

Mowbray

Sports Hub

Ecology Mitigation and Management Plan

November 2025



T: 0118 989 10 86
E: info@derekfinnie.com
W: www.derekfinnie.com

20 Soames Place, Mulberry Grove
Wokingham, Berkshire RG40 5AT



COMMISSIONED BY

Legal & General (Strategic Land North Horsham) Ltd,
Moathouse Farm,
Rusper Road,
Horsham,
West Sussex,
RH12 4QR

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Report Ref: DFA25091

Derek Finnie Associates Ltd

20 Soames Place
Wokingham
Berkshire
RG40 5AT

info@derekfinnie.com

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 In March 2018 outline planning permission (Planning Reference: DC/16/1677) was granted by Horsham District Council (HDC) for a site to the north of Horsham (known as 'Land North of Horsham') for:

"A mixed-use strategic development to include housing (up to 2,750 dwellings), business park (up to 46,450 m²), retail, community centre, leisure facilities, education facilities, public open space, landscaping and related infrastructure."

- 1.1.2 This planning consent was granted subject to several conditions, five of which (Conditions 11, 12, 13, 14 and 49) relate directly to ecology. This report addresses Condition 49 of planning permission DC/16/1677 which states:

"Any application seeking approval of Reserved Matters pursuant to the planning permission shall be accompanied by a detailed Ecological Mitigation and Management Plan (EMMP), which shall be in accordance with the approved Phase-wide EMMP, shall incorporate any additional or amended recommendations arising from the up to date Ecological Surveys relevant to that Reserved Matters Area and shall include details of protection of retained habitat and avoidance measures with regards to protected and notable species. The EMMP shall include details of pre-works, during works and post-works measures including any on-going management and maintenance necessary to ensure the effectiveness of the mitigation and enhancement measures. Any application seeking approval of Reserved Matters which includes a Proposed Primary Road, as shown on the Parameter Plan: Movement and Access reference 2153A-103P received by the LPA on 6th March 2017 shall be accompanied by detailed design proposals for those road(s), including all ecological mitigation, such as dark corridors, underpasses and bridges and drawings including cross sections and details of associated fencing and landscaping to guide wildlife. The development shall thereafter be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: As this matter is fundamental to safeguard and enhance the ecology and biodiversity of the area in accordance with Policy SD6 and Policy 31 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015), the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended),

- 1.1.3 As the Sports Hub area is a stand-alone Sub Phase within the wider development, the following report also addresses Condition 13 of the outline permissions as far as it relates the Sports Hub land. Condition 13 states:

"Prior to the submission of an Ecological Mitigation and Management Plan (EMMP) with an application seeking approval of Reserved Matters pursuant to the planning permission, up to date ecological surveys shall be carried out to provide up to date

information regarding the potential of the area covered by the Reserved Matters application to support protected and notable species and inform the future design of measures that will be required to avoid, mitigate or compensate for impacts and to inform the Ecological Mitigation and Management Plan for that Reserved Matters application. These surveys shall be completed by suitably qualified ecologist(s), recognised by a relevant professional body such as CIEEM, and in accordance with current survey guidelines. The scope of these surveys shall be agreed in advance with the LPA, and may include advanced surveys for rare bat species. The surveys shall be completed in accordance with the agreed scope prior to the submission of the EMMP for that Reserved Matters area and the results and associated reports appended to the Ecological Mitigation and Management Plan for that Reserved Matters area."

- 1.1.4 Furthermore, there is a specific condition, Condition 64, relating to lighting and the potential for negative impacts upon ecological receptors within retained habitats. Condition 64 states:

Any application for approval of Reserved Matters within the Sports Sub-Phase shall include details of the ambient light levels of surrounding vegetation at night to demonstrate existing baseline light levels and a scheme of measures to ensure that any external lighting serving the Sports Hub area does not impact harmfully on the ability of the surrounding vegetation to provide ecological habitat, including details of the hours of operation of the proposed lighting, the proposed luminance levels of any lighting and screening measures such as baffles to light fittings to ensure that light spill onto the surrounding mature trees is no greater than 1 lux or higher than the existing baseline light levels. The development shall thereafter be carried out and operated in accordance with the approved details.

- 1.1.5 The following report, therefore, has been prepared to provide sufficient information to allow Conditions 13, 49 and 64 to be discharged as far as they relate to the Sports Hub Reserved Matters Application. For consistency across and between Phases, this EMMP is based upon the approved EMMP submitted for Phase 1A, prepared by Bioscan (Bioscan Report Ref: E1585/EMMP/P1A/R1/V1).

2 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

2.1 Overall aims and objectives and consistency with other plans

- 2.1.1 The primary aim of this EMMP is to provide details of the mitigation, enhancements and management that will be implemented for the benefit of the ecology, landscape and surface water drainage features within the Sports Hub RMA area.

2.2 Sources of information

- 2.2.1 The objectives for the management detailed in this EMMP are derived from, and are consistent, with the recommendations and commitments set out in the following planning documents:

- Chapter 12 of the Environmental Statement (ES), its appendices, and the subsequent ES addendum;
- Outline Ecological Mitigation and Management Plan (dated December 2016); and
- Updated Ecology Appendices;
- Reports submitted in relation to Condition 13 for Phase 1A, 1B, 1C, 1D and Sports Hub (Planning Ref: DISC/19/0132).

- 2.2.2 In addition to the above, a verification Phase 1 survey was undertaken across the Sports Hub land in March 2022 and October 2025 to ensure that the habitats within the Sports Hub land had not changed significantly since the previous surveys and the results of said surveys are still valid.

2.3 Overall Management Strategies

- 2.3.1 In summary, the recommendations for the wider site include:

- The inclusion of wildlife underpasses under roads to be included in the scheme to assist in retaining existing commuting routes for great crested newts (and small mammals) through the application site;
- To obtain derogation licences for works that have the potential to impact great crested newts, bats and hazel dormice where necessary;
- To design SuDS features, including open swales, that are to be incorporated into the scheme, to increase the quality of surface water discharge, and to provide additional features for great crested newts and foraging bats;
- To manage the Green Infrastructure for a range of species including reptiles, [REDACTED] great crested newts, dormouse and bats;
- To produce an ecological management plan for the larger areas of Green Infrastructure, with the plan including the mowing regimes for areas of semi-natural grassland for the benefit of reptiles and cutting regimes for the hedgerows;
- To mount bat and bird boxes on retained trees;
- To use native species of a composition present within the existing woodland and hedgerows for the creation of the landscape buffers;
- To include fruit/berry bushes within the landscape plan to provide an additional foraging resource for [REDACTED] birds.



2.3.2 Taking the recommendations above into account, the specific objectives for the Sports Hub RMA are to:

- Ensure avoidance and mitigation measures are implemented during construction to avoid adverse effects upon protected species;
- Manage/mitigate for the urbanising effects of the development on habitats and species and ensure their long-term protection and management post-construction;
- Ensure the habitats within the scheme are connected and permeable to allow species to pass through the site;
- Ensure the proposed planting will enhance the biodiversity and nature conservation interest of the RMA and the wider development site;
- Provide a biodiversity resource which is valued by local residents, and which can deliver nature-related education to residents and other visitors;
- Establish and undertake a programme of monitoring and reporting post-construction.

3 BASELINE ECOLOGICAL INFORMATION

3.1 Background to survey work undertaken

- 3.1.1 The RMA, along with the wider Mowbray site, has been subject to numerous ecological studies undertaken since 2010. The results of these surveys have enabled a picture of the ecological interest of the site to be built up. The surveys were initially carried out to support the allocation of the site in the local plan (Horsham District Planning Framework 2015), and then, following allocation, further ecological surveys were undertaken to inform the application for outline planning consent (Planning Ref: DC/16/1677).
- 3.1.2 Further surveys of the Phase I area were undertaken in 2018, 2019 and 2020 and covered all of the RMA area that is the subject of this report. The methodologies of the 2018 surveys were scoped, as required under Condition 13 of the OPP, with HDC (Bioscan, Report Ref: E1585R1/Scope/P1/V1, dated July 2018). The scope for the 2019 ecological surveys, which covered both Phase I and the proposed Sports Hub area, were set out in Bioscan report E1585R1/Scope/P1/V2 and subsequently agreed by HDC through a further partial discharge of Condition 13 in June 2019 (HDC reference: DISC/19/0132).
- 3.1.3 To ensure the findings of the previous survey reports still remain valid for the Sports Hub land, a verification survey of the Phase 1 land was undertaken on the 24th March 2022 and 28th October 2025.
- 3.1.4 The surveys undertaken across the current RMA, are presented in detail in the above reports, hence are not repeated here. However, a summary of the findings is presented in the following sections.

3.2 Habitats

- 3.2.1 The RMA principally comprises two areas of former arable land, which appear not to have been sown with an arable crop since 2021. As such, a species poor, semi-improved grassland community has begun to develop in conjunction with some cereal crop plants, presumably growing from previous years seeds.
- 3.2.2 Chennells Brook runs from the northeast corner of the RMA area before entering a culvert under the A246 on the southern boundary of the Site.
- 3.2.3 To the north of the RMA is an area of ancient woodland, separated from the site by a bridleway; a hawthorn and blackthorn dominated hedge runs along the southern boundary of the bridleway.
- 3.2.4 The banks of Chennells Brook support linear belts of semi-mature trees, comprising oak, ash and willow.

3.3 Fauna

- 3.3.1 No reptiles are known to be present in the vicinity of the RMA. Great crested newts have been recorded within a waterbody known as P2 some 100m to the north of the RMA area, with a maximum count of 5 in 2025. Given the nature of the habitats within the site, the RMA area itself is unlikely to provide valuable terrestrial habitat for this species.



- 
- 3.3.3 Bat foraging activity in and around the RMA is relatively low when compared to the wider site, with only common pipistrelle, soprano pipistrelle, *Myotis* species and brown-long eared bat being recorded.
- 3.3.4 No bat roosts have been identified within any of the trees which may have to be removed to facilitate the development with all being assessed as having negligible or Low potential to support bats. There are no buildings within the RMA area.
- 3.3.5 Dormouse have been recorded within the tree belt along the southern boundary of the RMA area as well as along the southern section of the linear tree belts either side of Chennell Brook.
- 3.3.6 Several common and widespread bird species have been recorded breeding within the RMA, including house sparrow, which is listed on the Red list of Birds of Conservation Concern.

3.4 Summary of Ecological Receptors

- 3.4.1 Based on the above, the key ecological receptors relevant to this RMA area are limited and have been identified as:
- Bats
 - Nesting birds
 - Dormouse
 - Higher value habitats (hedgerows, mature trees)

4 AVOIDANCE / DESIGN MITIGATION/ COMPENSATION

4.1 Background

4.1.1 Since the project's inception, the designers have been evolving a detailed masterplan for the site. The production of the masterplan has been an iterative process, with input from the Project Ecologist to ensure that avoidance measures and ecological mitigation measures have been included within the scheme in the appropriate locations. The design and layout of the RMA has again been an iterative process, with ecological input to the landscape scheme to provide ecological enhancement measures. One of the objectives of the Sports Hub is to maximise the biodiversity value of the RMA through creating species rich habitats wherever possible, hence the design has sought to retain the vast majority of valuable ecological receptors within the RMA, whilst providing new species rich habitats through appropriate new planting. The Landscape Masterplan, produced by David Jarvis Associates, has been submitted in support of this RMA.

4.1.2 Nevertheless, it is assessed that the impacts that cannot be avoided by design are as follows:

- A limited amount of vegetation removal to facilitate access.

5 CONSTRUCTION PHASE MITIGATION/COMPENSATION

5.1 Bats

- 5.1.1 Several bat species have been recorded foraging within the RMA area, although the activity levels were found to be lower compared to the wider area. Whilst no tree roosts have to date been confirmed within the RMA, the limited number of trees that will be removed to facilitate the RMA will be re-inspected for bat potential bat roost features prior to the commencement of works. Should evidence of bats be found, then a derogation licence from Natural England will be sought prior to their removal.
- 5.1.2 The potential for indirect impact upon bats through light spill on retained habitats is discussed in Section 6 of this report.
- 5.1.3 Compensation. In part to compensate for the loss limited amount of vegetation clearance required within the RMA, the proposals incorporate new landscape planting throughout the RMA area. This new native planting will provide new foraging opportunities for bat, whilst also creating new green corridors across the RMA area. In addition, the provision of SuDS features towards the south of the RMA will provide additional new foraging opportunities for bats.
- 5.1.4 Enhancement. Whilst no bat roosts have been confirmed within the mature trees within the RMA area, six bat boxes will be installed on retained trees within the RMA area to create new roosting opportunities (indicative locations provided on Figure 2) for species such as pipistrelles, long-eared bats and barbastelle.

5.2 Dormouse

- 5.2.1 A small amount of vegetation may need to be cleared around the periphery of the RMA area due to encroachment for the existing vegetation. Given the presence of dormouse within habitat connected to the areas identified for clearance, the vegetation will need to be removed giving due regard to the potential presence of dormouse.
- 5.2.2 Mitigation. Given the relatively small amount of vegetation that would need to be removed, it may be possible to implement the works under a watching brief. However, if the quantity and quality, in terms of the potential to support dormouse, is deemed to be reasonable, the consideration will be given to completing the works under a derogation licence.
- 5.2.3 Additional areas of dormouse compensation planting will also be undertaken within the Sports Hub area as part of a wider dormouse compensation strategy.

5.3 Reptiles

- 5.3.1 Background. Although no reptiles have been encountered within the RMA area, low populations of slow-worm, common lizard and grass snake have been encountered within the wider Phase 1 area. The habitats within the RMA are considered largely unsuitable for reptiles. Nevertheless, a precautionary approach will be adopted during any necessary site clearance works.



5.3.2 Mitigation. Where vegetation is to be removed, progressive strimming / mowing will take place to encourage any reptiles that may be present to move off of their own volition. The clearance works will only be undertaken during the period when reptiles are active, nominally mid-March to September.

5.3.3 The vegetation clearance will be as follows:

- The vegetation will be subject to a first cut to a height no less than 15cm;
- Cut material will be raked off to one side.
- After a minimum of 24 hours, a second cut to as short as possible will be made, hence leaving the vegetation too short to be suitable for reptiles.



5.5 Nesting Birds

5.5.1 Mitigation. In order to avoid impacting nesting birds, works to areas capable of supporting birds' nests will be carried out outside the breeding bird season, nominally March to August inclusive.

5.5.2 If vegetation clearance is unavoidable during the nesting bird season, then a pre-clearance check for nesting birds by an experienced ecologist will be carried out no more than 48 hours prior to the commencement of clearance. In the event that any active bird nests are encountered, the nest will be retained *in situ* until nest is deemed no longer active by the supervising ecologist. If an active nest is found within the vegetation to be removed, then a buffer zone of at five metres from the nest will be established using barrier tape, and the nest will be monitored until such time as it can be confirmed that the chicks have fledged and/or the nest is no longer in active use. Only then will vegetation removal be permitted to continue.

5.5.3 Enhancement/Compensation. In order to enhance the area for nesting birds ten nest boxes will be installed on trees within the RMA to create new nesting opportunities (See Figure 2 for indicative locations). These will comprise tits boxes (Schwegler 1B Bird Box or similar), open fronted boxes and woodpecker boxes.

5.6 Other mitigation/compensation/enhancements

- 5.6.1 Wetland Wildflower areas. The ground for this area, in the south west corner of the RMA, will be suitably prepared to receive the seed mix in accordance with the seed manufacture's specification. This will then be sown with a wildflower seed mix such as Emorsgate EM8- Meadow Mixture for Wetlands. Sowing will be carried in autumn or spring and once sown the ground will be rolled. During the first growing season after sowing the vegetation will be cut regularly at a height of 40-60mm in order to control undesirable weeds. Spot treatment of residual perennial weeds such as docks will be undertaken as appropriate. These areas will not only provide a visually attractive floral display but will also provide a foraging resource for bees and butterflies.
- 5.6.2 Tree planting. Approximately 150 new native trees will be planted within the RMA area. The exact location and species to be used are shown on David Jarvis Drawing 2898-5-2-29 DR-0002.
- 5.6.3 Scrub planting. Over 1700m² of new scrub planting, utilising native species, will be undertaken throughout the RMA area as shown on David Jarvis Drawing 2898-5-2-29 DR-0002.

6 SPORTS HUB LIGHTING

6.1 Existing Light Levels

- 6.1.1 There are no existing light levels within the Sports Hub RMA area. Hence, as a precaution, it has been assumed that the current levels are the same as the ambient background level, which is approximately 0.3 lux on a clear full moon.

6.2 Proposed Lighting

- 6.2.1 It is currently proposed to light the artificial grass pitch as well as the three multiuse games areas (MUGA) located in the southwest of the RMA. The pitches will be floodlit using LED luminaires to achieve a maintained average horizontal illumination level of 200 lux with a uniformity (Min/Ave) >0.6, in accordance with principal sports guidance. However, back guards will be fitted onto all lighting columns to minimise the amount of light spill onto retained habitats.

6.3 Lighting levels

- 6.3.1 As can be seen from Figure 3 the light levels will be below 1 lux within the areas of retained vegetation, with the exception of a small area in the extreme northwest corner of the RMA area. Here, a section of Group G74 and the southern canopy of T71 are just within the 1 lux contour.
- 6.3.2 Flood lighting will only be used until 21:15hrs between April and October, extending to 22:30 between November and March. As bats are generally inactive during the period from early October until mid April, increased light levels across the RMA resulting from the flood lights used until 21:15hrs could only potentially indirectly impact bats for a limited time from mid-April to the third week of May and from the first week in August until the end of September.
- 6.3.3 Hence, when the low lights levels and restricted use are considered together, the potential adverse impact on surrounding retained vegetation is assessed to be negligible.

7 AFTERCARE AND MANAGEMENT

7.1 Background

- 7.1.1 The aftercare and management below will be carried out by a management company engaged by L&G or by Roffey Football Club, though this is currently subject of discussions.

7.2 Wet grassland

- 7.2.1 Following the first growing season after creation, a cut will be taken in early spring and in late summer/early autumn at a height of approximately 5cm. The cut vegetation will be left on the grassland for no more than seven days to aid seed dispersal before removal to the designated composting area either on-site or off-site. If perennial weeds such as docks, nettles and ragwort start to become established then these will be spot treated by the management company before they set seed.

7.3 Tree and Scrub Management

- 7.3.1 Once planted, the long-term management for the tree and scrub planting will be minimal. The scrub will be monitored on a three-year basis and cut back if it encroaches into the surrounding grassland areas excessively.

8 MONITORING

8.1 Ecological Monitoring

8.1.1 The ecological monitoring programme will comprise the following:

- Bat boxes. These will be checked in Years 4 and 5 after installation in October for evidence of bats by a licenced bat ecologist. Concurrently, the condition of the boxes and brackets will be checked and replaced if damaged or are showing signs of wear.
- Bird boxes. These will be cleared of nest debris annually for the first five years after construction in October. Concurrently, the condition of the boxes and brackets will be checked and replaced if damaged or are showing signs of wear.
- Log piles. The log piles will be checked during the walkover surveys in years 1 and 2 after creation. However, the log piles will not be dismantled to facilitate the surveys to avoid disruption to wildlife, so the monitoring will check for any easily accessible small mammal signs.
- Wetland planting areas. The walkover surveys in years 1 and 5 after the planting has been carried out will incorporate checks of the wildflower and wetland meadow areas to assess how their growth is progressing. The management plan will be modified as appropriate based on the survey findings.
- Landscape planting. The walkover surveys in years 1 and 5 after the planting has been carried out will incorporate checks of all the landscape planting to assess how their development is progressing.
- Appropriate remedial action will be taken in the event that any of the monitored features are not assessed to be in satisfactory condition and/or functioning as required. The results of the above surveys will be used to inform the eventual LEMP as appropriate.

8.2 Monitoring Report

8.2.1 An annual monitoring report covering the RMA will be submitted to the LPA for the first two years post completion of Sports Hub.



- Legend
- Broad-leaved woodland
 - Watercourse
 - Bare ground
 - SI Species poor grassland

Drawing Number:
Figure 1

Title:
Phase 1 Habitat Map

Date:
November 2025

Project:
Sports Hub Access

Client:
L & G

Derek Finnie Associates
CONSULTANT ECOLOGISTS

20 Soames Place
Wokingham
Berks RG40 5AT

info@derekfinnie.com



Legend

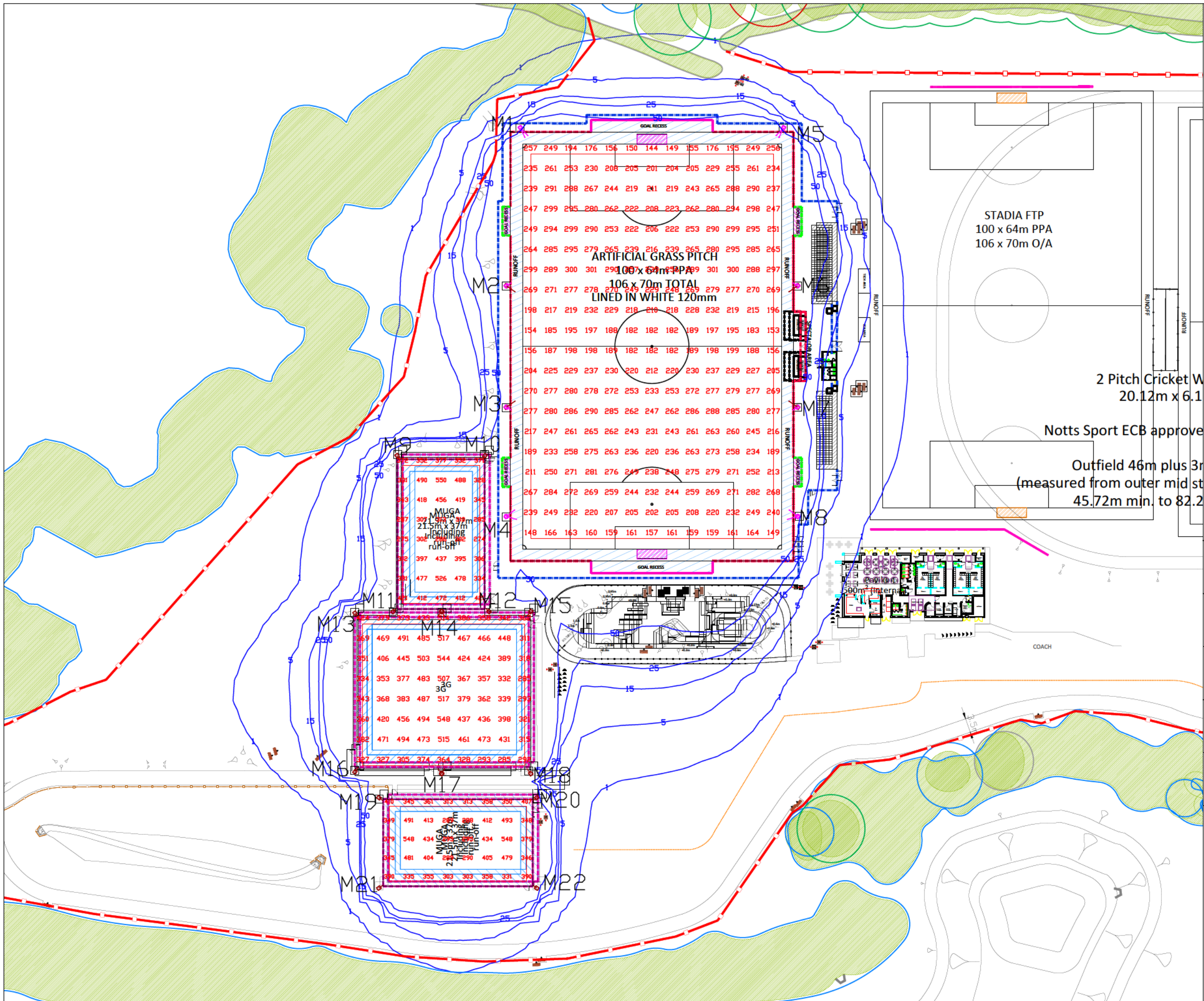
● Bat box

Drawing Number:	Figure 2
Title:	Bat box locations
Date:	November 2025
Project:	Sports Hub
Client:	L & G

Derek Finnie Associates[®]
CONSULTANT ECOLOGISTS

20 Soames Place
Wokingham
Berks RG40 5AT

info@derekfinnie.com



Legend

Based on data provided by Halliday Lighting

Drawing Number:

Figure 3

Title:

Lux Levels

Date:

November 2025

Project:

Sports Hub

Client:

L&G



Derek Finnie Associates
CONSULTANT ECOLOGISTS

20 Soames Place
Wokingham
Berks RG40 5AT

info@derekfinnie.com