



**Land at Wyvols Court Farm, Basingstoke Road,  
Swallowfield, RG7 1WY**

**SUPPORTING STATEMENT**

Prior approval for the erection of a Forestry Building

Prepared by: Blue Fox Planning Ltd

On behalf of: Wyvols Court Farm Ltd

February 2025



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## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 This statement is prepared in support of a prior notification application which relates to the erection of a new forestry building on land at Wyvols Court Farm, Basingstoke Road, Swallowfield, RG7 1WY. A Site Location Plan is provided at **Appendix 1**.
- 1.2 A separate plan (**Appendix 2**) is also provided which shows the proposed forestry building in the context of a separate agricultural building which has recently been subject to the prior approval process as explained below.
- 1.3 This application seeks confirmation of the erection of the building by virtue of Class E, Schedule 2, Part 6 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 (as amended).
- 1.4 This statement will identify the site and its surroundings, a description of development and provide the justification for this request, confirming compliance with the provisions set out in legislation.
- 1.5 Within proximity to the site, a prior notification application (ref: 243150) for the erection of a new agricultural building was withdrawn on the 10<sup>th</sup> January 2025, on the grounds that it contained both Class A and Class E use. This application was subsequently followed by a revised prior notification application (ref: 250065), consisting of a reduced scale building with only Class A use contained. This was approved on the 7<sup>th</sup> February 2025. This current application seeks to introduce an additional building, of the same size as that approved, but for Class E use only.



## 2. Site and Surrounding Area

- 2.1 Wyvols Court Farm (WCF) is located adjacent to Basingstoke Road (B3349) at the western edge of the settlement of Swallowfield and relates to an agricultural holding comprising 167.26 acres (67.69 hectares).
- 2.2 WCF is a diversified farm business with three main activities. This includes a number of commercial units, providing approximately 30,000sqft of employment space, comprising former use classes B1(c) (light industrial) and B8 (Storage and Distribution) and supports approximately 110 jobs. There is also a niche forestry business growing willow trees for cricket bats and some grass leys for temporary grazing. The forestry business produces test-grade cricket bat willow for Gray-Nicolls in Robertsbridge, Sussex, comprising approximately 2,500 willow trees planted across 12.5ha (31 acres) of the site.
- 2.3 Wyvols Court Farm provides pasture for sheep grazing on a seasonal basis. The total pasture areas within the land holding extends to 33 ha (81 acres). The farm's grass leys also currently produce feedstock for an Anaerobic Digester located off-site at Farley Hill. This involves the whole-crop harvesting of the grass leys twice a year in addition to the grazing enterprise.
- 2.4 Commercial activities are housed within 9 separate units, predominately located adjacent to Wyvols Court Farmhouse and Wyvols Court, with a small number of units located at 'Handpost'. The location of these units is shown on the attached site location plan and the nature of these units and current occupants is summarised below.

Current Occupants	Nature of Business
Star Fireworks Ltd	Firework display company
Lister Wilder Ltd	Turf & amenity horticulture machinery company
Farm Energy & Control Services Ltd	Printed circuit boards for agricultural control systems
Rentokil Initial PLC	Tropical plant displays & landscaping
Commentary Charts Ltd	Football memorabilia charts of big games
Thames Valley Region Ltd	Dynorod drain cleaning south east region
R3 Environmental Solutions Ltd	Recycling of IT equipment (EA licence held)
Bracknell Glass Ltd	PVC windows & doors manufacture

- 2.5 Existing operations related to willow production are to be expanded to allow for further production stages, including the splitting of logs, sawing, and shaping of raw materials to take place on site prior to finishing into cricket bats. The proposed new forestry building will provide suitable storage and processing space for this expansion of operations. Evidence of the typical types of production and processing to be undertaken within the proposed building can be found within **Appendix 3**. This includes timber handling, sawing of logs, splitting into clefts and rough sawing into basic bat blanks in readiness for further processing.

### 3. Description of Development

- 3.1 This application seeks permission for the erection of a new forestry building, to allow for the expansion of existing willow production on-site.
- 3.2 The proposed building will measure 36.95m in length and 20m in width with a ridge height of 10m (8m to eaves). The elevations and roof will be clad in Kingspan Quadcore KS1000 RW composite wall and roof panels in olive green colour (BS 12 B 27), alongside double skin galvanised steel roller shutter doors (with a core of insulation to prevent any cold bridging) in moorland green colour (BS 12 B 21).
- 3.3 The size of the building proposed is the same as the previously approved Class A agricultural barn on-site and will provide appropriate storage space for the machinery, materials and products required for operations relating to the production of test-grade cricket bat willow at WCF.

## 4. Planning Policy Context

4.1 Class E Schedule 2 Part 6 of the Permitted Development Rights schedule permits development necessary for the purposes of forestry, including afforestation, that consists of works for the erection, extension or alteration of a building.

4.2 Class E consists of three parts: Part 1 states that development is not permitted if it does not comply with certain criteria, Part 2 provides certain conditions attached to Class E that must be met in order for the development to be considered permitted development, and Part 3 clarifies interpretations within Class E.

4.3 This application seeks to ascertain whether prior approval is required for Class E. For ease of reference, we consider each condition within E.1 to demonstrate that the proposals would constitute permitted development.

4.4 E.1 Development is not permitted by Class E if–

- a) It would consist of or include the provision or alteration of a dwelling;**
  - The proposals do not relate to the provision or alteration of a dwelling.
- b) The height of any building or works within 3 kilometres of the perimeter of an aerodrome would exceed 3 metres in height;**
  - The site is not within 3 kilometres of an aerodrome.
- c) Any part of the development would be within 25 metres of the metalled portion of a trunk road or classified road; or**
  - The proposed building is not within 25 metres of a metalled part of a trunk road or classified road.
- d) Any building for storing fuel for, or waste from, a biomass boiler or an anaerobic digestion system would be used for storing waste not produced by that boiler or system or for storing fuel not produced on land which is occupied together with that building for the purposes of forestry.**
  - The proposed building will not be used for the storing of fuel for or waste from a biomass boiler or anaerobic digestion system.

- 4.5 Development under Class E is permitted subject to conditions.
- 4.6 The developer must, before beginning the development, apply to the local planning authority for determination as to whether the prior approval of the authority will be required as to the siting, design and external appearance of the building.
- 4.7 The application must be accompanied by a written description of the proposed development, the materials to be used and a plan indicating the site together with any fee required to be paid. This statement and its associated appendices, alongside the drawings/plans listed below form the basis of this submission in accordance with Regulations.
  - Proposed Forestry Unit 291/1 (25/02/2025)
- 4.8 In respect of the siting, design and external appearance of the forestry building proposed, the following should be noted.
  - A. Wyvols Court Farm is a successful and diversified agricultural unit and employment location which sits adjacent to the settlement of Swallowfield. Wyvols Court Farm extends to approximately 167 acres, with approximately 2,500 willow trees planted across 31 acres for the use in production of test-grade cricket bats for Gray-Nicolls.
  - B. As part of the ongoing forestry activities at Wyvols Court Farm, the new building will provide under cover processing space for various stages in the production of cricket bats from trees grown on the farm: (a) tree stems need to be cut into rounds 30" long with use of a table saw (b) rounds need to be split along the grain into 8-10 wedge-shaped clefts using a log splitter (c) clefts need to be sawn into a basic bat shape for onward finishing using table-saws and (d) offcuts are collected in a stillage and chipped into wood chips for recycling.
  - C. The design of the building will be single storey, externally the finishes will include Kingspan composite wall and roof panels in olive green colour, alongside double skin galvanised steel roller shutter doors in moorland green colour. It is considered that the external appearance of this building is appropriate for its use and setting, and as a result will not be contentious.
  - D. The siting of the new building will utilise existing internal access arrangements within Wyvols Court Farm, set behind existing substantial hedgerow and tree planting which runs parallel to Basingstoke Road. The proposed location within the holding provides an efficient and convenient location to support ongoing operations at Wyvols Court Farm.



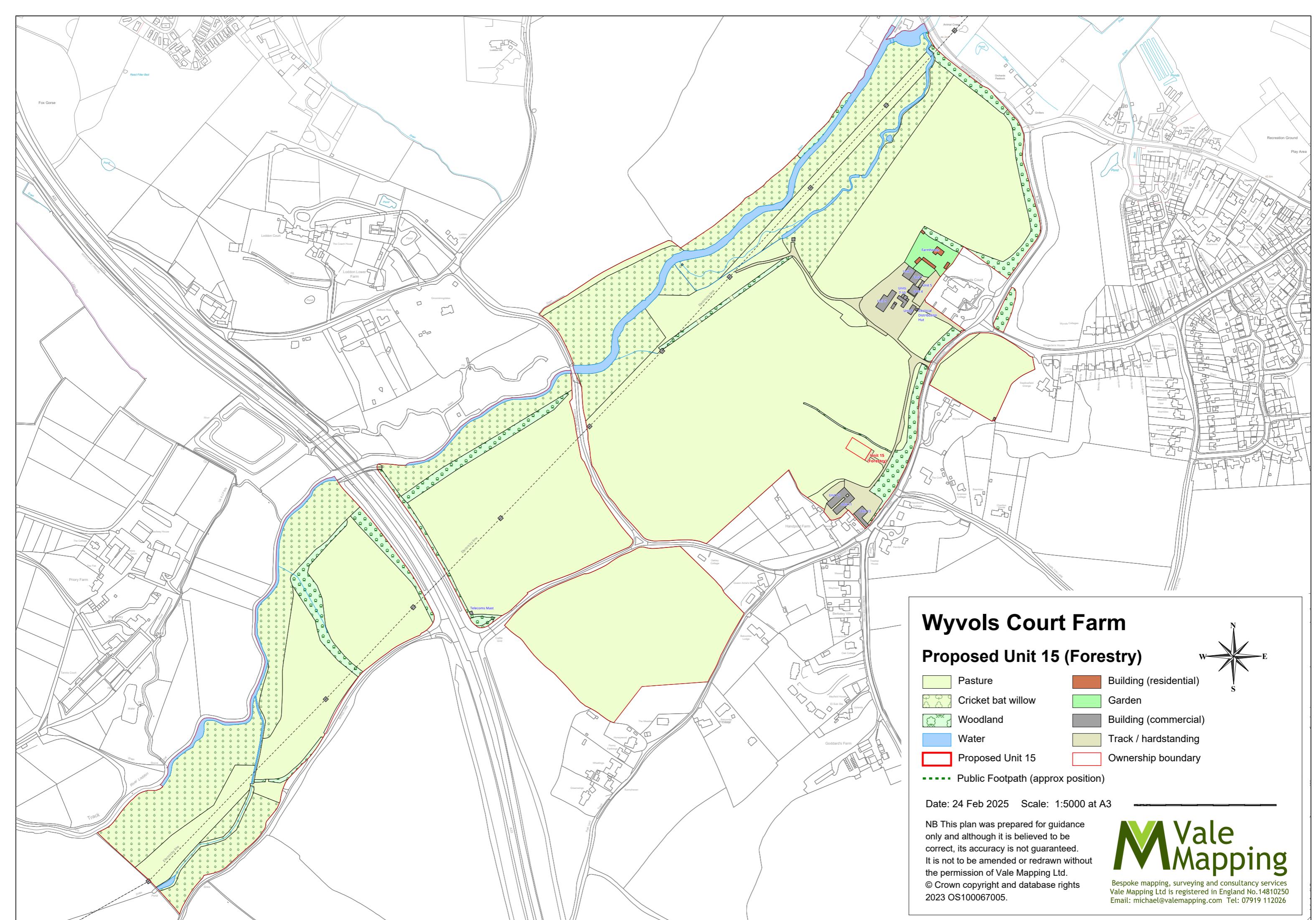
## 5. Conclusions

- 5.1 For reasons set out within this Statement, it is considered that the proposal will accord with Class E for the erection of a building for the purpose of forestry, and that the proposals are in compliance with the Permitted Development criteria.
- 5.2 This proposal has considered previous concerns raised as part of the withdrawn application (ref. 243150) which consisted of both Class A Agricultural and Class E Forestry uses. The building will be utilised solely for providing space for forestry works associated with the production and processing of test-grade cricket bat willow at WCF, expanding the existing capacity on-site in an appropriate location.
- 5.3 It is therefore respectively requested that confirmation be issued that prior approval will not be required and that the development can proceed in relation to Class E.



## APPENDIX 1

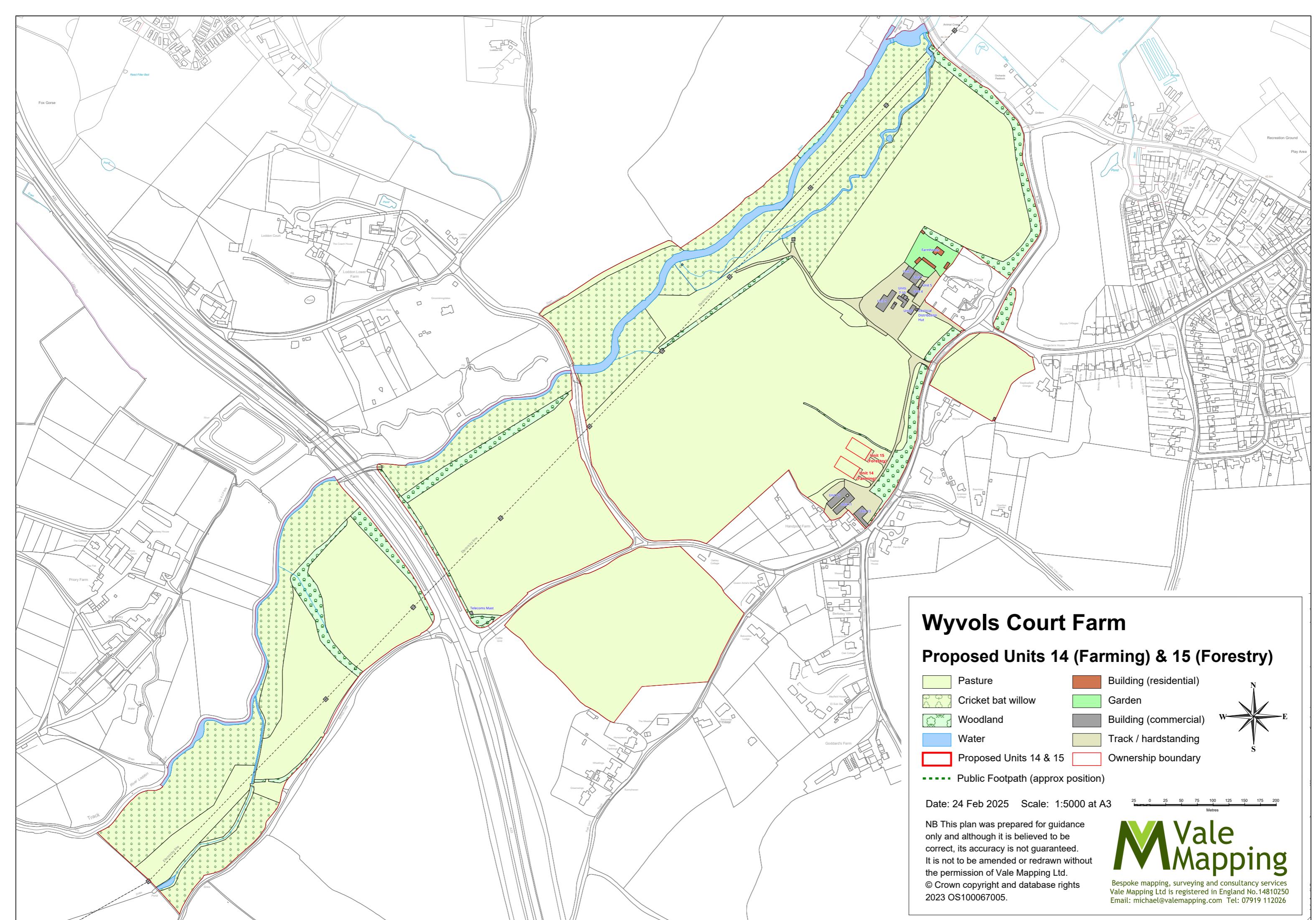
### Site Location Plan





## APPENDIX 2

### Plan Showing Proposal in Context of Separate Agricultural Building





## APPENDIX 3

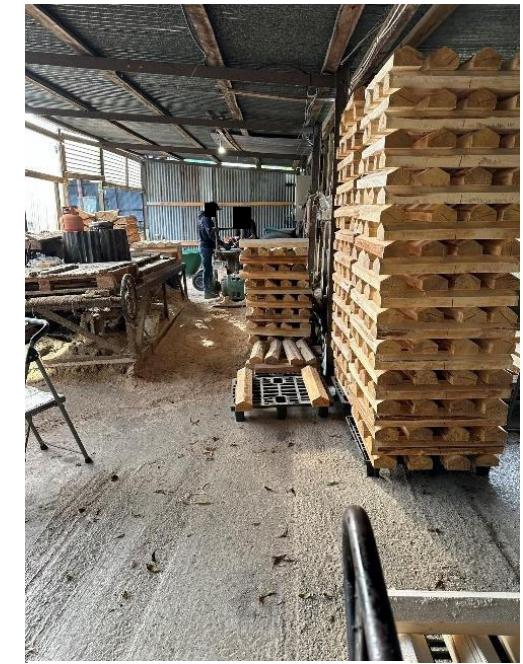
### Cricket Bat Willow Production and Processing



Air Drying of Clefts



Table Saw



Willow Clefts



Log Splitter



Table Saw 2



Willow Clefts 2



Willow Offcuts 2



Willow Clefts 3



Willow Offcuts