

HABITAT MONITORING AND MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Coach House — Erection of New Build Coach House (Holiday Let)

1. Introduction and Purpose

This Habitat Monitoring and Management Plan (HMMP) has been prepared to accompany the Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Supporting Statement submitted in respect of the planning application, for the erection of a new build coach house to be used as a holiday let. The BNG assessment for the site (1,042.5m²) was undertaken using the Small Sites Metric and demonstrates a 76.23% net gain in area habitat units, together with 32m of new native hedgerow, exceeding the mandatory 10% biodiversity net gain requirement under Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as inserted by the Environment Act 2021).

This document sets out how the habitats created and retained on site will be established, managed, monitored and reported on over the statutory minimum 30-year maintenance period, in order to secure the delivery of the net gain calculated in the accompanying metric and to satisfy any planning condition or Section 106/conservation covenant requiring a management plan.

2. Objectives

- To establish the proposed wildflower meadow and native hedgerow to good ecological condition within the establishment period (Years 1–3).
- To maintain all retained and created habitats in at least the condition assumed in the Small Sites Metric calculation for the life of the development.
- To secure a net measurable gain in biodiversity value that is real, additional and not double-counted against other mitigation or legal obligations.
- To provide a clear, proportionate monitoring and reporting framework appropriate to a small residential site, capable of being implemented by the landowner or a competent contractor without specialist ecological input in normal circumstances.
- To identify triggers for remedial action should habitats fail to establish or decline in condition, and to set out corrective measures.

3. Habitat Baseline and Management Units

The following habitat parcels are identified on site, consistent with the habitats mapped in the BNG Supporting Statement and the completed Small Sites Metric tool:

Habitat Parcel	Baseline / Proposed	Target Condition	Approx. Extent
Vegetated garden	Retained / enhanced	Good	Site-wide (residual)
Sealed surfaces	Retained (access/parking)	N/A	As existing
Retained trees	Retained	Good — no dieback	As mapped
Wildflower meadow (new)	Created	Good/moderate species-rich sward	Around proposed building
Native hedgerow (new)	Created	Good — species-rich	32m, northern boundary

4. Management Prescriptions

4.1 Wildflower Meadow

- Sow with a native, locally-appropriate wildflower/grass seed mix in the first available autumn or spring sowing window following completion of groundworks.
- Cut once in late summer (August–September) once seed has set, removing arisings within 1–2 weeks to maintain low soil fertility and favour forb diversity.
- Do not apply fertiliser, herbicide or pesticide to the meadow area.
- Spot-treat and hand-pull pernicious weeds (e.g. dock, thistle, ragwort near amenity/grazing areas) as needed.
- Over-seed or plug-plant any bare or species-poor patches identified during Year 1–3 monitoring.

4.2 Native Hedgerow (32m, northern boundary)

- Plant bare-root native whips (e.g. hawthorn, blackthorn, hazel, field maple, dog rose) at appropriate density in the first planting season, with tree guards/spiral guards and mulch mats as needed.
- Water during establishment in dry periods through the first two growing seasons.
- Replace failed whips (>10% mortality) at the next available planting season following each of the first three annual inspections.
- Trim on rotation no more than once every 2–3 years, outside the bird nesting season (March–August inclusive), to allow flowering and fruiting wood to develop.
- Retain a minimum hedgerow width and height consistent with 'good' condition under the metric once established (target circa 2m height, full width, gappy sections under 10%).

4.3 Retained Trees

- No works, excavation, or soil compaction within the root protection area during and after construction.
- Annual visual health check for disease, deadwood or structural defects; arrange arboricultural inspection if concerns are identified.
- No unauthorised felling, pollarding or crown reduction beyond routine arboricultural safety works.

4.4 Vegetated Garden and Sealed Surfaces

- Maintain remaining garden/amenity planting using peat-free, pesticide-minimal practices where practicable.
- Keep sealed/hardstanding areas to the footprint assessed in the metric; any proposed increase to be re-assessed against the BNG calculation before implementation.

5. Monitoring Schedule

Monitoring is proportionate to a small residential site and does not require a qualified ecologist under normal circumstances, consistent with the basis of the Small Sites Metric. A competent person (e.g. the landowner, managing agent, or a garden/grounds contractor briefed on this plan) may undertake routine checks, with ecological input sought only if a habitat is failing to establish or declining.

When	Monitoring Activity	What to Check
Year 1	Establishment check (spring/summer)	Germination/take of meadow seed and hedgerow whips; watering needs; weed pressure
Year 2	Establishment check	Meadow species diversity emerging; hedge whip survival rate; replace failures
Year 3	Establishment review	Confirm habitats are on track to reach target condition; final gap-replanting
Year 5	Condition check	Meadow sward composition and cutting regime working; hedge height/width/gappiness
Year 10	Condition check	Habitats compared against target condition in Section 3; retained tree health
Year 15	Condition check	As above; review management prescriptions still appropriate
Year 20	Condition check	As above

When	Monitoring Activity	What to Check
Year 25	Condition check	As above
Year 30	Final review	Confirm net gain has been maintained for the full statutory period

A brief written record (dated photographs plus a short checklist against the table in Section 3) should be kept after each check and retained with this plan. This is sufficient to demonstrate compliance if requested by Horsham District Council.

6. Remedial Action Triggers

The following triggers indicate that corrective action is required:

- Wildflower meadow: less than 60% ground cover, or fewer than 4 forb species present, at the Year 2 or Year 3 check.
- Hedgerow: whip mortality exceeding 10% at any establishment-year check, or gaps exceeding 10% of total length at any later check.
- Retained trees: visible signs of dieback, disease, or root protection area incursion.

Where a trigger is met, the response is: (i) identify the likely cause (drought, competition, herbicide drift, grazing/browsing, poor initial establishment); (ii) carry out targeted remedial works (re-seeding, replanting, weed control, watering) at the next appropriate season; and (iii) re-check at the following scheduled monitoring point. If a habitat fails to recover after two remedial attempts, a suitably qualified ecologist should be consulted to review the management approach.

7. Responsibilities and Funding

Responsibility for implementing this plan rests with the landowner/occupier of The Coach House (and any successor in title), who will fund routine planting, replacement and maintenance works as part of normal property upkeep. As a small residential site, no separate financial bond or escrow is proposed; the modest scale and cost of the prescribed works (seasonal cutting, occasional whip replacement) is consistent with ordinary garden maintenance and is considered proportionate and deliverable without additional financial security.

This plan should be passed to any future owner or occupier of the property, and a copy retained with the title documents, to ensure continuity of management for the full 30-year period.

8. Review of this Plan

This HMMP should be reviewed at each scheduled monitoring point (Section 5) and updated if the management prescriptions are found not to be delivering the target condition, if planting fails and a different species mix or technique is required, or if any legislative or policy change (e.g. to the BNG regime) requires amendment. Any material change to habitat extent or type should be checked against the approved Small Sites Metric calculation referenced in the BNG Supporting Statement.

Prepared to accompany the Biodiversity Net Gain Supporting Statement for planning application DC/25/1881. Site walkover 16 February 2026 (valid until August 2026); assessment based on the Government's Small Sites Metric, effective from 2 April 2024.