



Country Court Care

Woodlands Village Green

LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT PLAN

March 2024

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The following Landscape Management Plan has been prepared by FPCR Environment & Design Ltd. on behalf of Country Court Care. This document indicates potential habitat protection and management measures for Woodlands Village Green, which is situated to the east of the former Woodlands Hotel site. The boundary within which the Landscape Management Plan should be applied is shown at Appendix A.
- 1.2 The development proposals within the former Woodlands Hotel site, which adjoins the western edge of the Village Green, include the demolition of the existing building to facilitate the construction of a Care Home. Associated with this will be substantial amounts of retained woodland and a habitat diverse and sustainable external area for residents to use and enjoy. Within the garden there will be an accessible footpath network, individual and group seating areas, activity zones in the form of growing areas, an orchard and a bowls lawn. The front of the site will be formed of a landscaped car park area with a tree avenue positioned to the edge of the site.
- 1.3 This document has been compiled to detail the maintenance interventions that could be applied to Woodlands Village Green to protect and maintain the currently unused Public Open Space.
- 1.4 The following recommendations are subject to an Ecological Assessment of the Village Green which would identify the existing habitats and ensure that the prescriptions included are appropriate and will have the greatest benefit to habitat and users of the area.

Legislation & Policy

- 1.5 All relevant EU and UK nature conservation law will be adhered to in relation to the protection of ecological features and ecological enhancement. This includes the protection afforded to nesting birds under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and with reference to the protection of great crested newts and bats and their roosts under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended). Regard has also been given to the Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP) and Habitats of Principle Importance (HPI) as listed within Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006.

Health & Safety

- 1.6 The Landscape Management Company will check for below and above ground services, including land drainage, in the vicinity, and give notice if they may be affected and obtain instructions before proceeding. The Landscape Management Company will comply with Arboriculture and Forestry Advisory Group Safety leaflets.
- 1.7 The works should be implemented by competent landscape managers and operatives, who are responsible for the application of best practice standards and all relevant health and safety procedures, protection of the environment, avoidance of pollution and protection of protected species and habitats. The management items set out in this document in no way remove their responsibilities to current, or any future, statutory and best practice procedures or obligations.
- 1.8 Care must be taken during the management to assess, and where practicable reduce or eliminate risks. To this end the Management Company will periodically carry out a Health and Safety Audit of the whole of the Common Areas. This audit will review health and safety considerations and make recommendations on works necessary to maintain the Park in a safe condition. These will be worked into the landscape management as it evolves.

2.0 VISION, AIMS & OBJECTIVES

Vision

- 2.1 A range of existing habitats and landscape features are present within Woodlands Village Green. Our intention through the compilation and implementation of the following Landscape Management Plan is to retain and protect them, maintaining existing habitats and maximising habitat potential and enabling use by the community.
- 2.2 The Landscape Management prescriptions embrace broader Green Infrastructure (GI) and sustainable development principles and seeks to maximise these multifunctional benefits wherever practicable.

The **Vision** for the management of the area is to:

Maintain and protect the biodiversity and recreational value of the site over the long-term

Aims & Objectives

- 2.3 The Vision consists of four main Aims, with each Aim being sub-divided into its Objectives. The **Aims** are outlined below, with **Objectives** described in detail on the following pages.

Aim 1: Maintain and protect the biodiversity value of the site.

Objective 1: Protect and maintain habitats within the site.

Aim 2: Balance recreational use with habitat protection.

Objective 2: Maintain a safe recreational resource.

Aim 3: Manage the site for biodiversity recreational value in the long-term.

Objective 3: Ensure the matrix of existing habitats are suitably maintained to ensure long-term biodiversity gain.

Aim 4: Monitor the site and review the Plan

Objective 4: Provide a framework of monitoring and review periods.

3.0 HABITAT RETENTION AND PROTECTION

Objective 1: Protect and maintain habitats within the site.

- 3.1 The Village Green comprises of a range of habitats and landscape features. Primarily, features comprise of grassland, tree planting, tree groups, self-set scrub planting and hedgerows. Currently the area does not appear to experience a level of maintenance or management that would either enhance existing habitat opportunities or encourage use as a leisure or recreational resource.
- 3.2 A track travels through the Village Green connecting Coupals Road in the south with PRoW W-343 020/0. No dedicated pedestrian access is available via Coupals Road. The northern area of the Village Green is overgrown with few indications of regular access from PRoW W-343.

Hedgerows, Trees and Vegetation

- 3.3 Individual trees, tree groups, hedgerows and vegetation will be inspected for signs of stress, disease or damage and appropriate remedial action taken. Arisings from any tree and vegetation management activity will, where appropriate, be retained on site in piles to create wood habitat to maximise invertebrate and bryophyte biodiversity. Where it accords with health and safety inspection, standing dead wood would be left in-situ to provide additional dead wood habitats.
- 3.4 Please note, that should a species survey on site find that invasive species are present they will not be dealt with as a part of the Landscape Management Plan, professional advice should be sought by the Landowner and the species removed accordingly.

Grassland

- 3.5 Grassland within the Village Green appears not to have been mown or grazed for a period, as such it has a rough and "tussocky" character. This grassland type is not as diverse or attractive as meadowland, but once established requires minimal maintenance. This can form useful refuge habitat on corners and margins of a site.
- 3.6 Tussock grassland is not as diverse as meadow grassland; however dense tussocks establish a layer of thatch that provide valuable shelter and over wintering areas. In order to expedite this establishment, the tussock grassland areas will have minimal maintenance and will not require harrowing or the removal of arisings.

Identification of Potential Habitat Enhancements

- 3.7 As a part of the Ecological Assessment of the existing habitats recommendations would be made relating to the potential introduction of formal habitat features within the site; for Landowner review / approval. The following features may be appropriate to include and would also allow for the retention of arisings on site.

Bird Boxes, Bat Boxes and Dormouse Boxes

- 3.8 Bat boxes could be erected on suitable retained semi-mature / mature trees within the retained hedgerows and positioned out of reach of opportunistic predators such as cats. The bat boxes will be installed in accordance with standard best practice, such that the boxes are positioned at least 4m above the ground, with the entrances to the boxes facing south-west to south-east. The entrances to the boxes are to be free of obstacles such that there is a clean and clear flight path

to the new potential roost sites. This measure will provide increased roosting opportunities across the site over the existing situation.

- 3.9 Bird boxes could also be erected on retained semi-mature / mature trees within the retained hedgerows. Using a variety of nest box types will provide new suitable nesting opportunities for a range of birds and potentially encourage new bird species into the site. The bird boxes will be installed in accordance with standard best practice, such that the boxes are positioned generally around 1-3m above the ground, with the entrances to the boxes facing between north and east. The entrances to the boxes are to be free of obstacles such that there is a clean and clear flight path to the new potential nesting sites.
- 3.10 Dormouse boxes (produced by the Mammal Society (or similar), wooden with a sliding lid) could be installed within the hedgerows, which will provide new suitable nesting opportunities for this species.

Hibernacula / Refugia

- 3.11 Artificial hibernacula could be created in the Village Green according to the Ecological Assessment findings. These would occur along hedgerow boundaries, or within tussock grassland, and ideally away from public routes.

- Reptile / Amphibian Hibernacula

Hibernacula can provide a mix of refuge and wintering habitat for amphibians and reptiles. The hibernacula would be constructed out of loosely piled rubble and logs, so that small crevices will be created between material that will allow refuge for amphibians, invertebrates and small mammals. Ideally, on sites with free-draining soils, the hibernacula should be constructed and built up within a pit, whereas sites with impermeable soils or high flood risk, hibernacula should be constructed as a pile on a gentle slope for drainage.

For reptiles, the hibernacula must be positioned in a well-drained, sunny area, surrounded by tussocky grassland or scrub (particularly to the north), where there is minimal public disturbance. The length of the banked hibernacula will also be orientated so that it is south facing with vegetation managed for basking.

- Log Pile

Log piles would ideally be created from tree work arisings from site and placed at the interface between woodland and grassland habitats, avoiding north facing areas. The logs should be left in contact with the ground in dappled shade and built into a compact pile to maintain humidity. Stakes should be driven into the ground either side of the log pile to prevent the pile from collapsing.

Larger diameter logs (at least 100mm thick) with bark are of most value, particularly hard wood like ash, oak and beech, whereas freshly cut willow and poplar may re-sprout. Twigs, stems and shrub off-cuttings may also be added. Climbers may be allowed to grow thinly over the dead wood pile for stabilisation and moisture. Full sun will dry and heat the wood, supporting little life, whereas dense shade will promote the growth of fungi but may be too cool for insects.

- Standing Dead Wood

Standing dead wood habitat would be created by partially burying logs vertically side by side in the ground to an approximate depth of 450 to 500mm, to form a pyramidal structure. Logs should vary in diameter and length.

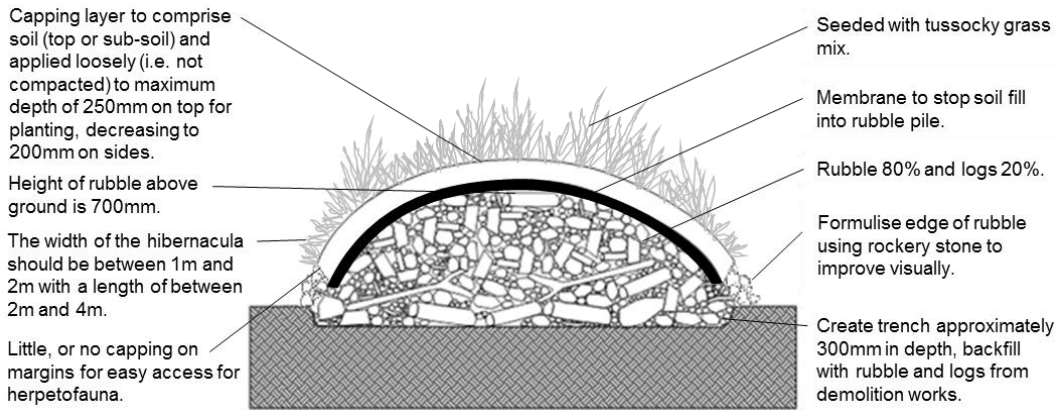


Figure 2: Reptile / Amphibian Hibernacula Detail

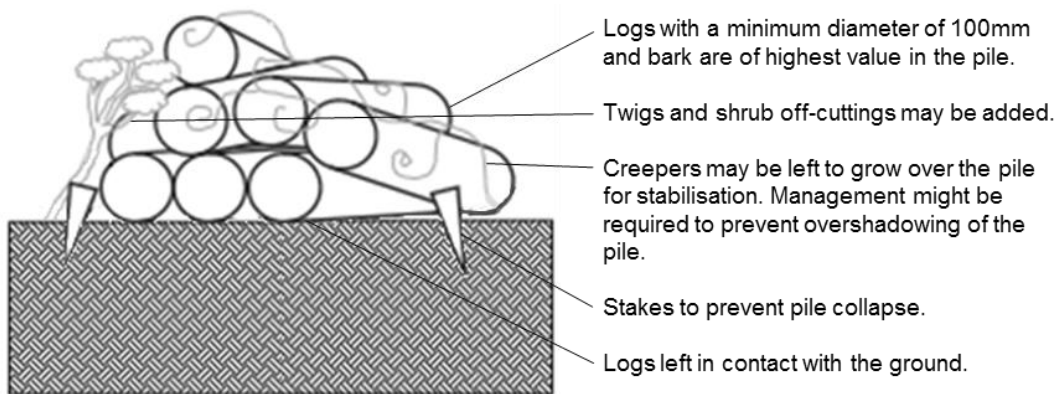


Figure 3: Log Pile Detail

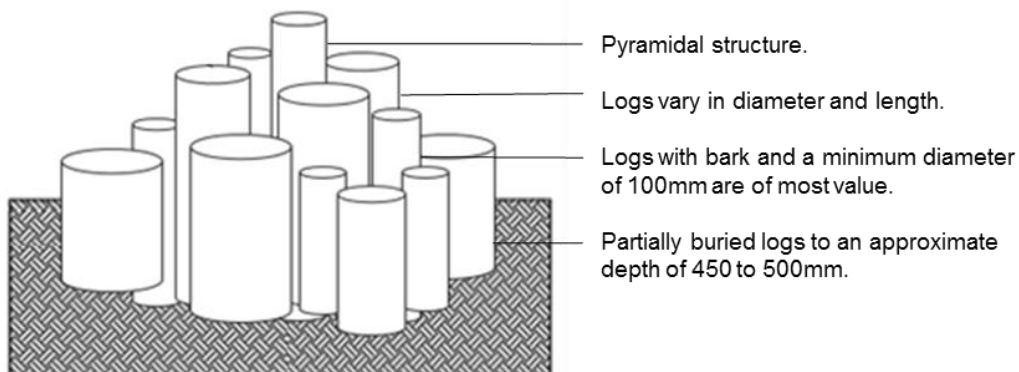


Figure 4: Standing Dead Wood Detail

Objective 2: Maintain a safe recreational resource.

- 3.12 The management applications will maintain existing areas of tussock grassland, meadow grassland, short sward / amenity grassland, trees, woodland, hedgerows and ground flora where present. The management plan would include the formation of a mown route through the Village Green should it be deemed appropriate by the Landowner.
- 3.13 Existing public access to the Village Green is available for pedestrians from the north via PRow W-343 020/0 and via car or bicycle from Coupals Road to the south. An informal looped mown pathway could be created to provide a legible route around the Village Green, reducing the potential for the creation of unauthorised desire lines across more sensitive habitats.

4.0 LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT

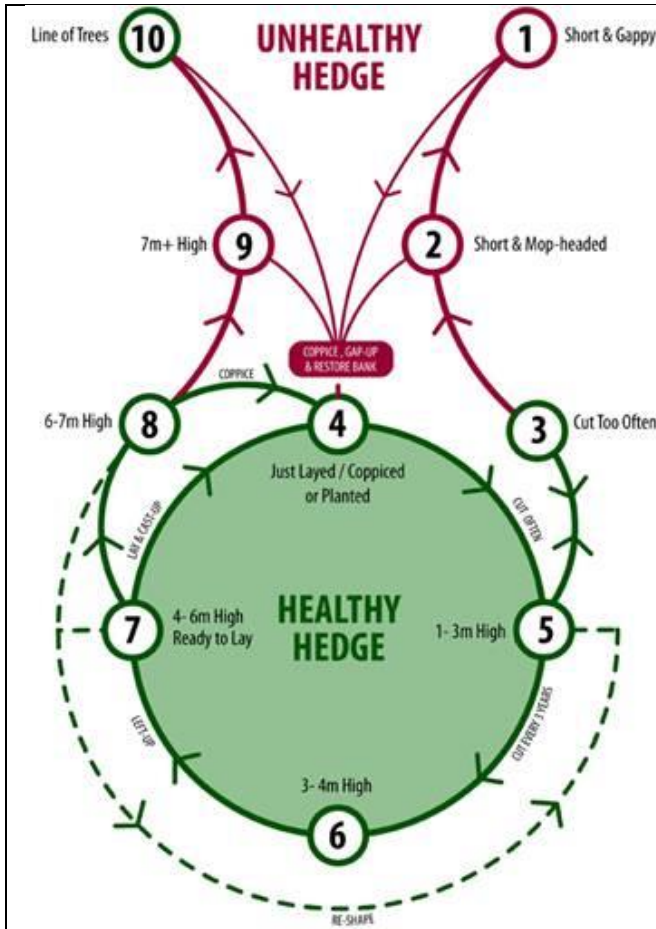
Objective 3: Ensure the matrix of existing habitats are suitably maintained to ensure long-term biodiversity gain.

- 4.1 The following section outlines the works programme and management regime for 10+ years. Please note that the recommended prescriptions should be applied to the Village Green for the lifetime of the development on the adjacent former Woodlands Hotel site.

Table 1: Ten Year Management Works Programme

Prescriptions	Years with Priority									
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10+
Existing Retained Trees and Hedgerows										
Trees should be assessed by an experienced arboriculturalist or tree surgeon. Tree works will follow best practice procedures as set out in BS 3998:2010. No removal of woody vegetation will take place during the bird nesting season unless checked by a qualified Ecologist. Existing trees will be left unmanaged unless otherwise dictated for reasons of public safety.	✓									
Arisings from any woodland management activity will, where possible, be used to provide opportunities for invertebrates and bryophytes by forming micro-habitats from piles of dead wood or recumbent dead logs away from publicly accessible areas. Woodpiles will be created at the woodland edge and within the woodland interior. Where practical, piles will be situated in partial sunlight with some shade.	As required									
Side trimming of hedgerows in an 'A' profile to promote healthy hedgerow base. Hedgerows will be cut along one side annually, alternating between the two sides of the hedgerow each year.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
In the long term, hedgerows should be taken through a Hedgerow Management Cycle (HMC) ¹ . The ten steps of the HMC are shown below. The cycle shows a healthy green core and two unhealthy red offshoots. The aim should be to keep the hedge in the green part (steps 3 to 8), periodically laying or coppicing it, with trimming at appropriate intervals in between. If the hedge is not permitted to go through this cycle, it will either, if cut too often, become short and gappy (steps 1 – 3) or, if neglected, develop into a line of trees (steps 8 to 10).	As required									

¹ The Hedge Management Cycle (HMC). Art work by Will Field. Management Cycle concept developed by Nigel Adams. Hedgelink UK



Tussock Grassland

To control scrub and bramble development tussocky areas may need cutting every 2-3 years between October and February. For wildlife this cutting is best done on a rotational basis so that no more than one third of the area is cut in any one year leaving part as an undisturbed refuge. Care shall be exercised when mowing or strimming around trees and hedges or other structures. Strimming should not occur with 100mm of tree stems.

✓				✓				✓		
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Spot treat persistent pernicious weeds using herbicide following growth and/or manual hand strimming of target areas either in late summer when adjacent grassland is mown or in early spring.

As required

Long / Meadow Grassland

Grassland will be mown on a rotational basis with areas either being mown once during early spring (March) and autumn (October). A later cut will benefit moth species by providing a food source for longer, and subsequently provide increases foraging opportunities for bats in their active season of April to October.

✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
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Grassland adjacent to hedgerows and woodland habitat will be cut once on alternate years with some ruderal species being allowed to colonise for further species and

✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
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habitat diversity. Arisings will be left for 48 hours to allow dispersal of seeds and invertebrates prior to removal, to encourage grassland establishment and prevent soil enrichment and thatching.										
Spot treat persistent pernicious weeds using herbicide following growth and/or manual hand strimming of target areas either in late summer when adjacent grassland is mown or in early spring. Care will be taken when using herbicide adjacent to riparian and aquatic habitats to prevent pollution of such habitats.	As required									
Amenity Grassland										
Amenity grassland will be cut 16 times per year between March and October. Strimming should not occur with 100mm of tree stems.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Mowing will be reduced during prolonged dry periods and the mowing height increased to 50mm at such times. Similarly in very wet conditions all grass cutting operations will cease until conditions allow for grass cutting to take place.	As required									
Spot treat persistent pernicious weeds using herbicide following growth and/or manual hand strimming of target areas either in late summer when adjacent grassland is mown or in early spring. Care will be taken when using herbicide adjacent to riparian and aquatic habitats to prevent pollution of such habitats.	As required									
Bird Boxes, Bat Boxes and Dormouse Boxes										
Bird boxes will have a non-invasive inspection in autumn or winter to check for damage. Replace lost or damaged boxes.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Bat boxes would have a non-invasive visual inspection in autumn or winter to check for damage, unless a separate agreement has been agreed with Natural England. Replace lost or damaged boxes. Any work required to the bat boxes will be carried out by a licenced bat worker.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Dormouse boxes will have a non-invasive visual inspection in autumn or winter to check for damage, unless a separate agreement has been agreed with Natural England. Replace lost or damaged boxes. Any work required to the dormouse boxes will be carried out by a licenced dormouse worker.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Hibernacula										
Following establishment, the grassed cap will be strimmed once annually in late summer (late August to September).	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
The margins of the hibernacula will be inspected once annually to be kept clear from vegetation, leaving the fill exposed to allow access by wildlife.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
The bank must be managed to maintain sparse vegetation so that bare ground is always visible. Sections of the bank	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

should be cleared annually of weeds in rotation, ideally in February , to minimise disturbance.										
The grass sward atop the bank will be managed during its first summer with typically three cuttings which commence when the sward reaches 10cm in height to encourage grasses to tiller and help control invasive annual weeds. Cutting should not occur within months May to August inclusive to avoid disturbing nests. Once established, the sward will typically only need cutting once annually to remove dead tussocks and promote tussock regeneration	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Footpaths										
Ensure mown footpath routes are free from weeds, trip hazards or other obstructions.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
General										
Litter will be removed from the site as part of the general management and maintenance visits. All litter, stones or other debris will be collected and removed by the Contractor immediately prior to grass cutting operations.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ecological visual inspection by a qualified ecologist for the to provide baseline data for future surveys to be monitored against.					✓					✓
Arboricultural visual inspection, as part of the tree safety risk assessment for the development.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Work programme review by those members of staff involved in site management.					✓					✓

5.0 MONITOR THE SITE AND REVIEW THE PLAN

Objective 4: Provide a framework of monitoring and review periods.

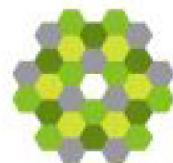
- 5.1 In order to ensure that the habitats created within the site reach and maintain their maximum value to nature conservation, all habitats will be monitored.
- 5.2 Results of this monitoring will be used to inform changes to the management plan and ten- year work programme. The prescriptions provided here will not be set in stone and will be altered if required in agreement with the Local Planning Authority (LPA).
- 5.3 The management plan will run for a period of ten years plus, with the work programme fully reviewed at the end of the initial five year period by those members of staff involved in site management, and the LMP updated accordingly, to be updated for the life of the development.
 - Ecological inspection by a qualified ecologist in years 5 and 10 to provide baseline data for future surveys to be monitored against.

APPENDICES

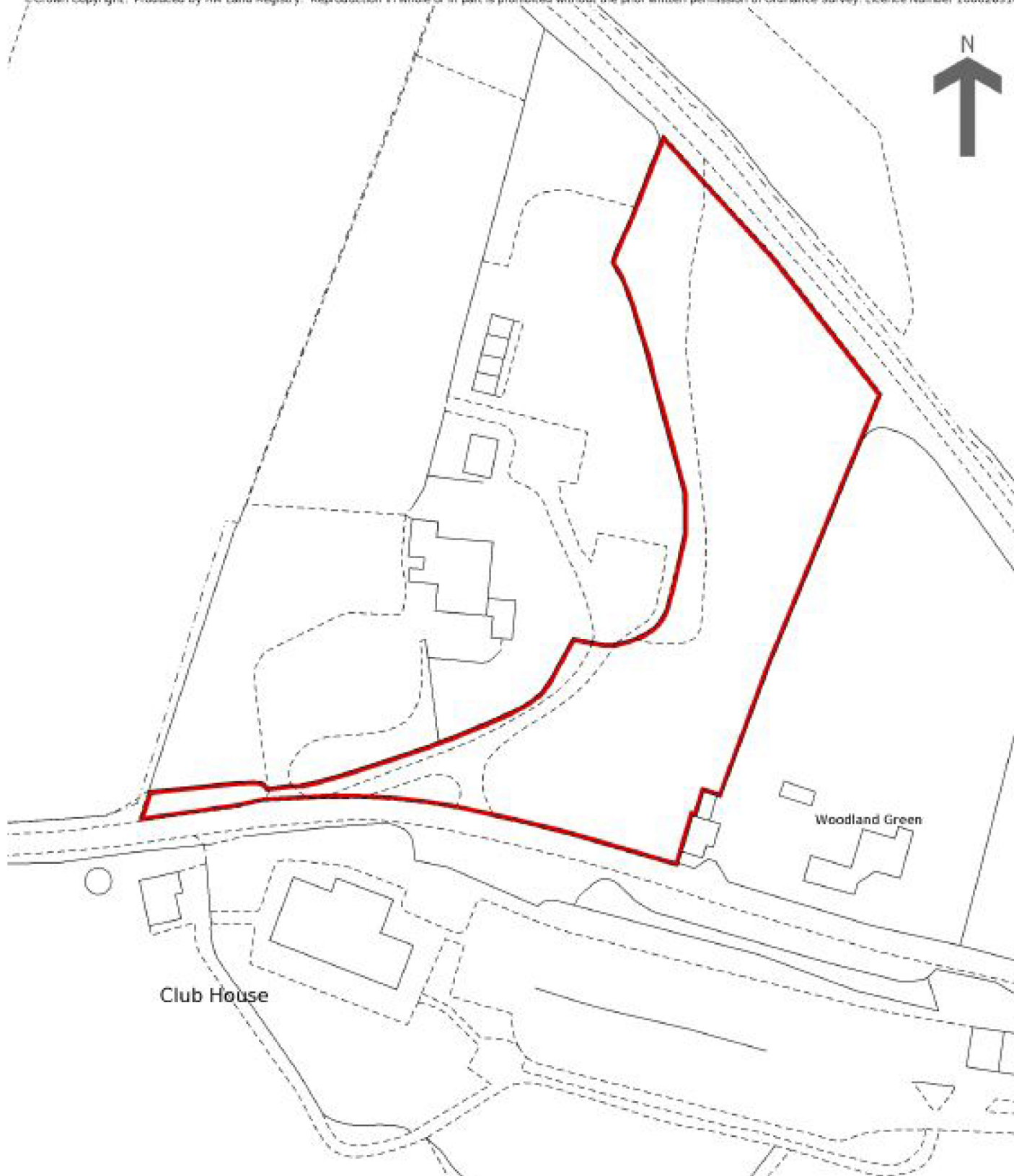
Appendix A: Woodlands Village Green Boundary Plan

HM Land Registry
Official copy of
title plan

Title number **EX862832**
Ordnance Survey map reference **TL6944NW**
Scale **1:1250 enlarged from 1:2500**
Administrative area **Essex : Braintree**



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APPENDICES

Appendix B: Woodlands Village Green Images



View from the north, looking into Haverhill Village Green

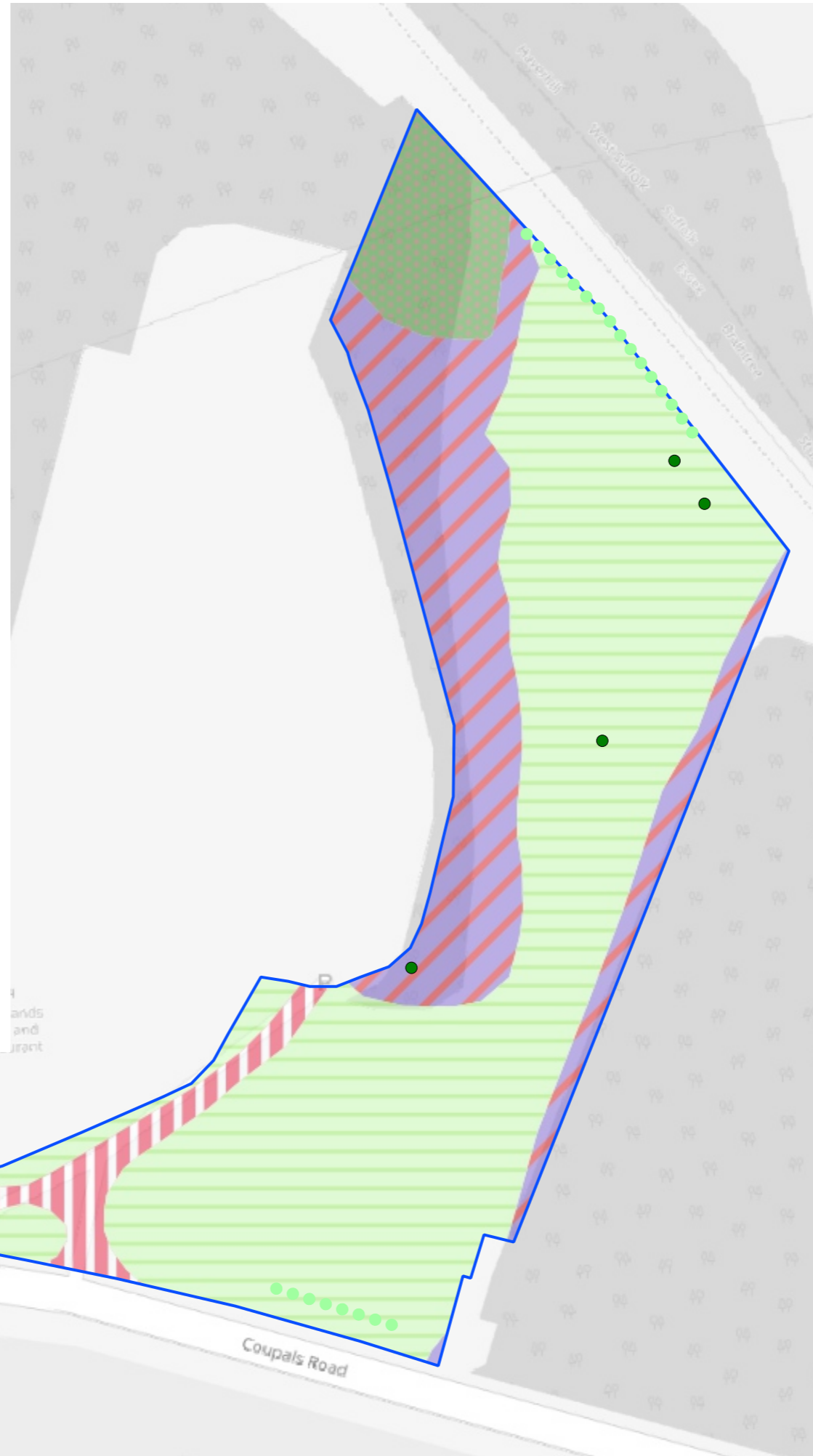


View across the southern portion of Haverhill Village Green towards the former Woodlands Hotel

APPENDICES

Appendix C: Village Green Maintenance Plan

Summary of Maintenance Prescriptions	
HABITAT TYPE	PROPOSED MAINTENANCE
Individual Trees and Tree Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trees should be assessed by an experienced arboriculturalist or tree surgeon. Trees and woodland will be left unmanaged unless otherwise dictated for reasons of public safety. Arisings from any woodland management activity will, where possible, be used to provide opportunities for habitat enhancement.
Neutral Grassland (long / meadow)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grassland will be mown on a rotational basis with areas either being mown once during early spring (March) and autumn (October).
Neutral Grassland (tussock)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To control scrub and bramble development tussocky areas may need cutting every 2-3 years between October and February. Grassland adjacent to hedgerows and woodland habitat will be cut once on alternate years
Neutral Grassland (amenity)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Amenity grassland will be cut 16 times per year between March and October. Strimming should not occur with 100mm of tree stems.
EXISTING FEATURE	PROPOSED MAINTENANCE
Footpaths / Sealed Surface	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure surfaced and mown footpath routes are free from weeds, trip hazards or other obstructions.
Litter / Arisings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Litter will be removed from the site as part of the general management and maintenance visits. All litter, stones or other debris will be collected and removed by the Contractor immediately prior to grass cutting operations.
Inspections and Reviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual arboricultural visual inspection, as part of the tree safety risk assessment. Annual work programme review by management company.
Further details on the maintenance prescriptions noted above are provided in the Landscape Management Plan. The prescriptions are to be carried out for the life time of the adjacent development at the former Woodlands Hotel site.	



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client
Country Court Care

project
Former Woodlands Hotel,
Haverhill

drawing title
**VILLAGE GREEN
MAINTENANCE PLAN**

scale
nts

drawn
jpf

drawing / figure number
Appendix C

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Nov 2023

rev