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Ecological Consultants
Environmental and Rural Chartered Surveyors

Hedgerow Survey

Parsonage Farm, Parsonage Lane, Chipping



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Hedgerow Survey

Instructions

Investigate the quality of the Hedgerow, adjacent pasture land and associated species as part of a planning application for the construction of camping pods at Parsonage Farm, Chipping.

Accuracy of report

This report has been compiled based on the methodology as detailed and the professional experience of the surveyor. Whilst the report reflects the situation found as accurately as possible, all of the protected species this survey covers are wild and can move freely from site to site. Their presence or absence detailed in this report does not entirely preclude the possibility of a different past, current or future use of the site surveyed.

We would ask all clients acting upon the contents of this report to show due diligence when undertaking work on their site and/or in their interaction with protected species. If protected species are found during a work programme, and continuing the work programme could result in their disturbance, injury or death, either directly or indirectly an offence may be committed.

If in doubt, stop work and seek further professional advice.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Site Description

The site is a hedgerow along the southern side of Parsonage Lane, separating the road from a field used for grazing sock and cutting silage. The site is adjacent to Parsonage Farm, south-west of Chipping. The stretch of hedge proposed for translocation is approximately 21m in length.

1.2 Proposed Works

An application is to be submitted for the construction of camping pods within the field off Parsonage Lane. The pods will be set back from the road and will require a section of the hedgerow to be removed/transplanted to make way for the access track and visibility splay to the site. The hedgerow is to be set back from the road to allow sufficient visibility. Loss of the adjacent pasture land will also ensue where access track and pods are situated.

1.3 Aims of Study

To ensure that the proposed development does not affect any hedgerows which are protected by The Hedgerow Regulations (1997).

The survey will:-

- ⇒ Identify woody species present within the hedgerow
- ⇒ Identify any species listed in the British Red Data Books present in the hedgerow
- ⇒ Identify any species listed in part I of Schedule 1, Schedule 5 and Schedule 8 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act (1981) present within the hedgerow
- ⇒ Provide a basis upon which to propose mitigation (if required) for section of hedgerow affected by the proposal
- ⇒ Assess the ecological value of the adjacent pasture on which development will take place.

2 Methodology

The methods used comply with those described in The Hedgerow Regulations 1997.

2.1 Methodology

- ⇒ Field assessment of hedgerow with identification of vascular plant species present, including identification of any Schedule 8 species of the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981
- ⇒ Inspection of the hedgerow for indications of potential for nesting birds. All nesting birds are protected at their nest site, some also near their nest site (generally March - September inclusive) by the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981
- ⇒ Inspection of the hedgerow for signs of those species listed in Schedule 5 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981

⇒ Search for signs of Badgers, including habitual runs, latrines, snuffle holes and hair in and around the hedgerow. Badgers are protected by the Protection of Badgers Act 1992, whereby interfering with, damaging, destroying or obstructing a sett, either by intent or negligence, is an offence.

⇒ For the purpose of quantifying those attributes which discern whether a hedge is deemed “important” by the regulations, the methodology followed that laid out by The Hedgerow Regulations 1997:

“where the length of the hedgerow is less than 100 metres, count the number of woody species present in the central stretch of 30 metres;”

⇒ Assess the ecological value of the adjacent pasture land on which development is planned.

2.2 *Timing*

Date of Visit	Site Inspection
9 th August 2021	11:45 - 12:30

2.3 *Personnel*

The survey was carried out by

Miss Flora Whitehead BSc (Hons)

3 *Results*

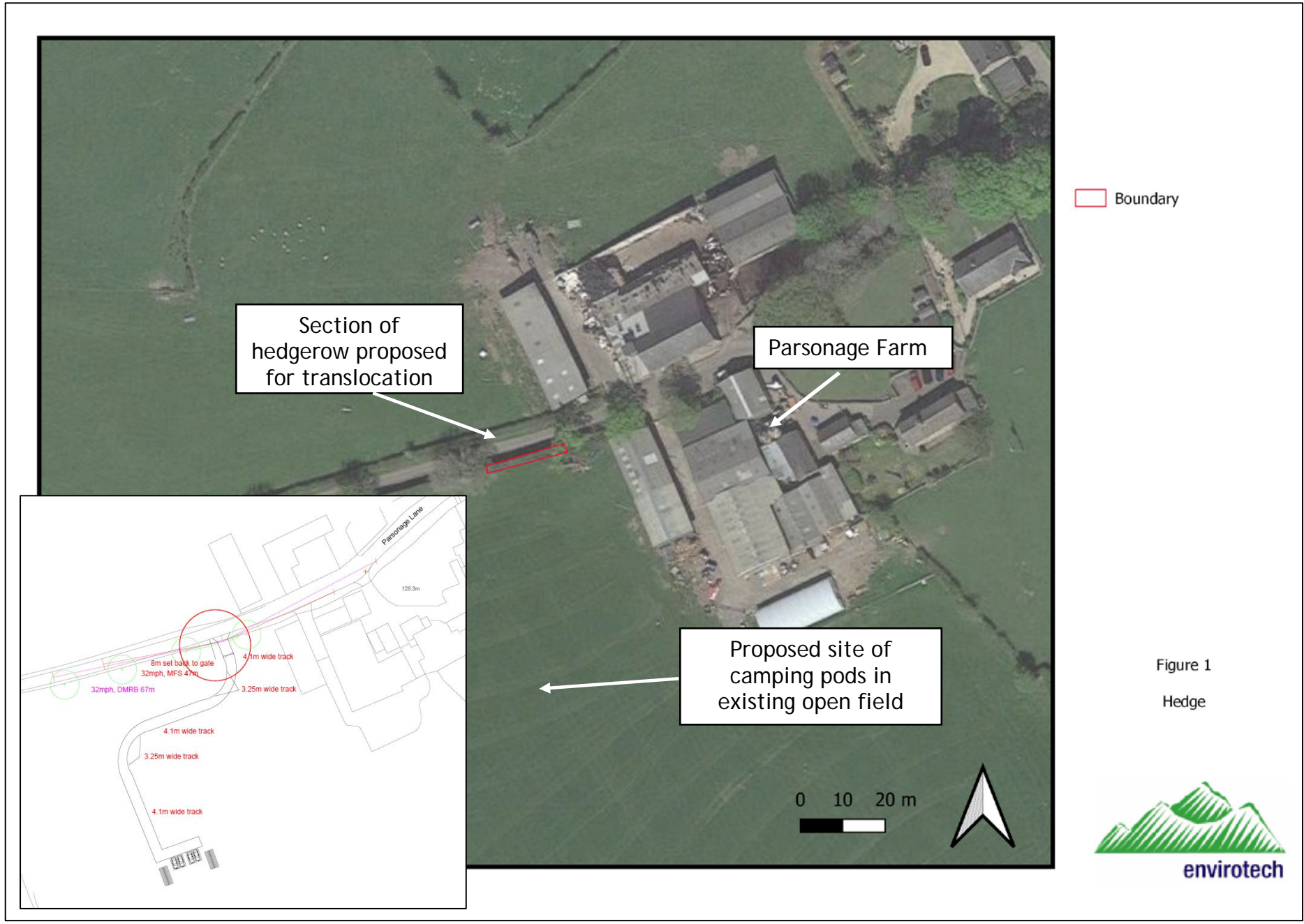
3.1 *Field Survey*

3.1.1 *Habitat Description*

The site lies adjacent to Parsonage Lane, south-west of Chipping. The habitat adjacent to the site is pasture land and Parsonage Lane itself. Parsonage Farm lies to the east of the site.

The hedgerows on either side of Parsonage Lane in this area are dense and approximately 2m tall, having been trimmed regularly. The surveyed hedgerow stands on the field edge, slightly raised above the height of the lane. The 21m stretch due to be transplanted lies between two mature Oak trees.

An annotated satellite image of the surrounding habitat is shown overleaf, plus the proposed site plan.



3.1.2 Flora Survey

The hedgerow on the south side of Parsonage Lane, adjacent to Parsonage Farm, was surveyed.

It was found to be a mature hedge supporting a range of vascular plant species. The hedge has been trimmed regularly and is mostly of high density. The section of hedge surveyed lies between two mature Oaks (*Quercus robur*). The hedgerow is predominantly composed of Holly (*Ilex aquifolium*) and Rowan (*Sorbus aucuparia*), with occasional Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*) and Sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*).

Bramble (*Rubus fruticosus agg*) grows throughout the hedge.

On the roadside, the most prevalent plants present at the base of the hedgerow are common grasses including Timothy-grass (*Phleum pratense*) and Perennial Ryegrass (*Lolium perenne*). There is occasional Red Campion (*Silene dioica*), Foxglove (*Digitalis purpurea*) and Bracken (*Pteridium aquilinum*).

On the field-side, grazing has occurred up the base of the hedge. There is little additional ground flora except for the grasses also found in the field, including Perennial Ryegrass, Yorkshire Fog (*Holcus lanatus*) and Timothy-grass (*Phleum pratense*). The field adjacent is used for grazing and silage, and is dominated by Perennial Ryegrass. It has low ecological value.

3.2.5 Fauna Survey

The hedgerow has high potential for use by nesting birds. Blue Tit (*Cyanistes caeruleus*), House Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*) and Blackbird (*Turdus merula*) were recorded in the hedgerow and oak trees during the survey. It is likely that these species were raising their final broods/fledglings of the year, as well as using the hedge for general foraging and refuge. No species (birds) listed in Part I of Schedule 1 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 were identified during the survey. However, all nesting birds are protected during nesting season.

No signs of Badger activity were identified during the survey. No signs of any species protected by Schedule 5 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 were found.

The hedge would be suitable for bats to commute or forage along but the stretch due to be removed being relatively short in length, the effect of this on bats would be very small. The oak trees on either end of surveyed stretch and at regular intervals along the rest of the hedgerow are to remain. In addition, there are other hedgerows in the local area of a high quality for these purposes. There is no roosting potential for bats in the stretch of hedge due for translocation.

4 Assessment

4.1 Constraints

No constraints

4.2 Interpretation

4.2.1 Hedgerow Regulations 1997

The Hedgerow Regulations cite an 'important' hedgerow as one which:

- (a) Has existed for 30 years or more; and
- (b) Satisfies at least one of the criteria listed in Part II of Schedule 1

The criteria referred to above, with regard to Wildlife & Landscape, are:

The hedgerow includes -

- (a) At least 7 woody species
- (b) At least 6 woody species and 3 features from 4 Red Data Books listed
- (c) At least 6 woody species plus one of the following:
 - Black Poplar Tree (*Populus nigra*)
 - Large-leaved Lime (*Tilia platyphyllos*)
 - Small-leaved Lime (*Tilia cordata*)
 - Wild Service Tree (*Sorbus torminalis*)
- (d) At least 5 woody species plus 4 features
- (e) At least 4 woody species plus highway plus two other features

Using the method described within the Regulations, 4 woody species were recorded for the hedgerow. The survey did not identify any species listed in the Red Data Books.

There are three features associated with the hedge, namely gaps less than 10% and standard trees. A parallel hedge runs down the other side of the road, this is included as the highway feature it is not included in the assessment, .

The hedge is adjacent a road, but this is not classified as a "highway" under the hedgerow regulations which refers to "un- adopted" highways.

The hedge is not classed as "important", under the hedgerow regulations and the removal of the proposed relatively short stretch would not reduce the quality or value of the remainder of the hedge.

Feature	Hedge				ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORY	Protected Species records	FEATURES	HEDGE CLASSIFIED AS IMPORTANT										
1	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes				No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
	No = Automatic failure				ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORY		Yes = Automatic pass		7 woody species or 6 woody species + 3 features or 5 woody species + 4 features or highway + 4 woody species and 2 features									
	Length 20m +	Not Curtilage of dwelling	Established more than 30yrs	Boundary of protected or common land or used for agriculture or forestry	Archaeological feature which is Included in the schedule of monuments	Situated wholly or partly within an archaeological	Boundary of a pre-1600 AD estate	Integral part of a field system	Bank or wall	Gaps less than 10%	Standard Trees	Ditch	Parallel Hedge	Footpath/ Bridleway	Connection points	3 Woody species	Average Ground Flora species	HEDGE CLASSIFIED AS IMPORTANT

We have not made an archaeological search for this site however site conditions indicate the hedge line is unlikely to be of historic significance.

4.2.2 Protection of Badgers Act 1992

No signs of badgers or badger activity, including habitual runs, latrines, snuffle holes or hair were found in the length of hedgerow surveyed. The surrounding habitat is assessed as being poor quality for badgers, as it consists of primarily grazing pasture, with no rough grassland.

4.3 Potential Impacts

4.3.1 Birds

The translocation of the hedgerow is unlikely to reduce the nesting potential for birds in the local area. In the context of the local environment, the hedge surveyed is of similar quality to nearby hedges. Its translocation is unlikely to result in a significant or long-term reduction in food availability or nest site availability.

4.3.2 Bats

Following an assessment of the surrounding environs via aerial images and then via a site visit, there is low potential for the translocation of the stretch of hedgerow to significantly affect the commuting routes of and foraging areas of bats. Such habitat is well represented in the local area.

4.3.3 Badgers

Following the survey, it is deemed that there would be minimal, if any, impact on badgers in the local area.

5 Recommendations and Mitigation

5.1 Mitigation Measures

5.1.1 Hedge Retention

It is recommended that the original hedge is translocated where possible and practicable. Retention of the vast majority of the original hedgerow will greatly reduce any negative impacts on the wildlife in the local area. It is also recommended that vegetation around the roadside base of the hedge is also translocated where possible, as it supports a variety of flowering plants. The removal and translocation of the hedge must follow a strict chronological order as detailed in Appendix 2. The Oaks to either end of the stretch to be translocated must have their root zones fully protected.

5.1.2 Hedge Planting

Where retention of the original hedge is not possible, planting of a replacement is recommended. It is recommended that a native species hedgerow mix is utilised, to further enhance the wildlife value of the hedge in its entirety. In addition, native wildflower seed mix or plug plants for hedgerow habitats would be of great benefit.

Planting of native wildflower seed at the site will be an enhancement in comparison to the existing ground-flora.

5.1.3 Timing

Any works on the hedgerow should be carried out outside of the bird nesting season (March - September inclusive) to avoid disturbance of nesting birds, which are protected by Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 during this period. If work is to be undertaken in this period the hedge should first be checked for signs of nesting birds. If the hedgerow, or parts of the hedgerow, are to be translocated this should ideally be undertaken outside the main growing period when the hedge is dormant (October to February).

6 Summary

The re-location of a 21m section of hedgerow is requested to be undertaken to facilitate access to a new development of two camping pods.

A hedgerow survey was requested following guidance under the Hedgerow Regulations 1997.

The site survey found that the hedgerow **does not** meet the criteria of being classified as 'important' by the Hedgerow Regulations 1997.

The translocation of the proposed relatively short stretch is not deemed to adversely affect the quality or value of the remaining hedge and disturbance is judged to be temporary with no significant long term effects on the hedge or the local wildlife.

As such, it is recommended that, where possible, the original hedge is translocated to its new position. Where this is not possible, a new hedgerow should be planted using a native species mix, with additional hedgerow wildflower seed / plug plants to be planted in the base. Planting of native wildflower seed at the site will be an enhancement in comparison to the existing ground-flora.

The adjacent pasture land on which development will take place was judged to be of low ecological value.

Appendix 1 Photographs



View of hedge from Parsonage Lane, with proposed section to be transplanted between two oak trees



View of hedge from field



View of adjacent field

Appendix 2

The methods below will need to be reviewed in line with the availability of machinery and timing of work.

1	Receptor Site- A trench is to be dug at the receptor site approximately 1m deep, 1m wide in the middle with side/s shallow tapered. As the donor hedge is being lifted from the road side one side of the trench can be fairly straight as the roadside can not be undercut during translocation.
2	Receptor Site - Soil in bottom of the trench is to be loosened and mixed with some top soil excavated from the receptor trench.
3	Coppice- The existing hedge should be cut back heavily to reduce its bulk. The level of cutting back should be similar to that which would be done should it be laid. Small trees should be coppiced to 30cm above ground level.
3	Lifting- Determine the length of hedgerow that can be moved in each bucket. The roots between each plant should then be severed. This is to be done by hand, but could be achieved more successfully and easily if a hydraulically powered blade/knife where used.
4	Lifting- A trench is to be dug on the lifting side approximately 1m from the stems. The machine bucket should be "combed" gently down to expose rather than break root ends.
5	Lifting- Whenever encountering large roots, an attempt should be made to cut them (strong loppers, sharpened mattock) rather than break them.
6	Lifting- With a non-reversible bucket the plants should be scooped from behind. Ideally using a reversible bucket the plant can then be lifted from underneath. In either case maintain as much of the root ball as is possible.
7	Lifting- Any large (>15mm) roots broken during lifting should be pruned to leave clean ends.
8	Placement- On placement, maintain the correct height and line of each plant. One or two people on the ground should be able to direct the machine operator and to assist in carrying out step 9.
9	Placement- The trench should be back-filled with top soil (ideally from the original site position) sufficiently to stabilise the plant. Soil should be firmed in around the root ball by treading.
10	Placement- Potential air pockets under the roots should be manually filled with topsoil.
11	Placement- Enough space should be left in the trench to leave room for the next stem.
12	Placement- Back-filling to be completed when a run of 4 or 5 plants are in place. This is to minimise tracking of the machine in adverse weather conditions.
13	Post establishment- The transplanted hedge should be supplemented with new planting where transplanted stems do not take.