Tenterden Neighbourhood Plan
Biodiversity & Wildlife Group

Habitat Surveys for Homewood Sports Fields
27th/29th December 2019 & 6th January 2020

TENTERDEN NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN
BIODIVERSITY & WILDLIFE WORKING GROUP

Habitat record form for assessing nature conservation value

DATE: 6TH JANUARY 2020 (CAMERA-TRAP 27TH-29 DEC. 2019)	SITE NAMES: HOMEWOOD SCHOOL FOOTBALL AND (OLD) CRICKET PITCH FIELDS	OWNERSHIP: TENTERDEN SCHOOLS TRUST
GRID REF: TQ 895335	SITE ~~NOS~~:	MAP ATTACHED: (Y)/N MAP 2.
COMPLETED BY: D. CLARKE, P. GOODE, R. MASEFIELD & J. SUGDEN	RECORDED SPECIES ATTACHED: (Y)/N	AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH: (Y)/N MAP 1

SIZE HECTARES/ACRES:

8 ACRES / 3.24 HECTARES

TYPICALNESS:

Is the site typical of a Wealden landscape, AONB, Landscape Character Area? BORDERING HEDGEROWS ARE PART OF A TYPICAL WEALDEN FIELD SYSTEM, WITH A MAGNIFICENT LINE OF MATURE (IN MANY CASES VETERAN) OAKS LINING AN ESTABLISHED FOOTPATH.

CONNECTION TO OTHER HABITATS:

Is it part of a larger site? Is it linked to other green sites by lanes or hedges? BOTH FIELDS ARE ADJACENT TO 'LIMES LAND' MEADOWS, WITH ANCIENT HEDGEROWS FORMING WILDLIFE CORRIDORS, AND A LINE OF MATURE OAKS CONNECTING WITH CHESTNUT & LIME TREES ON APPLEDORE ROAD.

FRAGILITY:

Over grazing, recreational pressure, rare species, future or nearby development.

THE POSITION AND TOPOGRAPHY OF THE FIELDS INEVITABLY EXPOSES THEM TO THE POSSIBILITY OF DEVELOPMENT.

RECORDED HISTORY:

Data from Magic Maps, KLIS, previous surveys)

AGRICULTURAL / PASTURAL FIELDS, LATTERLY USED AS SCHOOL FOOTBALL AND CRICKET PITCHES — AND LATER (IN THE CASE OF FIELD B) FOR GRAZING HOMEWOOD SCHOOL FARM CATTLE AND SHEEP.

RARITY:

Rare species including grassland, protected species etc. Have notable species been identified?

WHILE BOTH FIELDS HAVE BEEN BOTANICALLY DEGRADED, IMPORTANT HEDGEROWS AND MATURE/VETERAN TREES REMAIN INTACT.

INTRINSIC APPEAL:

Appeal to wildlife, birds, wildflowers, trees and residents. Note views, peace and tranquillity? ACCESSIBILTY FROM THE ROAD FOR FIELD A, AND UTILITY FOR AGRICULTURAL STUDENTS AND LIVESTOCK FOR FIELD B, GIVE BOTH INTRINSIC APPEAL

OPPORTUNITIES:

Increasing biodiversity with the support of landowners?

THE DIFFERENTLY-MANAGED FIELDS OFFER HABITATS FOR A VARIETY OF SPECIES, WITH THE LINE OF OAKS WHICH DIVIDE THEM A RICH RESOURCE FOR BIRDS, BATS AND INVERTEBRATES.

HABITAT DIVERSITY:

List types of habitat within the site (eg hay meadow, grazed pasture, type of grassland, heathland, orchard, parkland with trees, marsh, heath, deciduous woodland, ponds, watercourses etc). Identify anthills, mole activity, rabbit holes, active badger setts and fox earths. Support with photos. FIELD A: MOWN SWARD, BORDERED ON THE EAST SIDE BY MAGNIFICENT MATURE OAKS AND A HORNBEAM, INTERSPERCED WITH HAWTHORN.

FIELD B: GRAZED PASTURE WITH A RABBIT WARREN, MOLE ACTIVITY AND GROUPS OF TREES (PREDOMINENTLY BIRCH).

BOTH FIELDS BORDERED BY ANCIENT HEDGEROWS

SPECIES OBSERVED WITHIN THE SITE

TREES (Identify or photograph species) FOR FIELD A, SEE LIST ATTACHED (Incl. 8 VETERAN OAKS) FOR FIELD B, ISOLATED BIRCHES, A SMALL BIRCH GROVE WITH ONE HORNBEAM.	PHOTOS (Y)N: FIELD A: OAKS 17 & 29 FIELD B: BIRCH GROVE
FERNS (Identify or photograph species)	
FUNGI (identify or photograph species) FIELD B TOP HEDGEROW – F1 CLUSTERED DOMECAP (Lyophyllum) F2 MILKCAP (Russula), F3 YELLOW BRAIN (Tremella mesenterica) SOIL HEAP – F4 GIANT PUFFBALLS (Calvatia gigantea)	4 PHOTOS
GRASSES AND WILDFLOWERS (identify or photograph species. Collect grasses) PASTURE IN FIELD B INUNDATED WITH CREEPING THISTLE.	
HEDGEROW SPECIES (Use the Hooper Formula to identify and count the number of tree and shrub species in a 30 metre length of hedge. Photograph unknown species) FIELD A – STRETCH a) 3 species: HAWTHORN, HOLLY, HAZEL. " b) 5 species: OAK, HAWTHORN, BLACKTHORN, HOLLY, DOG ROSE " c) 5 species: HAWTHORN, OAK, HOLLY, SPINDLE, DOG ROSE. FIELD B – STRETCH d) 5 species: OAK, HAWTHORN, HORNBEAM, HOLLY, HAZEL. " e) 4 species: ASH, HOLLY, OAK, HAWTHORN. " f) 4 species: HORNBEAM, OAK, HOLLY, HAWTHORN.	PHOTO – FIELD A STRETCH b)/c)
INSECTS (Butterflies, bees, flies, dragonflies, damselflies, beetles, ants etc. Identify and photograph species and estimate numbers. Record bee/wasp nests)	
ARACHNIDS (Spiders – identify or photograph species)	

MOLLUSCS (slugs and snails – identify and photograph species)	PHOTOS (Y)/N:
MAMMALS (identify and photograph species. Estimate rabbit numbers. Look for nibbled nuts/acorns to indicate presence of voles/squirrels and potentially hazel dormice. Photograph holes in stream banks for water voles and water shrews. Record bat emergence and roosts. IN FIELD B: ACTIVE RABBIT WARREN WITHIN THE SOIL HEAP, WITH FRESH MOLE ACTIVITY ON BOTH SIDES OF IT. FAECAL EVIDENCE OF FOXES. WOOD MOUSE CAUGHT ON CAMERA-TRAP 27TH – 28TH DEC. 2019	WOOD MOUSE
REPTILES (identify and photograph species)	
AMPHIBIANS (frogs, toads, newts – identify and photograph species)	
BIRDS (identify and photograph species. Record Red and Amber List as well as common species, as well as nests on the site). WREN (CAUGHT ON CAMERA TRAP), BLUE TIT, BLACKBIRD (HEARD) NUTHATCH, BUZZARD, CHAFFINCH, ROBIN, CARRION CROW	WREN

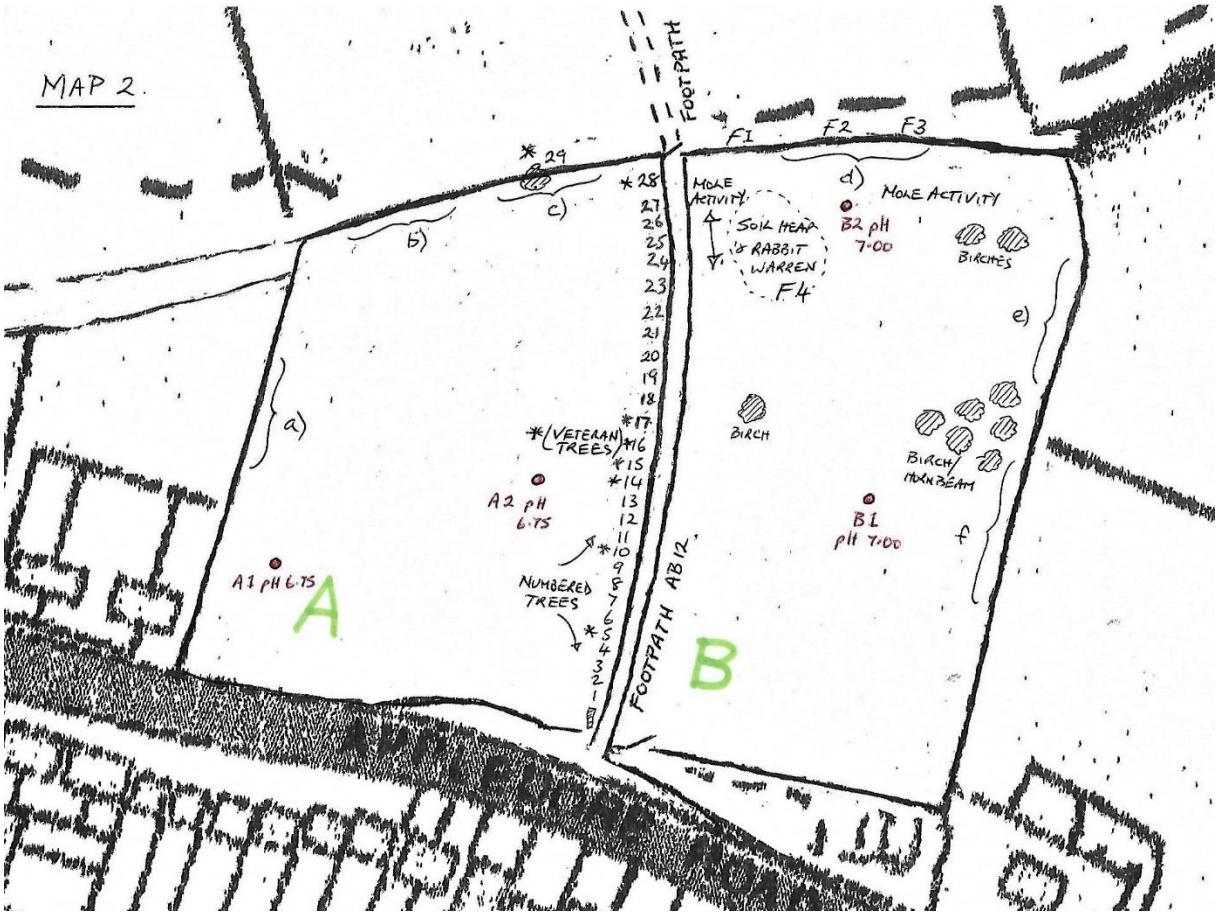
ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:

A CAMERA-TRAP WAS SET ON THE RABBIT WARREN IN FIELD B FROM 27TH–29TH DECEMBER 2019 FOLLOWING REPORTS OF A WILD POLECAT, BUT ONLY RECORDED A WOOD MOUSE AND A WREN.

THE HABITAT SURVEY CONDUCTED ON 6TH JANUARY 2020 SUGGESTED THAT THE PRINCIPAL ECOLOGICAL VALUE OF THE 2 FIELDS LIES IN THE SUPERB LINE OF OAK TREES WHICH BORDER THE A812 PUBLIC FOOTPATH IN FIELD A, AND IN THE ANCIENT HEDGEROWS ALONG THEIR BOUNDARIES, PARTICULARLY TO THE NORTH.

SEVEN OF THE OAKS ALONG THE FOOTPATH AND ONE ON THE NORTH SIDE OF FIELD A. ARE OF VETERAN STATUS, WHILE THE NORTHERLY HEDGES AND PART OF THE EASTERLY HEDGE IN FIELD B ARE APPROXIMATELY 500 YEARS OLD. (HOOPER FORMULA)


Homewood pitches
AERIAL MAP 1.
TQ 895335
3·24 HECTARE
N


MAP 2.
FOOTPATH
F1
F2
F3
F4
MOLE ACTIVITY
SOIL HEAP & RABBIT WARREN
MOLE ACTIVITY
B2 pH 7·00
BIRCHES
BIRCH
BIRCH/ROWAN/BEAM
B1 pH 7·00
A2 pH 6·7S
A1 pH 6·7S
(VETERAN TREES)
NUMBERED TREES
FOOTPATH AB12
A
B
a)
b)
c)
d)
e)
f)

Homewood School, Field A trees – as numbered on Map 2

In absence of leaf evidence, all oaks assumed to be *Quercus Robur;* 'veterans' identified by combinations of features, incl. girth, deadwood, snags, rot holes and bark characteristics.

Line begins with a felled veteran status oak, still ecologically valuable as deadwood.

1. Old coppiced oak, 5 stems, 2 over 2m circumference
2. Hawthorn
3. Oak
4. Oak, double trunk, largest 2.8m circumference
5. Veteran oak, 3.0m circumference, approx. 250 years old
6. Oak, double trunk, circumferences of 2.6m & 2.8m
7. Hawthorn
8. Oak, 2.6m circumference
9. Hawthorn
10. Veteran oak, 2.10m circumference
11. Oak
12. Oak, 2.1m circumference
13. Oak, 2.4m circumference
14. Veteran oak, 3.5m circumference, approx. 290 years old
15. Veteran oak, 2.2m circumference
16. Veteran oak, 3.4m circumference, approx. 280 years old
17. Veteran oak, 4.8m circumference, approx. 400 years old
18. Hornbeam
19. Hawthorn x 2
20. Oak
21. Oak
22. Hawthorn
23. Oak
24. Oak, 2.3m circumference
25. Oak
26. Hawthorn
27. Oak
28. Veteran oak, 2.3m circumference
29. Veteran oak with hornbeam

Note: Soil tests for the fields, which have a geology of mixed clay and sandstone, revealed a pH of 6.75 for Field A and 7.00 for field B, which is neutral.

Photographs

Field A – veteran oak 17, 4.8m circumference, approx. 400 years old.

Field A – veteran oak 29 with hornbeam, in top hedgerow.

Field B – birch grove with hornbeam.

Fungi

F1- Clustered Domecap (Lyophyllum)

F2 – Milkcap (Russula)

F3 – Yellow brain (Tremella Mesenterica), with bracket fungi

F4 – Giant puffballs (Calvatia Gigantea)

Field A – hedgerow assemblages b) & c), both of 5 species

Camera trap photos

Wood Mouse (Apodemus sylvaticus)

Wren (Troglodytidae)