and location specified in the title block. It may not be copied or disclosed to any other third party without prior written consent from DMA BUILDING DESIGNS.
Prior to any works commencing on site, DMA BUILDING DESIGNS is to be contacted regarding the current status, revision or regulatory approval of this drawing.

Notes

REV	DESCRIPTION	DATE
P1	ISSUED FOR APPROVAL	26.01.2026

DMA BUILDING DESIGNS
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CLIENT
Mr T White

PROJECT
Woodside Lodge
Picts Lane
Cowfold

DRAWING
Proposed Replacement Dwelling
Site Location, block plan, and Existing building plans and elevations.

STATUS
PLANNING

SCALE @ A1	DATE	DRG No	REVISION
1:1250 @ A1	Nov 2025	NJA023 - PL01	P1

APPENDIX B: **Historic Maps**

See separate file

APPENDIX C: **Photographs**



Photograph 1:
Southern façade of existing dwelling.





Photographs 2, 3 and 4:

View from the site entrance into the site.



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APPENDIX D: **GroundSure EnviroInsight Report**

See separate file

APPENDIX E: **Conceptual Model**

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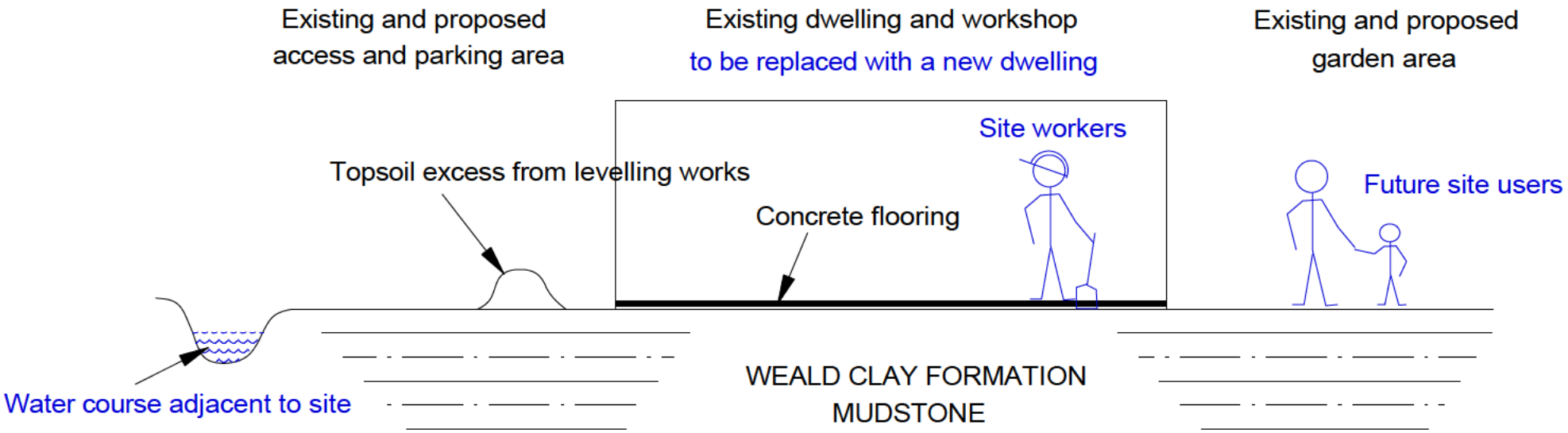
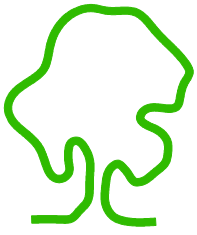
Preliminary Contamination Risk Assessment

Conceptual Site Model - March 2026



Source ⟷ Receptor
Pathway

To be reproduced in Colour



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