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Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

Survey site:

Land off Okehurst Road, Billingshurst, RH14 9BW

Client:

British Dog Fields

Survey date:

19th November 2025

Project:

This report is prepared for information only. No known proposed plans were provided and as such, this is a draft PEA report to be updated upon receipt of finalised plans.

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

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

The site survey was undertaken by Chantae Wells BSc (Hons) MSC MRSB, (Accredited Agent on Natural England Bat Licence Number: 2018-33540-CLS-CLS and Great Crested Newt Licence holder: 2025-13005-CL08-GCN).					
Date of survey	Temperature (°C)	Humidity (%)	Cloud Cover (%)	Wind (km/h)	Rain
19/11/2025	3	86	90	31	Light

Ecological Survey Factor Conclusion, Impact or Recommendations	Detailed using desk study and site survey. Any specific limitations noted within relevant section. 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.
Habitats and plants (see habitat map in appendix 1, location plan in appendix 2, photos in appendix 3 and proposal plan in appendix 4). Botanical species are described with reference to the DAFOR scale (D = Dominant; A = Abundant, F = Frequent, O = Occasional, R = Rare).	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	The site is located in Billingshurst, at National Grid Reference TQ 07552 29672, with an area of approximately 7.8km², comprised of grassland. The site is bordered to the north and east by ancient woodland, to the west by further grass fields and to the south by Okehurst road and further grass fields. There are numerous pockets of woodland within the wider landscape. On site Habitats- <u>Modified grassland (g4)</u> The site is comprised of modified grass field, surrounded by woodland. The grass field included species composition: dominant cocksfoot and Yorkshire fog grass, abundant white clover, with frequent creeping buttercup, ragwort,

	ground ivy and occasional dandelion, teasel. There were no invasive species observed, no evidence of physical damage, <5% scattered scrub, >5% bare ground and a uniform sward height of >7cm. <u>Hedgerow (h2a)</u> The hedgerow has no gaps, are >1.5m width and height, no invasive species, no evidence of physical damage and have 1m of undisturbed vegetation on one side. Species include dogwood, hazel, hawthorn and holly. <u>Other broadleaved woodland (w1g)</u> The north and east of the site is bordered by woodland. The woodland is dominated by oak, with frequent hazel, European holly and sycamore, with an understory of bramble. Local notable habitats There is ancient woodland immediately adjacent to the site. Within 2km of the site, the following notable habitats are present: Traditional Orchard (the closest being 1.5km south-east) Coastal and Floodplain Grazing Marsh (the closest being 400m west)
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	No known proposal, therefore impacts unknown.
<i>Recommendations</i>	It is likely that a Construction Ecological Management Plan will be required to reduce risk of impacts to the ancient woodland.

	The development will be required to demonstrate a minimum of 10% biodiversity net gain, as per current Natural England Guidance, unless one of the following exemptions apply: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/biodiversity-net-gain-exempt-developments
Locality and Designated Sites	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	On-site designations The site is not subject to any statutory designations. Statutory designated sites (within 2km) There is one statutory designated site located within 2km of the site: Coppedhall Hanger Site of Special Scientific Interest is located approximately 2km south of the site. The site is important for the detailed evidence it yields on palaeoclimate, depositional environments and origins of the detritus. The presence of non-statutory designation sites cannot be ascertained without biological records data.
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	No known proposal, therefore impacts unknown. However, no direct impacts are anticipated on statutory designated sites given the distance of the site to such designated sites (where known).
<i>Recommendations</i>	Best practice to minimise the risk of pollution to the nearby non-statutory designated sites (which may be present in the local area) must be followed.

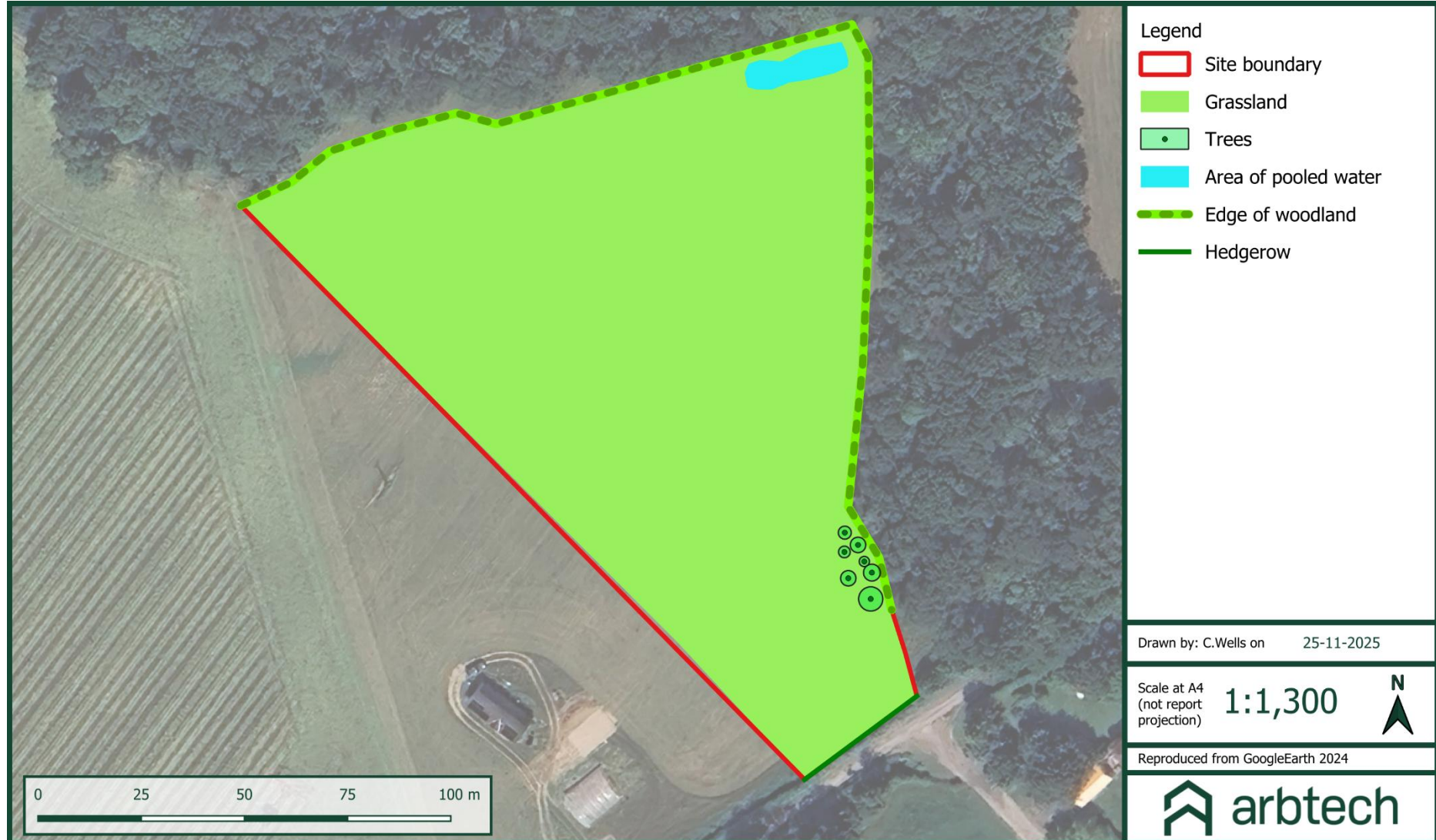
Invasive / Non-native species																
Summary of Survey Findings		No problematic invasive or non-native species recorded on site.														
Foreseen Impacts		No impacts anticipated.														
Recommendations		No further surveys but remain vigilant.														
Invertebrates																
Summary of Survey Findings		The grassland, hedgerows and adjacent woodland within the site provide suitable habitat for common invertebrates. The site contains no habitat to support notable assemblages of invertebrates.														
Foreseen Impacts		No known proposal, therefore impacts unknown.														
Recommendations		No further surveys are anticipated.														
Bats																
Summary of Survey Findings		EPSLs A search of the magic.gov.uk database for granted EPSLs within a 2km radius of the site has been completed. There are two granted EPSL within a 2km radius of site.														
		<table><tr><th>EPSL reference</th><th>Bat species affected</th><th>Distance from site</th><th>Impacts allowed by licence</th></tr><tr><td>2018-33753-EPS-MIT</td><td>Soprano pipistrelle</td><td>1km north</td><td>Destruction of a resting place</td></tr><tr><td>EPSM2010-2491</td><td>Common pipistrelle, Brown long-eared, Natterers'</td><td>650m north-west</td><td>Damage and destruction of a breeding place</td></tr></table>			EPSL reference	Bat species affected	Distance from site	Impacts allowed by licence	2018-33753-EPS-MIT	Soprano pipistrelle	1km north	Destruction of a resting place	EPSM2010-2491	Common pipistrelle, Brown long-eared, Natterers'	650m north-west	Damage and destruction of a breeding place
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	Roosting habitat There is no suitable roosting habitat within the site, however the immediately adjacent woodland provides suitable roosting habitat for local bats. Foraging and commuting bats The grass field and woodland edge offer suitable foraging and commuting habitat for bats.
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	No known proposal, therefore impacts unknown.
<i>Recommendations</i>	Unknown at this time. If proposals include an increase in current lightening levels, then, a wildlife sensitive lighting strategy will be adopted in order to reduce impacts to foraging and commuting bats.
Birds	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	The trees within the woodland offer suitable nesting opportunities for common bird species.
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	No known proposal, therefore impacts unknown.
<i>Recommendations</i>	Unknown at this time.
Reptiles	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	The grass field and woodland edge are suitable for foraging and commuting reptiles and the woodland offers suitable sheltering opportunities for reptiles.
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	No known proposal, therefore impacts unknown.
<i>Recommendations</i>	Unknown at this time.

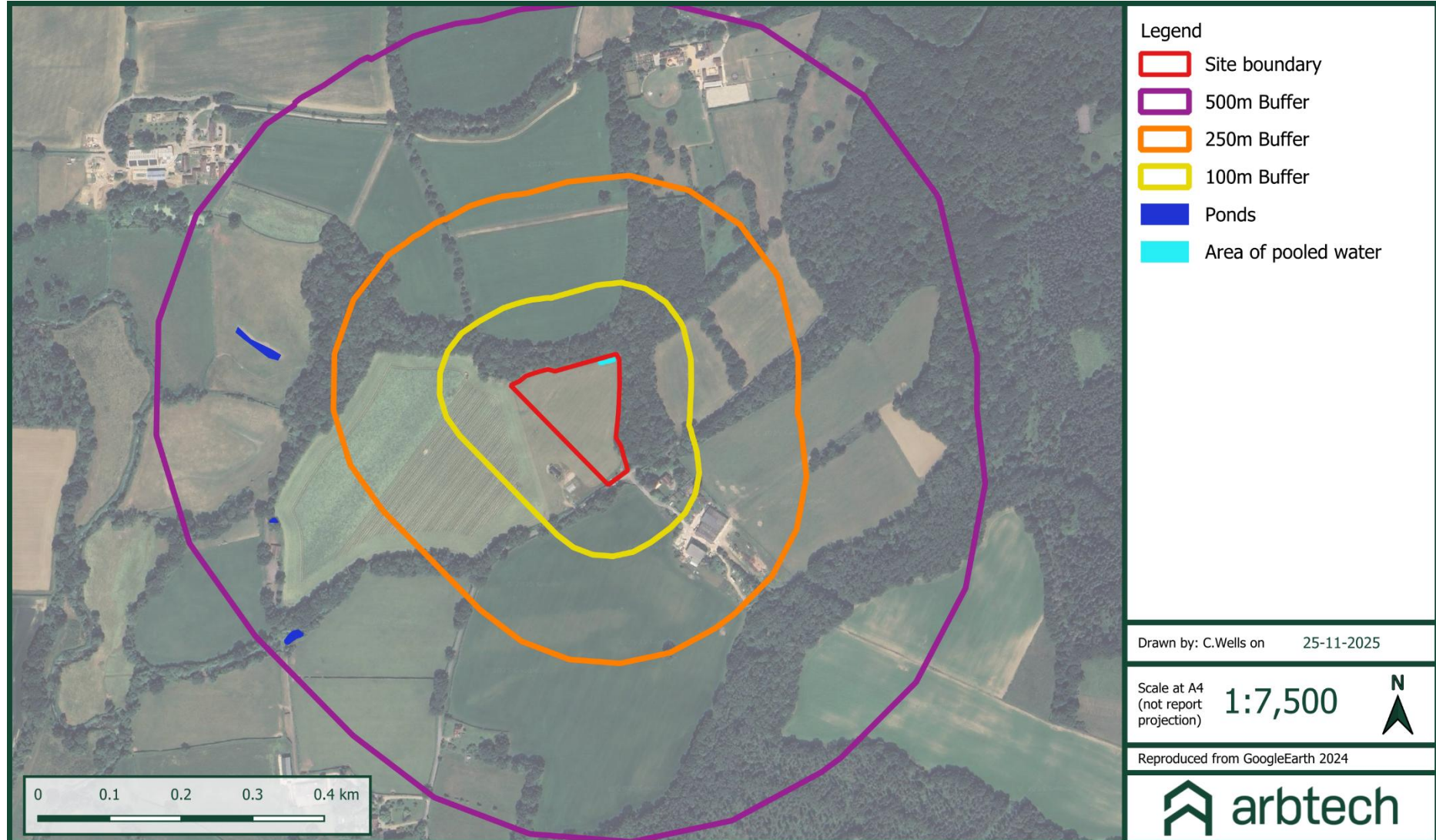
Amphibians	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	A review of the MAGIC database returned no granted EPSL records for great crested newts within 2km of the site. The grass field and woodland edge are suitable for foraging and commuting amphibians and the woodland offers suitable sheltering opportunities. At the time of survey, the north-most part of the field was waterlogged. However, this is not a permanent pond, lacked vegetation and is unsuitable for breeding amphibians. Great crested newts exist in metapopulations and are known to utilise ponds and their connecting terrestrial habitat during their life cycle; great crested newts are typically found within terrestrial habitats up to 500m from breeding ponds (Langton et al. 2001). A review of areal imagery indicates the presence of three ponds within 500m (see appendix 1b for pond map).
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	No known proposal, therefore impacts unknown.
<i>Recommendations</i>	Unknown at this time.

Riparian animals	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	There are no watercourses on or connected to the site.
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	No impacts anticipated given there is no suitable habitat.
<i>Recommendations</i>	None.
Hazel dormouse	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	There are no granted EPSLs for dormice within 2km of the site. Dormice typically utilise a three-dimensional habitat structure as to commute between feeding and breeding sites whilst avoiding predation; the habitats within the site (grassland) do not support this habitat structure. However, the adjacent woodland has suitability for dormice. The hedgerows provide a small amount of suitable habitat.
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	No known proposal, therefore impacts unknown.
<i>Recommendations</i>	Unknown at this time.
Other e.g. hedgehog and other mammals	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	The grassland and the woodland offer good foraging, commuting and sheltering habitat for hedgehogs and other mammals.
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	No known proposal, therefore impacts unknown.
<i>Recommendations</i>	Unknown at this time.

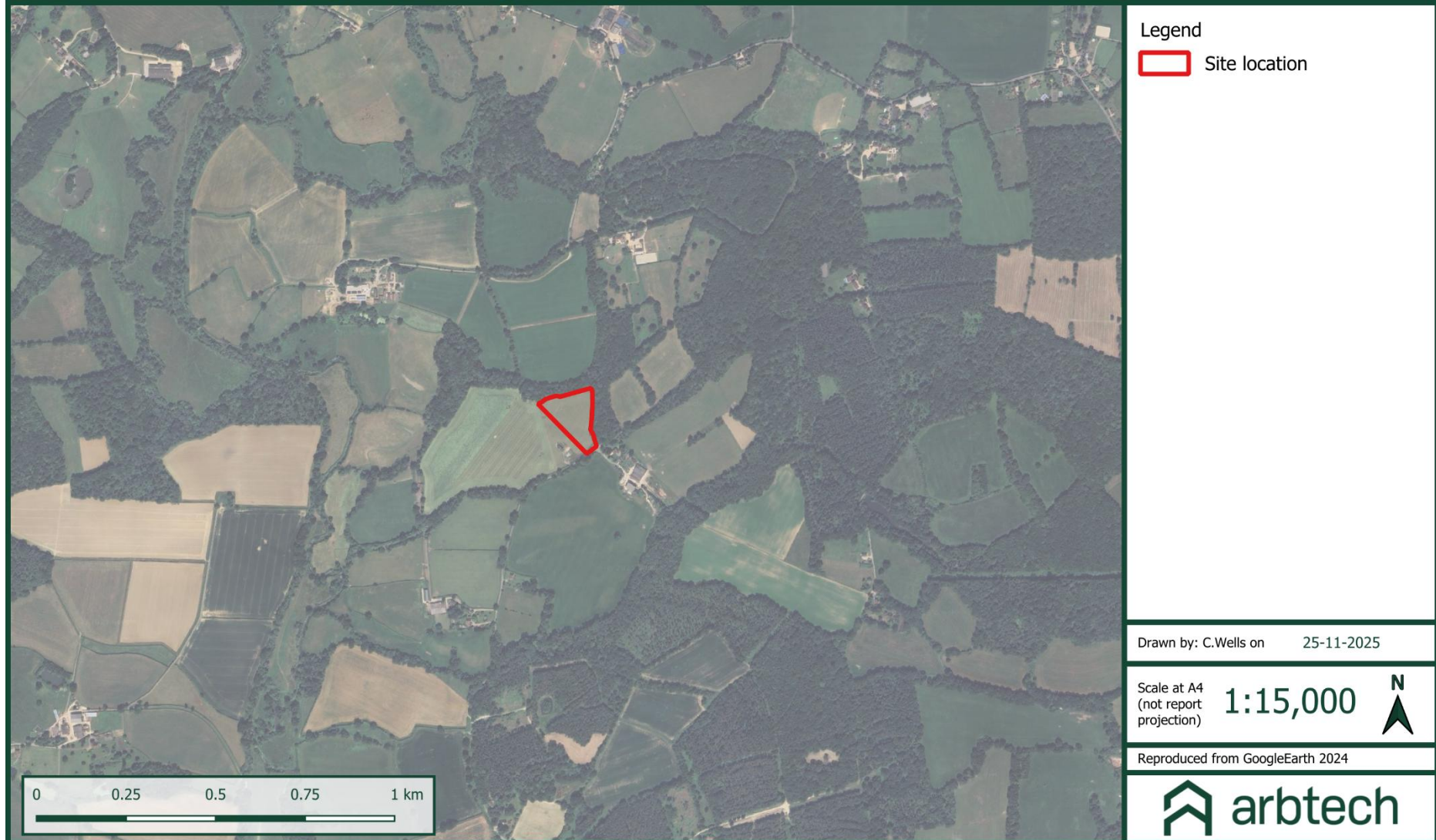
Appendix 1a: Habitat Plan



Appendix 1b: Pond Plan



Appendix 2: Location map



British Dog Fields

Land off Okehurst Road, Billingshurst, RH14 9BW

Appendix 3: Proposed Development

Not available at the time of writing

Appendix 4: Photographs

Description	Photographs
Preliminary Ecological Appraisal	
Grassland bordered by woodland	

	
Adjacent woodland	

		
Hedgerow		

Limitations and Copyright

Limitations

Biological record data has not been used to inform this report.

The site visit was conducted during the suboptimal season for botanical surveys, when floral diversity is at its lowest, and further surveys within the optimal season for surveying vegetation would normally be required to obtain accurate habitat classification and condition assessment data. However, in the case of this site, the delays involved would likely be disproportionate to the predicted likely value of the habitat. This is because the habitats on site are widespread and common. Further botanical surveys would likely be considered disproportionate, however to mitigate the limitation, it is recommended that a 'worst case scenario' precautionary assessment is applied in line with Statutory Guidance within Biodiversity Net Gain Condition Assessment Criteria. The habitats on site will be assigned the highest value realistically possible, with condition scores automatically set as Good (unless there is irrefutable and well-reasoned evidence to the contrary).

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Version control			
Status	Issue	Name	Date
Draft	0.1	Chantae Bleakman-Wells BSc (Hons), MSc, MRSB - Consultant Ecologist	19/11/2025
Final	1.0	Chantae Bleakman-Wells BSc (Hons), MSc, MRSB - Consultant Ecologist	25/11/2025