



Invitation to Tender

For the Work of:

October 2026 “Mend the Gap” Tender B –

Planting native trees and hedging on 3 sites in Goring and Pangbourne

Issued: 16th October 2026

Return responses by: 8th November 2026 at 17.00

1 The Mend the Gap Project

The project is a rail corridor enhancement scheme, funded by Network Rail and now administered by the Chilterns Conservation Board. The objective of the planting being tendered is to soften the view of the electrification of the Great Western main line from Reading to Didcot. Planting hedges and trees will enhance the landscape and help to screen the railway infrastructure.

2 Overview of the work

Three landowners in the Mend the Gap project area require tree and hedgerow planting on three sites covered by this Invitation to Tender.

The Contract is to supply and plant mixed native hedgerow trees, in-field trees and hedgerow, with guards or shelters and canes/stakes. Works will also include ground preparations including mowing, strimming and mulching.

The successful contractor is also to be employed to attend the site one year later for maintenance which shall be to straighten up hedge plants, to replace failed plants, broken guards and canes/stakes.

The contractor will liaise with FWAG South East Advisers who have produced this specification and will oversee works.

3 Summary of the works

The work is summarised as:

Site number	Location	Works
Site 1	Goring	Supply and plant native hedge 190m, including 6 hedgerow trees, stock fence protection and plant 3 individual trees.
Site 2	Lower Basildon	Supply and plant 77m of native hedge.
Site 3	Pangbourne	Supply only: 12 trees with suitable stakes, guards and ties.

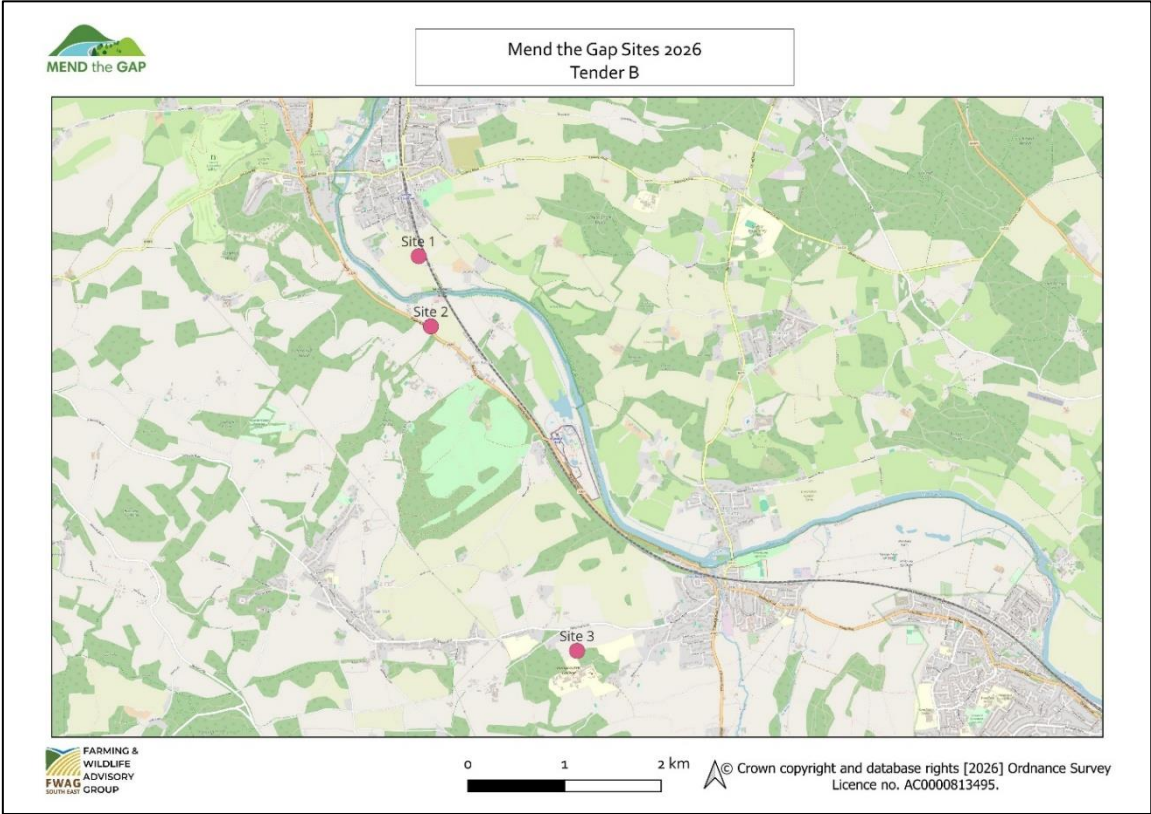
4 Timing of required works

Site preparation and planting to be completed between 16th November 2026 to 31st January 2027 (contingency one month extension, for example due to weather or ground conditions).

Follow-up care and maintenance works to be completed between 1st November 2027 and 15th January 2028 (the season after planting).

5 The Sites

Figure 1: Map of the sites

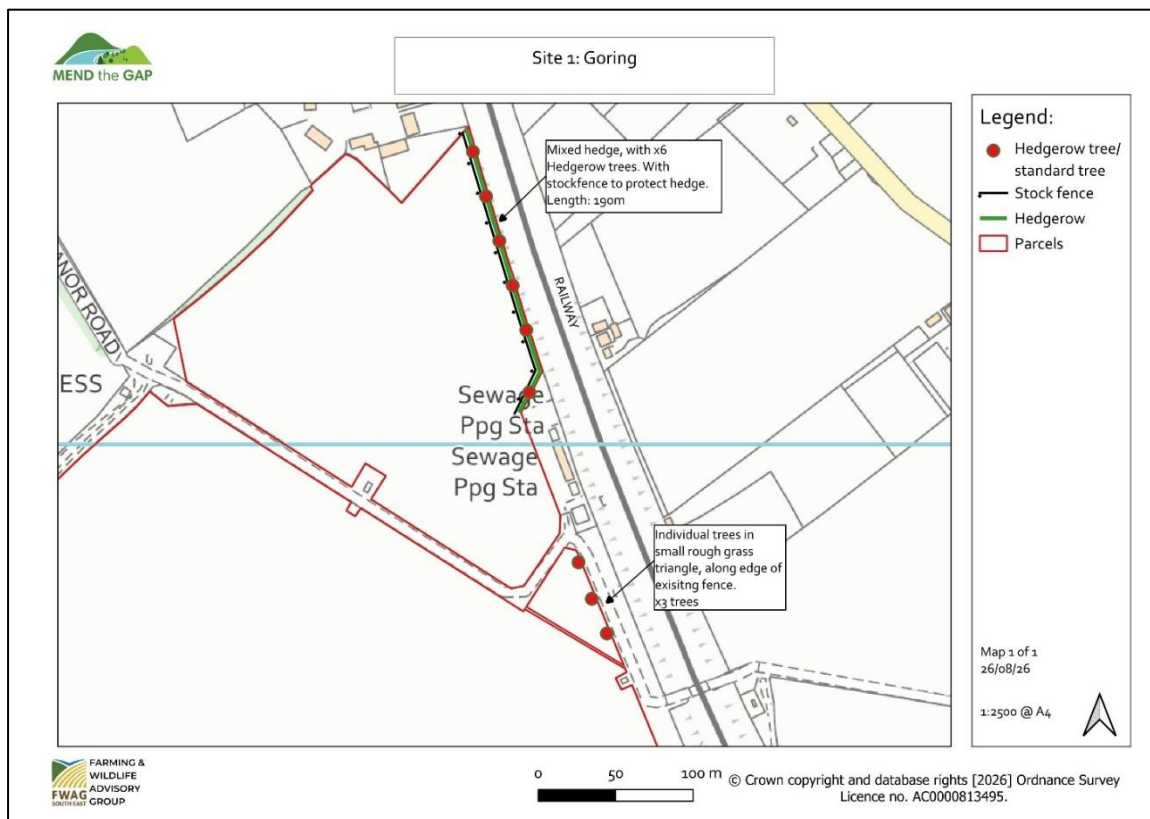


6 Details of the Works Required

6.1 Site 1

This is an area of agricultural land, currently in permanent pasture, with the railway embankment running along the eastern field boundary. There is a Network Rail fence that separates the field from the railway. Thames Water have a number of infrastructure enclosures and buildings on the site for water abstraction. The planned works avoid all of these areas. Works to comprise of planting native hedge (190m, including 6 hedgerow trees and stock fence protection) and 3 individual trees.

Figure 2 – Map showing Site 1



Required works:

Year 1: Installation works

Supply and plant 190m of mixed native hedge (Appendix 1) and 6 hedgerow trees (Appendix 2). Supply and plant 3 individual standard trees (Appendix 3). Supply and install a total of 190m of stock-proof fencing (Appendix 4), to protect hedge plants from livestock.

Works to be undertaken between 16th November 2026 to 31st December 2026 (contingency one month extension, for example due to weather or ground conditions).

For details of the required hedge, trees and fencing:

See Appendix 1 – Hedge Planting Specification

See Appendix 2 – Tree Standards in Hedges Specification

See Appendix 3 – Individual Tree Standards Specification

See Appendix 4 - Stock-proof Fence Specification – Barbed wire

Year 2: Maintenance & Aftercare

From 1st November 2027 to 31st January 2028, to replace dead, dying or damaged stock with the same species as soon as practicable in the first planting season. This factors a 100% failure rate for individual tree plantings and 20% failure rate for hedge planting.

Check shelters and stakes are sound and secure, straighten, and replace any broken protection as necessary.

6.2 Site 2

Site 2 is an arable field. Works to comprise of hedgerow planting along the field edge

Figure 3 – Map Showing Site 2

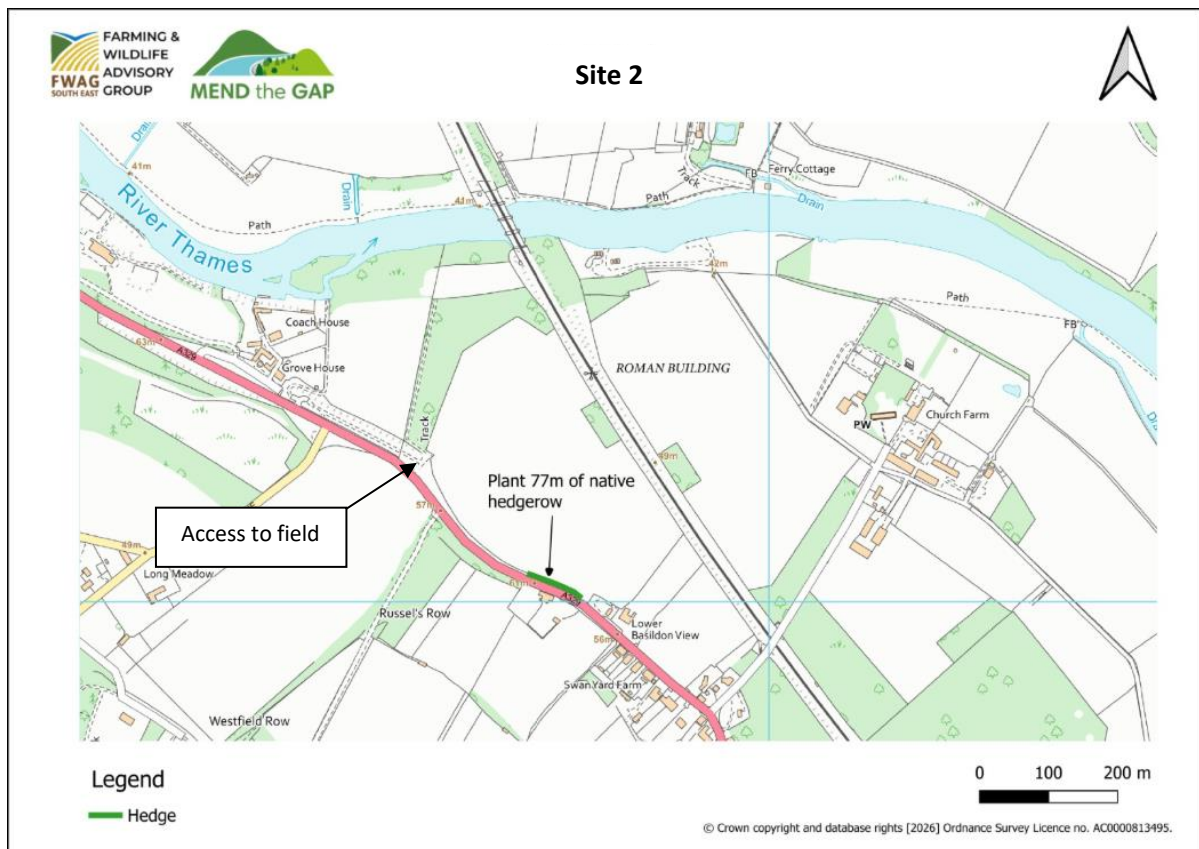


Figure 4: Image of site 2 from roadside



Required works:

Year 1: Mend the Gap Contractor Installation works

On the arable field, plant 77m of hedgerow plants. The hedge must be planted in the field, on the north side of the fence that goes along the road. Prior to planting the contractor may need to mow, strim and fill rabbit holes. Works to be undertaken between 16th November 2026 to 31st January 2027 (contingency one month extension, for example due to weather or ground conditions).

For details of the required hedge:

See Appendix 1 – Hedge Planting Specification

Year 2: Mend the Gap Contractor Maintenance & Aftercare

From 1st November 2027 to 15th January 2028, to replace dead, dying or damaged stock with the same species as soon as practicable in the first planting season. Assume a 20% failure rate.

Check shelters and stakes are sound and secure, straighten, and replace any broken protection as necessary.

6.3 Site 3

This is to supply trees, shelters, stakes and ties only, as the landowner will be planting the trees themselves.

Required works:

Year 1: Supply only

Supply 12 Disease-Resistant Elm trees, (includes biodegradable guards, stakes and ties).

Delivery to site between 16th November 2026 to 31st December 2026 (contingency one-month extension, for example due to weather or ground conditions).

- x12 Disease Resistant Elms (*Ulmus 'Ademuz' or 'Lutece'*).
- Trees to be supplied as at 100-125cm bareroot whips.
- All supplied with corresponding 1.2m biodegradable shelters, stakes and ties, delivered to a single address near Pangbourne.
- All proposed plants should be sourced from UK provenance seed – mostly southern area 405 where available.
- The chosen supplier of the plants and the species provenance is to be confirmed with the Project before delivery.

Appendix not needed – see above

7 Contractor Requirements

- The Contractor shall provide everything necessary for the proper execution of the works including all transport, plant, tackle, machinery, public liability insurance to £10 million, materials and labour of every kind.
- Vehicle movements will be kept to a minimum. Access routes will be agreed with the project manager before work.
- Some worksites are in public spaces. The contractor is to ensure that works are completed in a safe and courteous manner.
- To prevent damage to soil structure, no works shall be carried out when the site is wet, waterlogged or flooded.
- Contractors will check for any underground infrastructure before works begin on the construction of wooden tree guards and notify FWAG SE Advisors if identified.
- The Contractor is to make good any and all damage done to all existing items and features on the site unless with prior negotiation with the landowner, including buildings and all fixtures and fittings, fences, gates, drives, pavings, vegetation of all types, services of all types, land and any other articles in the course of these works at no cost to the contract.
- The Contractor shall remove all surplus materials and rubbish to their own place of deposit, including for haulage and any fees payable.
- All employees are to be competent and experienced in all aspects of work on which they are engaged.

8 Preparing to Respond

- The Contractor may visit the sites and surroundings so as to be thoroughly conversant with the position, conditions and extent of the proposed works and the means of access thereto.
- To discuss the tender or view the sites or photographs of the sites please contact Belinda Bown and James Poulton, FWAG South East, belinda.bown@fwagsoutheast.co.uk ; james.poulton@fwagsoutheast.co.uk
- Any enquiries relating to the tender should be discussed by 5pm on Friday 6th November 2026.

9 Responding to the Tender

- Tenders should be submitted by 5pm on Sunday 8th October 2026.
- Please email your Tender Response to Ruth Staples-Rolfe at rstaplesrolfe@chilterns.org.uk
- Format may be email, document or letter
- Must include:
 1. Price for the Works including labour and materials. Any assumptions made or deviation from specification.
 2. Price for the Maintenance Works including labour and materials. Any assumptions made or deviation from the specification.
 3. Confirmation of Insurance cover (level and provider)
 4. The names and contact numbers of two previous clients who can be contacted for a reference.
 5. Your company name and address, contact person and telephone number
 6. Proposed supplier for plants (we can supply contacts for Disease-resistant Elms, Wild Pear, Black Poplar and any others difficult to source).
 7. A paragraph to explain your company's experience in this work area and to show technical understanding of the works required.

This tender will be scored against the following criteria:

- Quality of tender, degree to which contractor meets brief.
- Demonstration of technical understanding.
- Proposed methodology
- Insurance in place
- Provision of referees
- Value for money

No works will be started until landowner agreements and introductions are made, with a purchase order in place from the Chilterns National Landscape.

10 Appendices

Appendix 1 – Hedge Planting Specification (Site 1 & 2)

Species:

- Hedge plants should be approximately 60% thorn (Hawthorn, Blackthorn), plus at least 5 other native species, including species such as Hazel, Holly, Dogwood, Dog Rose, Buckthorn, Wayfaring tree, Spindle.
- All proposed plants should be sourced from UK provenance seed – mostly southern area 405 where available.
- The chosen supplier of the hedging and the species and provenance is to be confirmed with the Project before commencement of works.

Ground preparation:

- Prior to planting the sites should be prepared to minimise competition from other vegetation and provide good soil conditions.
- Mowing is advised at all sites
- Ensure ground is not compacted, do not plant into frozen or waterlogged ground

Planting & Protection:

- Plant 40-60cm bare rooted whips, 5 plants/m in double staggered row, 40cm width
- Plant within 0.5m of the existing boundary fenceline.
- Do not allow plants to dry out during planting – keep them in closed bags / soak in water
- Use a mycorrhizal root treatment
- Slot plant and heel in
- Use Biodegradable 60cm Spiral guards, 38 mm diameter, with 90 cm bamboo canes, to protect from rabbits

Mulching:

- The hedging should be mulched with woodchip or similar.
- Contractor to state type of preferred mulch product for all sites.

Appendix 2 – Tree Standards in Hedges Specification (Site 1 only)

- Trees to be planted, as 80-100cm whips, approximately every 30 metres in the hedge as indicated on the map, these will be allowed to grow into standard trees.
- Trees to be staked, tied and guarded, and mulched with the hedgerow.

Species:

- Trees should include Wild Pear, Crab Apple, Bird Cherry, Whitebeam, Rowan & Field maple.
- All proposed plants should be sourced from UK provenance seed – mostly southern area 405 where available.
- The chosen supplier of the trees and the species and provenance is to be confirmed with the Project before commencement of works.

Ground preparation:

- With hedge planting preparation

Planting & Protection:

- Slot plant and heel in.

- Use a mycorrhizal root treatment
- Use tree guards for protection and to allow visibility during hedge cutting operations.
- Allow for 1.2m biodegradable tree shelters, stakes and ties.

Mulching:

- With hedge mulching

Appendix 3 – Individual Tree Standards Specification (Site 1 only)

- Trees to be planted as 100-125cm whips, where indicated on the map, these will be allowed to grow into standard trees. Trees to be staked, tied and guarded, and mulched.

Species:

- Trees should include x1 Hornbeam, x1 wild service tree, and x1 Disease-resistant Elm (*Ulmus* 'Ademuz' or 'Lutece').
- All proposed plants should be sourced from UK provenance seed – mostly southern area 405 where available.
- The chosen supplier of the trees and the species and provenance is to be confirmed with the Project before commencement of works.

Ground preparation:

- Brushcut a 1m diameter circle at the place of tree location.

Planting & Protection:

- Slot plant and heel in
- Allow for 1.2m tree biodegradable shelters, stakes and ties.

Mulching:

- The trees should be mulched with woodchip or similar.
- Contractor to state type of preferred mulch product for all sites.

Appendix 4 – Stock-proof Fence Specification – Barbed wire (Site 1 only)

- Use treated softwood or hardwood timber fence posts (state which)
- Use high-tensile steel wire stock net of type HT8/80/15 to make a stock-proof fence with finished height at least 1 m
- Top the net with two strands of high-tensile galvanised barbed steel wire
- One strand of barbed wire to be placed 2cm above the net, the other 12-15 cm above this
- Use straining posts, no more than 150m apart, at each corner and at each end of the fence
- Intermediate posts approximately 4 m apart
- Use barbed staples
- Fencing should be at least 1m away from hedge plants