

## **Kimpton Parkfield Sports Ground Supporting Document**

The legend on the map provides an overview of the site currently (where buildings and **hard standing** are found and where **tree cover** is already present). It also outlines opportunities including **conservation cuts, meadow creation, bulb planting** and **hedge planting**.

### **Conservation cuts**

There are 3 areas selected as suitable for conservation cuts. These are along the eastern bank, the wildflower section in the carpark and the bank around the carparking area. Here there would be a relaxation of the mowing regime to a single yearly cut. Removing the arisings after a late summer/early autumn cut should be implemented as leaving these has a smothering effect on new growth and adds additional fertiliser to the soil. For a site of this size a friend of group could potentially be utilised to remove the cuttings after mowing and may be the only option for the eastern bank where the gradient and fence may impede machinery.

The eastern bank and the small section in the carpark will require additional cuts over the first three years. This is in more line with meadow creation techniques and would aid the emergence of the previously seeded wildflowers where grass and nettle has currently overwhelmed them by keeping these suppressed.

### **Meadow Creation**

These are the two locations outlined along the hedgerow and the small area on the north eastern side. The creation of excellent wildflower meadows requires a higher resource input than only changing the cutting regime but can provide good results when the current floral diversity is poor. The appropriate time for meadow creation is in either early autumn (September to October) or early spring (March to April) with autumn being the optimal time, both for success and to have a second chance at seeding in the spring.

Here the initial stage is a cut and lift as in the conservation cut, followed by scarification of the remaining ground to provide bare soil and then seeded and rolled into the soil. It is at this time that additional **Springtime Bulb Planting** of crocuses and other early flowering bulbs can be carried out to provide a delineation between the different management techniques of frequent amenity mowing and a cut and lift. The bulb planting also allows a good pollination resource early in the year for emergent pollinating insects as well as extending the colours through until summer flowering species are in bloom.

It is recommended to cut areas of meadow creation more regularly in the first year, every 8 -12 week alongside the amenity cuts to prevent the succession of grasses and other undesirable species. After establishment in the first year these also would move to a yearly single cut.

### **Hedge Planting**

Hedges are great connective habitat and offer many of the same benefits to wildlife as woodland fringes and are an important and well recognised feature unique to the UK. Much like woodlands they provide shelter and food for birds and insects as well as offer screening, sound dampening and flood prevention. The difference in hedge planting to woodland planting is in the selection of species, often shorter growing, leafier species, and the management of the hedge.

On site there are three areas of proposed hedging: along the southern edge, around the current fencing for the car park and the eastern fence line. There are also scattered trees on the western

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fence line and an area in the north eastern corner where hedging tree species would be an appropriate choice. These would be planted between October and February at a density of 5 trees per metre. On the southern boundary this would be planted alongside the existing hedgerow as the intention is to bolster what is there currently.

The western edge is slightly different as a full hedgerow beneath the trees would not be appropriate. However, as there are several small hawthorns already thriving along this boundary adding additional whips here when the hedge is planted on the southern boundary would fill in gaps along the short metal fence.

### **Right of Way**

Here the three dead trees that the ivy is using to climb up have been marked for removal as these are creating a low tunnel and would remain a gap in any new hedgerow being planted. The gaps already in the current hedgerow would be filled when planting the new line in front of it. Much of the blockage is overgrowth of nettle, bramble and some ivy and would be simple to remove.

There are several pieces of wood propping up parts of the fence or have been dumped behind. These are also blocking the RoW and need to be removed and cleared so that access can be granted which may require a conversation with the owner of the affected fencing.

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