



PLANNING STATEMENT

**Construction of radar equipment on top of existing telecommunications mast,
construction of associated equipment cabinet and laying of paving slabs for access**

at

**Vickery Building, Police Training Centre, Royal
Victoria Country Park, Netley Abbey, Southampton,
SO31 4TS**

**On Behalf of:
Hampshire Police**

Prepared by
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December 2025

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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared by Batcheller Monkhouse on behalf of Hampshire Police in support of a planning application for the construction of radar equipment on top of existing telecommunications mast, construction of associated equipment cabinet and laying of paving slabs for access at Vickery Building, Police Training Centre, Royal Victoria Country Park, Netley Abbey, Southampton, SO31 4TS
- 1.2 The statement includes a description of the site and its surroundings, relevant planning history, details of the proposed development and pre-application advice, a summary of the planning policy context, and an appraisal of the scheme in the context of relevant planning considerations.
- 1.3 The following documents have been submitted alongside this Statement:
 - A site location plan
 - Planning Drawings (Prepared by MFDCI)
 - Radar Equipment Specification
 - Heritage Statement (Prepared by Batcheller Monkhouse)

2 SITE AND SURROUNDINGS



Figure 1: Site Location Source: Google Maps

- 2.1 The proposals submitted under this enquiry relate to an existing telecoms mast within the Applicant's ownership. The telecoms mast sits in within extensive grounds relating to Hampshire Police Training Centre which contains a number of buildings. The telecoms mast lies adjacent to The Vickery Building which is used for the main 999 call centre for Hampshire Police.
- 2.2 The buildings sit within the wider Royal Victoria Country Park which is a registered park which backs onto the Southampton Water Estuary (designated as a Special Protection Area). There are a number of heritage assets in the wider setting, as can be seen in Figure 2 below. Woodland to the east of the existing telecoms mast is ancient woodland as can be seen in Figure 3 below. A public right of way is present to the north of the site, see Figure 4. The land lies within Flood Zone 1 so it is not constrained by flooding risks.
- 2.3 Up until recently the existing telecoms mast has been used to house two transmission dishes which were microwaved linked to Southampton Central Police Station however this form of communication was no longer operational. Since the removal of the radio antenna the telecoms mast is available for use for other infrastructure.

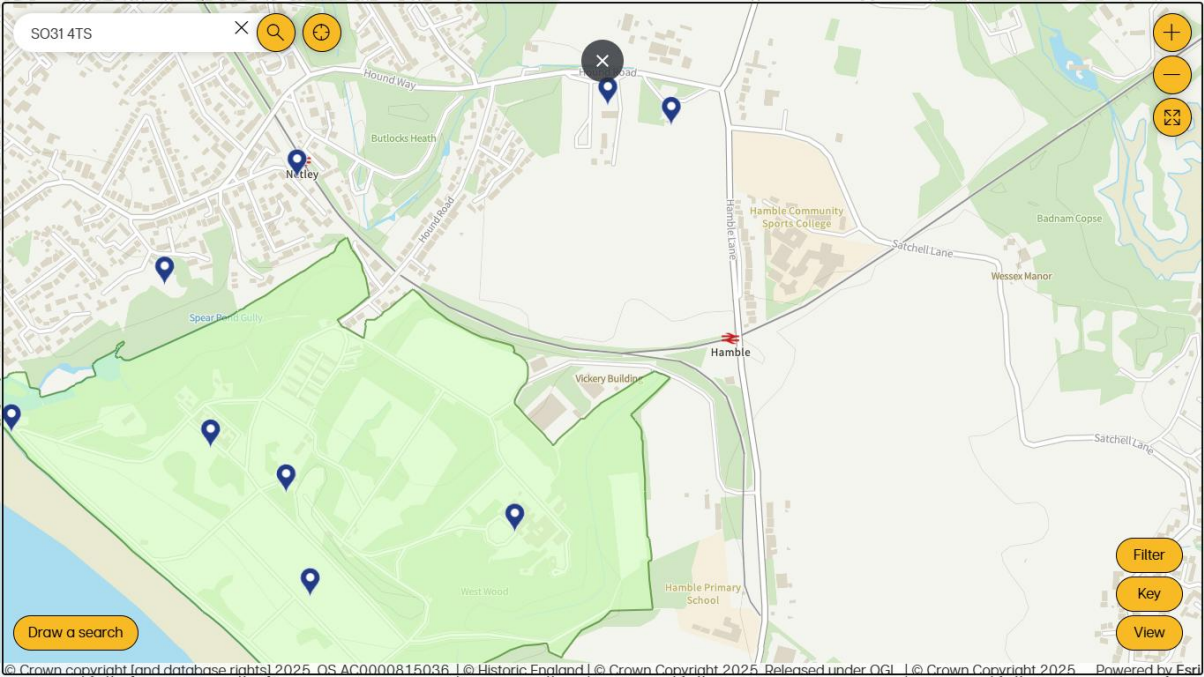


Figure 2 Listed Buildings Source Historic England

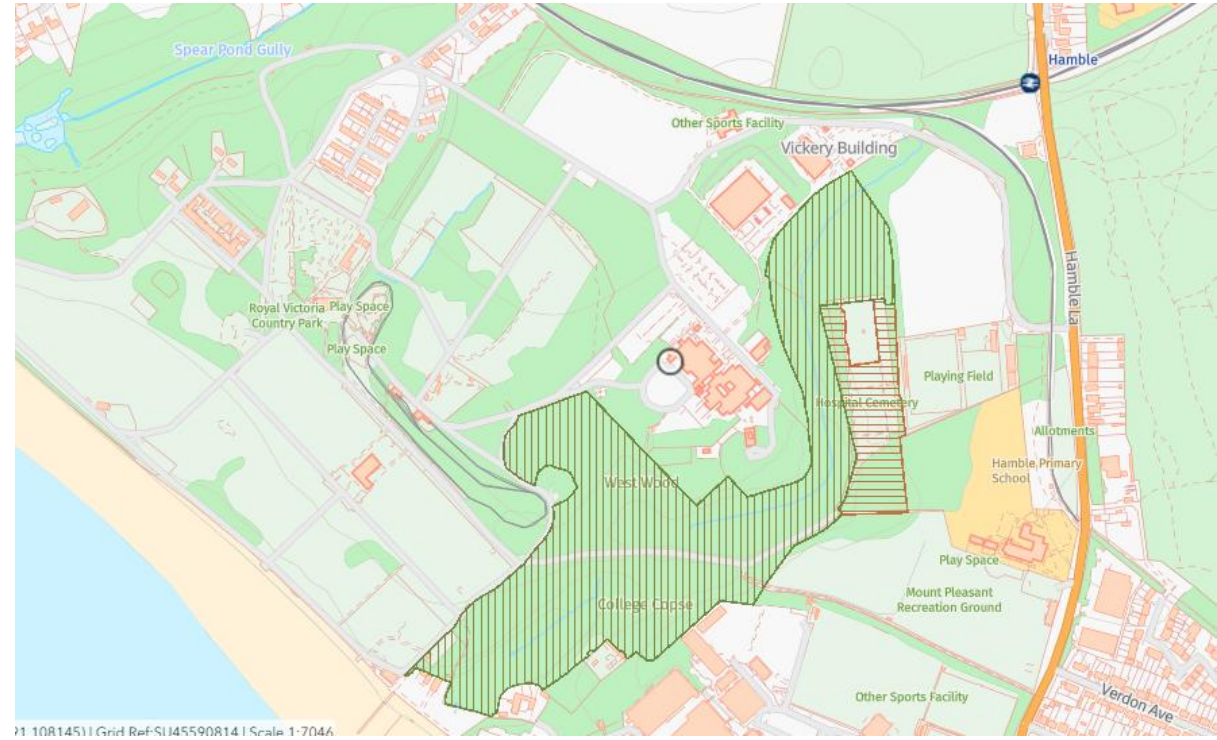


Figure 3 Ancient Woodland Source Magic Maps

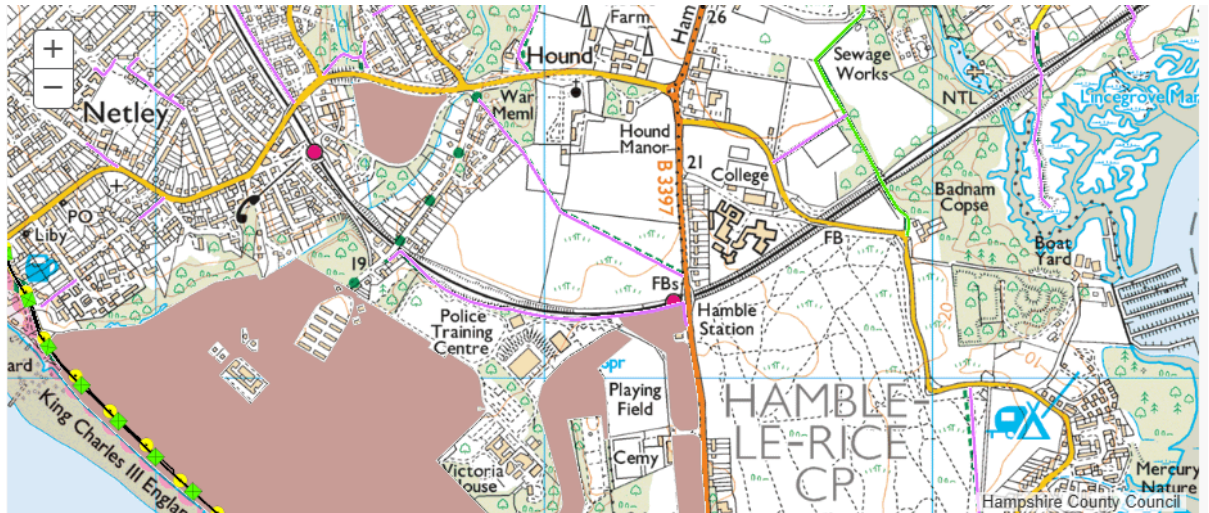


Figure 4 Public Rights of Way Hampshire Rights of Way Map

3 PLANNING HISTORY

- 3.1 The site lies within Eastleigh Borough Council (EBC) local planning authority area. The Council's online planning records have been consulted and the following applications found for the relevant part of the site (correct as of 16 September 2025).

Application	Proposal	Decision
F/19/85934	Installation of 2no. chiller units on concrete slab enclosed by palisade security fence with access gates along northwestern elevation of Vickery Building.	Approved 03 September 2019
L/19/86156	Installation of 2no. chiller units on concrete slab enclosed by palisade security fence with access gates along northwestern elevation of Vickery Building.	Approved 03 September 2019
F/07/60084	Construction of detached double garage	Approved 11 July 2007
Z/17924/055/00	Erection of radio antenna dish on 3m high pole on building roof.	Approved 04 March 2002

Table 1: Planning history relating to the application building/site

4 PROPOSAL

- 4.1 The submitted proposals relate to the installation of radar equipment in lieu of radio antenna that were previously installed on top of an existing telecommunications mast adjacent to The Vickery Building. The radar infrastructure would consist of a single rotating radar positioned on top of the existing telecommunications mast this would be linked by two cables to an equipment cabinet located adjacent to the mast. The equipment cabinet would be positioned on an extended concrete base.
- 4.2 The radar equipment will be used for the monitoring of pilotless drones and is part of NPCC Home Office funded trials. The radar will not be used to monitor public drones. Instead, the radar will display Hampshire Police drones via Application Programming Interface (API) when flown Beyond Visual Line of Sight however its primary function is to detect other aircraft in the vicinity such as planes and helicopters, enabling Hampshire Police to maintain safe separation and uphold public safety during Beyond Visual Line of Sight (BVLOS) operations.
- 4.3 The location of the pre-existing mast is ideally suited for monitoring the air space in the region between Portsmouth, Southampton and Isle of Wight and also saves operational costs by making use of a pre-existing structure.
- 4.4 The mast itself is finished in a green colour so as to blend in with its surroundings and would continue to be maintained in this colour moving forward.

5 PRE-APPLICATION ADVICE

- 5.1 A written pre-application request was submitted to Eastleigh Borough Council with a response being received on the 20th November. The full response is enclosed at **Appendix 1** but in summary the planning officer indicated that they didn't have any concerns with the proposals. They also confirmed that listed building consent would not be required for the proposals and that heritage and landscape impacts could be considered via 'light-touch' assessments which could be incorporated into a planning statement.

6 PLANNING POLICY

6.1 Planning Policy Overview

6.2 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the Local Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The Development Plan for the District comprises the Eastleigh Borough Local Plan 2016-2036. The Local Plan is currently being reviewed with an Issues and Options Consultation being held in January 2025 – given the early stage at which this review is not of relevance to the current proposals. Material considerations include the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

6.3 This following section sets out the relevant Development Plan policies for this site and other material considerations which may be taken into account in the determination of the pre-application advice provided.

6.4 Development Plan

6.5 Tables 2 sets out the relevant policies of the Eastleigh Borough Local Plan 2016-2036.

Policy	Summary
S5	Countryside
S8	Historic Environment
DM1	General criteria for new development
DM9	Public utilities and communications
DM12	Heritage Assets

Table 2: Local Plan Policies

6.6 Other Material Considerations

The National Planning Policy Framework

6.6.1 The NPPF came into force in 2012 and was updated in 2024. It is the overarching government policy for England in relation to the assessment and determination of planning applications.

6.6.2 Paragraph 10 of the NPPF indicates that a presumption in favour of sustainable development should be seen as a golden thread for both plan-making and decision-taking with paragraph 9 stating that there are three dimensions to sustainable development which give rise to the need for the planning system to provide an economic, social and environmental role.

6.6.3 Table 3 below sets out the relevant policies of the NPPF.

Paragraph	Summary
120	Use of existing radio and electronic communications masts
215	Less than substantial harm to designated heritage assets

Table 3 Relevant Paragraphs of the NPPF

7 DEVELOPMENT APPRAISAL

7.1 Principle of Development

7.1.1 The site sits outside of any defined settlement boundary as such Policy S5 of the Eastleigh Local Plan applies which sets out forms of development that will be permitted in the countryside. One such form of development is 'essential public utilities' whilst radar equipment is not specified the planning officer confirmed as part of the pre-application advice received that Policy S5 was the most appropriate policy to consider the principle of the proposals. It is considered that the proposed radar equipment which is essential to the Hampshire Police operations can be classed as an essential public utility and as such can draw on support from Policy S5.

7.1.2 Policy S5 sets out a number of criteria that the permitted types of development will need to adhere to as follows:

- a) avoid adverse impacts on the rural, woodland, riparian or coastal character, the intrinsic character of the landscape including the avoidance of adverse landscape impacts on areas adjoining national parks and their settings, the significance of heritage assets and on the biodiversity of the area; *The proposals are not considered to adversely affect the character of the area being a relatively minor change to the appearance of existing infrastructure on site. This is particularly the case as the mast is largely screened from the wider landscape by virtue of the existing woodland and adjacent built form.*
- b) secure long-term beneficial management practices that will enhance the landscape and biodiversity of the countryside and coast; *This criteria is not considered to be relevant to the nature of the proposals.*
- c) avoid sterilisation of mineral resources, in accordance with the Hampshire Minerals and Waste Plan; *The proposals are not considered to affect the mineral resources of the area.*
- d) safeguard the best and most versatile agricultural land unless the benefit of the development clearly outweighs the loss; and *The proposals do not relate to agricultural land.*
- e) protect soils during construction wherever possible in line with the 'Defra code of practice for the sustainable use of soils on construction sites'. *The proposals will only require a very small amount of excavation to extend the existing concrete base so it is not anticipated to significantly affect the soil quality. If considered necessary measures to protect the soils during construction could be secured by an appropriately worded condition*

- 7.1.3 In addition to Policy S5, Policy DM9 of the Eastleigh Local Plan sets out policy in relation to public utilities and communications whilst the policy is perhaps more aimed at infrastructure for development sites the proposals the subject of this enquiry are still considered to constitute public utilities.
- 7.1.4 Policy DM5 sets out a number of criteria many of which are not relevant to the proposals but one of the criteria is that: The development of new and improvement of existing utilities infrastructure essential to meet the needs of new and existing communities will be encouraged and permitted subject to the other policies of this plan. In the event of conflict with other policies of this plan the Borough Council will require a full justification including an assessment of alternative means of provision.
- 7.1.5 As set out earlier in this statement the proposed infrastructure is essential to the operations of Hampshire Police and therefore the communities it serves and as such it is considered the proposals can draw support from Policy DM9.

7.2 Impact upon landscape character

- 7.2.1 As referred to earlier in this statement a public right of way runs along the northern boundary of the site. This right of way runs through a wooded area and as such it is not considered that the proposals would be visible from the right of way. Photographs included at **Appendix 2** indicate that the existing mast is largely invisible from this public right of way. At the pre-application stage the planning officer confirmed there agreement that the proposals would not be easily seen from public vantage points as it will not be significantly greater in height than the existing telecommunications mast.

7.3 Impact upon residential amenity

- 7.3.1 The site of the proposed radar equipment is considered to be sufficiently distanced from residential properties to avoid any adverse amenity impacts including any radiation impacts.

7.4 Impact upon biodiversity

- 7.4.1 The proposals would involve the removal of a minimal amount of grass to extend the existing concrete base. Aside from this no existing vegetation would be affected and as such it is not considered necessary to undertake an ecological appraisal. It is noted that the site lies adjacent to the Southampton Water SPA however the proposals are not considered to have any potential for affecting the characteristics of the SPA.

7.5 Impact upon Heritage Assets

- 7.5.1 The application site lies within close proximity to a number of designated heritage assets as set out earlier on in this statement. It was confirmed within the pre-application advice that listed building consent is not required. A heritage statement is provided with this application which considers the impact of the proposals on the setting of the designated heritage assets. The statement concludes that the proposals will have a Neutral impact on the historical value of Listed Buildings and Registered Park and Gardens nearby to The Vickery Building
- 7.5.2 In line with paragraph 215 of the NPPF the public benefits of the proposed radar installation are considered to outweigh any harm to the heritage assets.

8 CONCLUSION

- 8.1 This statement has been written in support of proposals for the construction of radar equipment on top of existing telecommunications mast, construction of associated equipment cabinet and laying of paving slabs for access within the grounds of the Vickery Building, Police Training Centre, Royal Victoria Country Park, Netley Abbey, Southampton, SO31 4TS.
- 8.2 The proposals were subject to written pre-application advice which raised no concerns in relation to the proposals and confirmed that listed building consent would not be required.
- 8.3 The proposals are considered to comply with the relevant criteria of Policy S5 which relates to proposals in the countryside. An enclosed photograph schedule shows that the existing telecommunications mast which the proposals relate to is largely invisible from the Hamble Rail Trail and it is not considered that the proposals also be well-screened from the Hamble Rail Trail. The submitted heritage statement concludes that the proposals will lead to less than substantial harm to the designated heritage assets within the vicinity of the proposals.
- 8.4 Overall the proposals are considered to comply with the relevant policies of the Development Plan and as such the proposal is put forward for approval.

Appendix 1.

CHRISTINE DADSWELL
BATCHELLER MONKHOUSE 1 LONDON ROAD
TUNBRIDGE WELLS
TN1 1DH

Application	Q/25/100264
Please ask for	Gary Osmond
Direct dial	023 8068 8490
Working hours	Mon-Fri 9-5
Email	gary.osmond@eastleigh.gov.uk

Thursday 20th November 2025

Dear Ms Dadswell,

Without Prejudice

Application No: Q/25/100264
Description: Construction of radar equipment on top of existing telecommunications mast
Site: POLICE TRAINING CENTRE, ROYAL VICTORIA COUNTRY PARK, NETLEY ABBEY, SOUTHAMPTON, SO31 4TS

Thank you for your pre-application enquiry regarding the proposed installation of radar equipment to the existing telecommunications mast at the Vickery Building, Royal Victoria Country Park. Having now had the opportunity to review the submitted information, and on the assumption that the proposals do require formal planning approval given there is no obvious part of the GPDO within which the works would fall, I would make the following comments.

Section 5 & 6 of your pre-application statement clearly sets out the relevant policies, and I would be in agreement that the works would be considered acceptable in principle despite being outside the urban edge where generally development is not usually considered appropriate. As is set out in Policies S5 and DM9, development associated with public utilities and telecommunications can be deemed to be acceptable, provided there is no adverse impact upon the locality. Whilst these policies do not make specific reference to development of the nature proposed, they are likely to be the most appropriate policies on which to make an assessment of any formal application.

In terms of the design and layout of that proposed and its potential impact upon the wider locality, I have no particular concerns. Given the existing mast would be utilised and the height of the new equipment would not really be any greater than what is already in place, together with the position of the mast between the Vickery Building

and the adjacent woodland, it would not easily been seen from any public vantage points. As such, physical and visual impact would be minimal.

With regards to the need or otherwise for listed building consent, whilst the site is within the boundaries of the Royal Victoria Country Park, which is itself listed, I would be of the view that separate listed consent would not be required. The location of the mast is well away from any of the historic elements of the park and given its relatively unobtrusive location away from the main public areas of the park, I do not feel any further assessment of the development's impact upon wider heritage assets over that which would be undertaken as part of the planning application is necessary.

In terms of supporting information required for a planning application, I would not envisage anything over and above the standard plans, elevations and supporting statement. Whilst not essential for validation of the application, it may be worthwhile seeking the advice of an ecologist, particularly in relation to any impact upon bats, and potentially an arboriculturalist should any works to adjacent trees be required.

I would also recommend a basic landscape impact assessment to demonstrate if there are any available views from further afield, particularly from the Hamble Rail Trail. However, this and any heritage assessment could be included within the main planning / design & access statement as opposed to being separate documents.

Based on that proposed, I would not envisage any significant issues being raised should a formal planning application be submitted.

I hope that these brief comments are of assistance but please be aware that they are given on a without prejudice basis, based on the information available and will not be binding on any future planning application. Should you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact Gary Osmond using the contact details at the top of this letter.

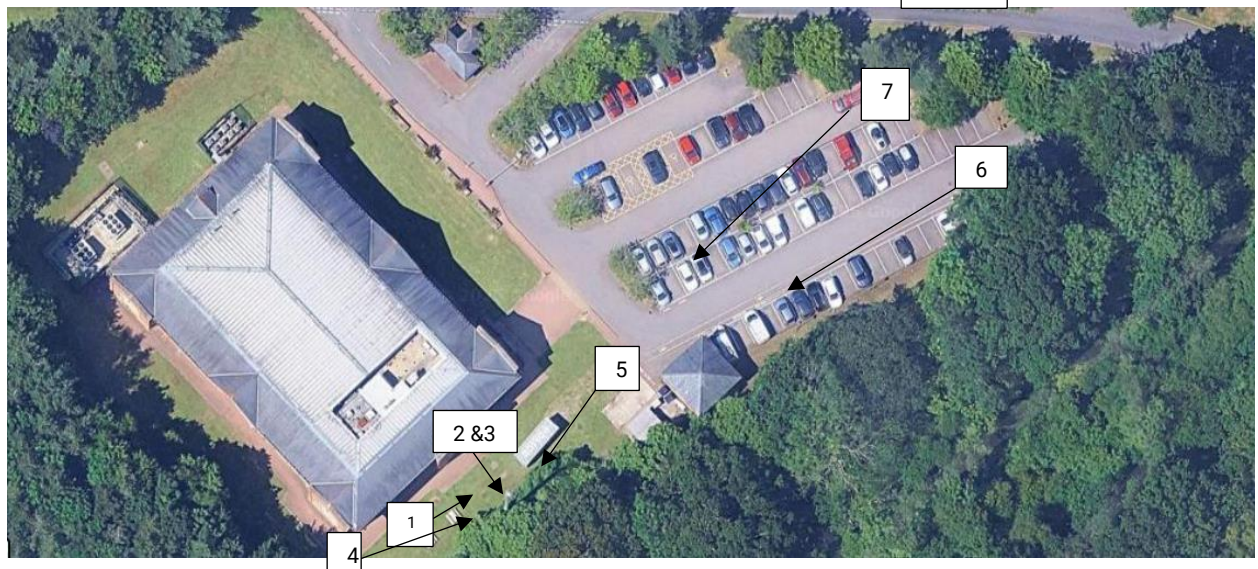
Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "N Parker". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Nicholas Parker
Planning Manager

Appendix 2.

Photographs 13-25 are taken at various points along the Hamble Rail Trail between points A & B as labelled below



Photograph 1



Photograph 2



Photograph 3



Photograph 4



Photograph 5



Photograph 6



Photograph 7



Photograph 8



Photograph 9



Photograph 10



Photograph 11



Photograph 12



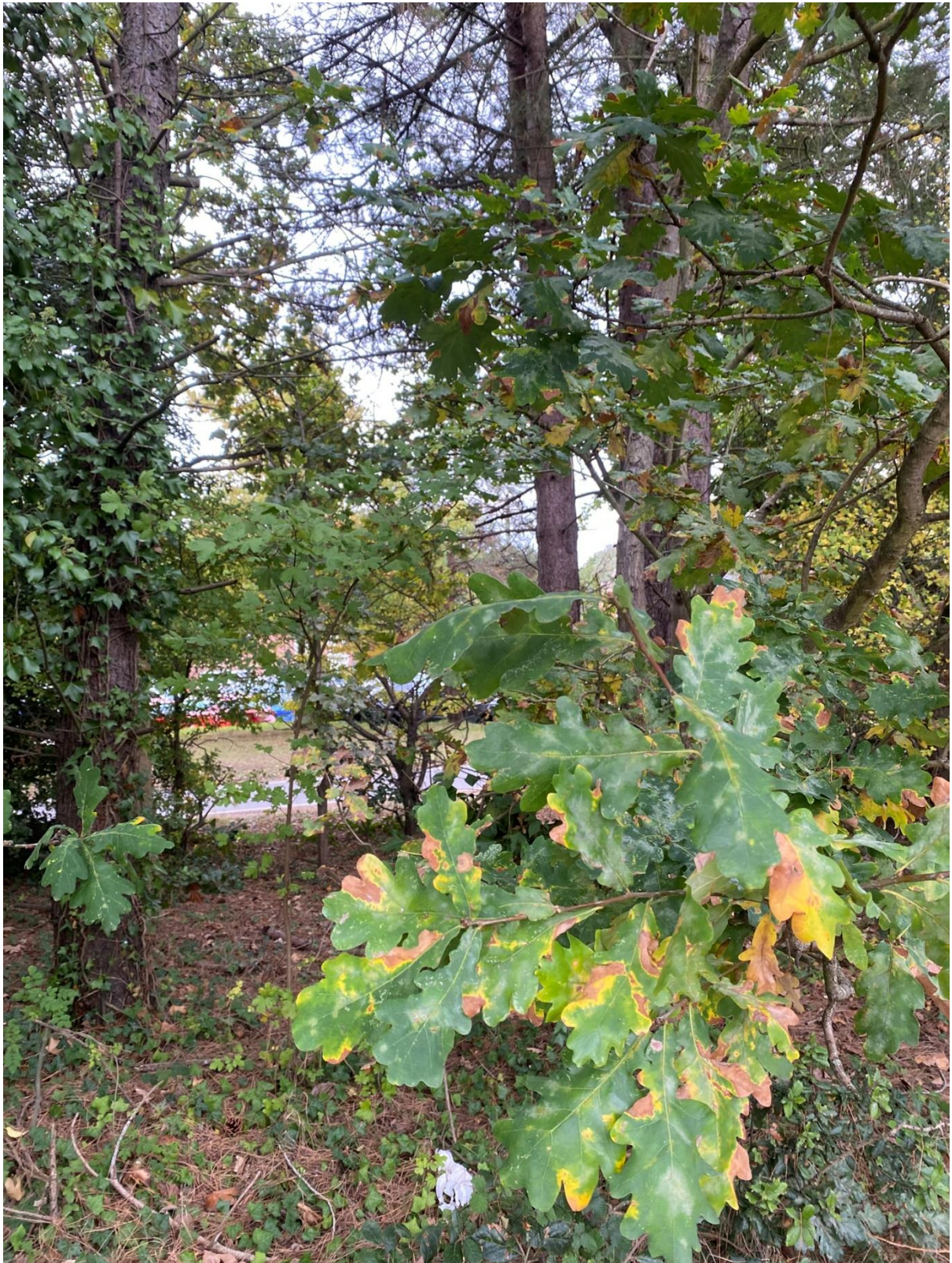
Photograph 13



Photograph 14



Photograph 15



Photograph 16



Photograph 17



Photograph 18



Photograph 19



Photograph 20



Photograph 21



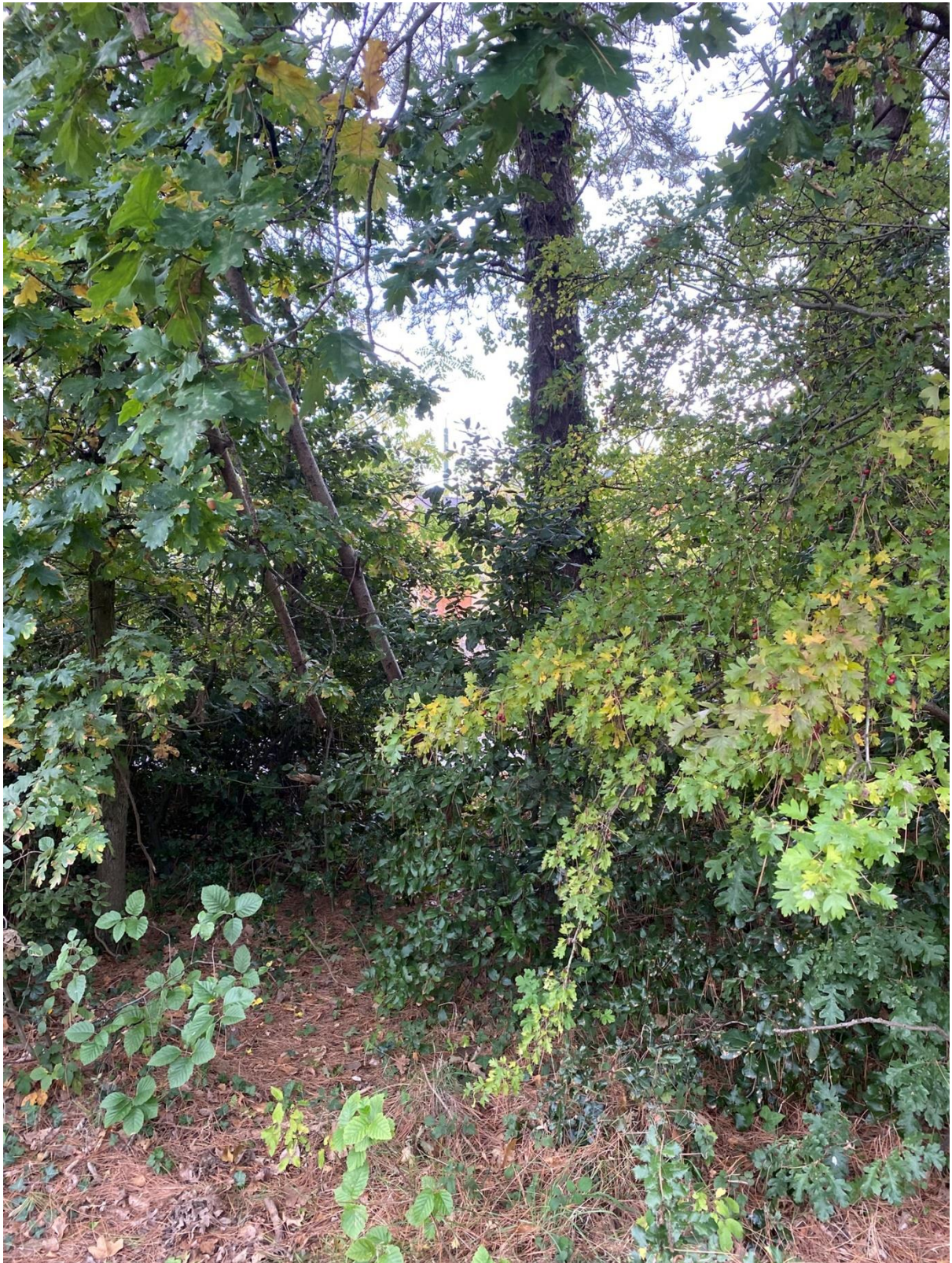
Photograph 21



Photograph 22



Photograph 23



Photograph 24

