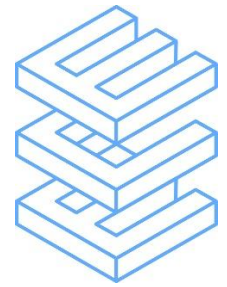


Client	Earlswood Homes South East Limited		
Project	Watermead, Cowfold		
Document	Draft Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan	Revision	
Date	22 July 2026		
Author	R Hoad	Checked	C Barker



Draft Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan

Introduction

This document is a draft 30-Year Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan prepared from the following information:

- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA): PR124901_PEA, dated 28.05.26
- Baseline Habitat Map: PR124901_60A, dated 18.05.26
- Habitat Creation Map: PR124901_68A, dated 18.05.26

This draft has been prepared to support planning application validation with Horsham District Council.

Important note:

This is not the final Biodiversity Net Gain Habitat Management Plan. A final HMP/HMMP will be prepared and signed off by a Suitably Qualified Ecologist (SQE) following grant of planning permission and subject to a suitably worded condition.

Site Details

- Site name: Watermead
- Address: Henfield Road, Horsham, Cowfold, RH13 8DT
- LPA: Horsham District Council
- Proposed development: 9 residential dwellings with associated access, gardens, parking, landscaping and ecological enhancements
- Applicant: Earlswood Homes South East Ltd.
- Ecological source documents: PR124901_PEA, PR124901_60A, PR124901_68A

Purpose of this Plan

The purpose of this draft HMP is to:

- set out how the retained and newly created habitats shown on the Habitat Creation Plan will be established, managed and monitored for 30 years;
- provide a framework for maintaining ecological functionality for:
 - retained woodland,
 - new native hedgerow,
 - grassland,
 - rain garden,
 - new trees and shrub planting,
 - commuting/foraging bats,
 - nesting birds,
 - invertebrates,
 - badgers and other small mammals;
- provide a draft monitoring framework for post-development review; and
- provide a structure for the final SQE-led HMP required after planning permission is granted.

Planning and Ecological Context

This draft HMP has been prepared with regard to:

- Environment Act 2021
- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2024)
- Horsham District Planning Framework, especially:
 - Policy 26: Countryside Protection
 - Policy 31: Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity
- The ecological mitigation and enhancement recommendations in the PEA

The PEA concludes that, subject to mitigation and enhancement, the site can be developed in ecological terms; however, it also confirms that the current proposals produce an on-site habitat unit deficit and therefore additional off-site BNG measures and/or statutory biodiversity credits will be needed.

Site Summary

According to the PEA, the site currently comprises:

- three connected commercial warehouses;
- two disused derelict sheds;
- a derelict three-sided low-roofed barn;
- scattered trees;
- grassland;
- bramble scrub; and

- two woodland parcels:
 - north-west: other mixed woodland;
 - south-east: other broadleaved woodland.

The Habitat Creation Plan shows retention and/or creation of:

- retained other mixed woodland;
- retained other broadleaved woodland;
- native hedgerow;
- other neutral grassland;
- modified grassland;
- introduced shrub planting;
- rain garden;
- new trees; and
- built form, gardens and access infrastructure.

Scope of this Draft HMP

This HMP applies to the on-site retained and created habitat features shown on drawing PR124901_68A. It is intended to cover management of the following habitat components:

1. Retained and enhanced other mixed woodland
2. Retained and enhanced other broadleaved woodland
3. New native hedgerow
4. New other neutral grassland
5. New modified grassland
6. Rain garden
7. Introduced shrub planting
8. New trees
9. Ecological enhancement features including:
 - bat boxes / bat bricks,
 - bird boxes / integrated bird features,
 - log piles / deadwood habitat,
 - bee bricks / bug hotels,
 - dark corridors for bats,
 - hedgehog permeability where feasible.

Habitat Management Compartments

The final SQE version should include a numbered management compartment plan. Until then, the habitat creation plan PR124901_68A should be treated as the working management plan drawing.

Compartment	Habitat type	Location	Draft management objective	Draft condition* target
H1	Other mixed woodland	North-west corner	Retain, protect and enhance woodland structure and native species diversity	Moderate condition*
H2	Other broadleaved woodland	South-east corner	Retain, protect and enhance woodland structure and native species diversity	Moderate condition*
H3	Native hedgerow	Along retained habitat edges / boundaries as shown on PR124901_68A	Establish dense, species-rich boundary and connective habitat	Moderate / good condition*
H4	Other neutral grassland	Open landscaped areas	Establish species-diverse low fertility grassland	Moderate condition*
H5	Modified grassland	Amenity/open space areas	Establish and maintain usable amenity grassland with biodiversity value	Moderate condition*
H6	Rain garden	As shown on PR124901_68A	Provide sustainable drainage planting with biodiversity value	Target condition to match final metric entry*
H7	Introduced shrub planting	Around development parcels	Deliver pollinator-friendly landscape structure and shelter	Good establishment and ongoing structural diversity
H8	New trees	Distributed throughout site	Replace tree losses and provide long-term canopy cover	Successful establishment and long-term retention

H9	Ecological features	Across site	Maintain species enhancements and functional dark corridors	Functional and retained for 30 years
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**Exact target conditions must be inserted by the SQE using the approved Statutory Biodiversity Metric outputs and condition assessment sheets.*

Overarching Management Objectives

In accordance with the accompanying Ecology documents, the long-term ecological objectives for the site are to:

1. Retain and protect the two woodland parcels and their ecological function.
2. Establish and maintain the proposed habitats shown on the Habitat Creation Plan.
3. Increase structural diversity across the site through native planting, grassland management and deadwood retention.
4. Maintain habitat connectivity for bats, birds, invertebrates and small mammals.
5. Avoid deterioration of retained habitats through garden encroachment, excessive lighting, inappropriate pruning, nutrient enrichment, fly tipping or storage.
6. Provide measurable ecological enhancement over the 30-year management period.
7. Monitor success against agreed target conditions and implement remedial measures where habitats fail to establish or deteriorate.

General Site-Wide Management Principles

The following principles will apply to all retained and created habitats:

- No storage of materials, spoil, chemicals or garden waste in ecological areas.
- No extension of private garden management into retained woodland, hedgerow or grassland habitats.
- No use of pesticides, herbicides or fertilisers within ecological areas, other than targeted spot-treatment of injurious or invasive weeds where necessary.
- Vegetation clearance and pruning must avoid the main bird nesting season unless checked by an ecologist first.
- External lighting must be designed and managed to maintain dark corridors along retained woodland and hedgerow edges.
- Deadwood should be retained where safe to do so.
- Boundary treatments should prevent trampling and encroachment into the retained woodland compartments.
- Management works must be undertaken by suitably competent contractors, with ecological input where required.

Habitat Prescriptions

H1 – Other Mixed Woodland (retained and enhanced)

Description

Retained woodland in the north-west corner of the site, identified in the PEA as a key ecological feature.

Management objectives

- Protect the woodland from construction and residential pressure.
- Enhance native composition and understorey diversity.
- Maintain deadwood, leaf litter, shaded refuge and edge habitat.
- Prevent decline in condition caused by compaction, dumping, lighting or invasive species.

Prescriptions

Years 1–5

- Protect woodland and root protection areas with fencing during construction.
- Install permanent boundary treatment where needed to prevent garden encroachment.
- Undertake annual checks for dumped material, excessive trampling, soil compaction and invasive species.
- Supplement with native tree/shrub planting where shown on the approved landscape plan.
- Water newly planted stock during prolonged dry periods in first 2–3 years.
- Mulch new planting and keep bases weed-free.
- Replace failures in the first available planting season.
- Retain standing and fallen deadwood where safe.
- Create discreet brash/log piles from arisings where appropriate.

Years 6–30

- Annual inspection for habitat condition, encroachment and tree health.
- Localised thinning or selective coppicing only where needed to diversify structure or ensure safety, under arboricultural/ecological advice.
- Control invasive or non-native species if they begin to dominate.
- No routine tidying of woodland floor other than litter removal.
- Retain scrubby edge habitat where not conflicting with access or safety.

Draft target outcome

Woodland retained in at least moderate condition, with:

- intact canopy and understorey;
- low invasive cover;
- natural deadwood presence;
- no significant compaction or dumping;
- successful establishment of enhancement planting.

H2 – Other Broadleaved Woodland (retained and enhanced)

Description

Retained woodland parcel in the south-east corner of the site.

Management objectives

- As per H1, with emphasis on protecting the smaller woodland block from edge effects and curtilage pressure.

Prescriptions

- Same broad measures as H1.
- Particular attention to:
 - fencing / defensible boundary,
 - prevention of garden waste dumping,
 - control of excessive shading from inappropriate planted ornamentals,
 - maintenance of dark conditions along the woodland edge where this forms a bat corridor.

Draft target outcome

Woodland retained in at least moderate condition, with improved native structure over the 30-year period.

H3 – Native Hedgerow

Description

New native hedgerow proposed on PR124901_68A, including sections adjoining retained woodland.

Management objectives

- Establish a dense, continuous native hedge.
- Provide shelter, nesting habitat, blossom and berry resource.
- Strengthen ecological connectivity across the site.
- Maintain as a dark linear corridor where relevant to bats.

Planting principles

To comprise predominantly native species appropriate to local character, such as a mix of:

- hawthorn,
- blackthorn,
- field maple,
- hazel,
- dog rose,
- holly,
- spindle,

- guelder rose,
- wayfaring tree,
- hornbeam (if appropriate to detailed design).

Final species mix to be confirmed in the landscape scheme.

Prescriptions

Years 1–5

- Plant in first suitable planting season.
- Water during dry spells for first 2 growing seasons.
- Keep a 0.5m weed-free strip either side where practicable.
- Mulch and protect from browsing/trimming.
- Replace dead or failed plants annually in winter.
- Formative prune lightly in years 2–3 to encourage bushy growth.
- Allow flowering/fruiting species to establish.

Years 6–30

- Trim no more than once every 2–3 years unless required for visibility or access.
- Trim on a rotational basis, ideally in late winter, not annually on all faces.
- Maintain average width and height sufficient to provide dense structure.
- Gap-up any sections that thin or fail.
- Maintain adjacent rough margin where compatible with design.

Draft target outcome

Dense, largely continuous native hedgerow with minimal gaps, strong flowering/fruiting performance and good structural diversity.

H4 – Other Neutral Grassland

Description

New other neutral grassland proposed throughout landscaped parts of the site.

Management objectives

- Establish a species-rich, low nutrient grassland.
- Provide nectar, pollen and seed resource.
- Support invertebrates and improve habitat connectivity.

Establishment

- Prepare substrate to avoid excessive fertility where possible.
- Sow with an approved wildflower/grass mix such as EM1 Meadow Mix or equivalent, as noted in the PEA, unless final specification is amended by the SQE/landscape architect.

- Avoid nutrient-rich topsoil where possible if consistent with approved design.

PrescriptionsYears 1–2

- Cut as required in first growing season to control annual weeds and reduce competition.
- Remove arisings after cuts.
- Spot-treat injurious weeds only where necessary.
- Overseed bare or failed areas in autumn.

Years 3–30

- One main cut in late summer (August/September).
- Optional second cut in late winter (February/March) if required.
- Remove arisings after each cut.
- No fertiliser, routine herbicide or frequent mowing.
- Spot-control scrub, docks, thistles or nettle dominance where it threatens target condition.
- If species diversity declines, review cutting regime and overseed with appropriate provenance mix.

Draft target outcome

Species-diverse neutral grassland in at least moderate condition, with a well-established forb and fine grass mix and limited dominance by coarse weeds.

H5 – Modified Grassland**Description**

Modified amenity grassland proposed as part of the residential landscape.

Management objectives

- Provide functional open space with biodiversity value.
- Avoid excessively intensive mowing and chemical input.
- Maintain a varied sward structure where possible.

PrescriptionsYears 1–5

- Water newly seeded/turfed areas if required for establishment.
- Maintain by regular mowing during growing season, but avoid scalping.
- Leave clippings only if light; remove if build-up begins to enrich the soil excessively.
- No weed-and-feed treatment.
- Spot-treat injurious weeds only where necessary.
- Repair worn/bare patches promptly.

Years 6–30

- Continue amenity mowing regime appropriate to use.
- Maintain sward height typically around 40–60mm during the main growing season unless landscape specification states otherwise.
- Review mowing frequency to reduce intensity where possible.
- Avoid over-compaction and nutrient enrichment.

Draft target outcome

Stable amenity grassland in the target condition used in the final metric, with no significant bare ground, rutting or weed dominance.

H6 – Rain Garden**Description**

One rain garden is proposed, planted with species listed in the PEA including species such as *Camassia quamash*, *Carex pendula*, *Geranium pratense*, *Salvia officinalis* and *Verbena bonariensis*.

Management objectives

- Deliver drainage functionality and ecological value.
- Maintain seasonal interest and pollinator resource.
- Ensure inlets, outlets and soil profile remain effective.

PrescriptionsYears 1–5

- Water during establishment in dry weather.
- Remove litter monthly or as required.
- Weed regularly by hand.
- Replace failures annually.
- Inspect after major rainfall to confirm free drainage and no erosion.
- Maintain mulch where required.

Years 6–30

- Inspect at least twice yearly and after significant rainfall events.
- Desilt inlets/outlets where necessary.
- Remove invasive weeds and excessive ruderal dominance.
- Divide/replant vigorous species if they suppress diversity.
- Replace failed planting as required.
- Ensure no conversion to ornamental hard landscape or mown grass.

Draft target outcome

Functioning vegetated SuDS feature with healthy plant cover, seasonal diversity and no prolonged unmanaged failure.

H7 – Introduced Shrub Planting**Description**

Introduced shrub planting shown on the habitat creation plan.

Management objectives

- Provide year-round structure and pollinator value.
- Use wildlife-friendly planting and reduce reliance on formal amenity management.
- Prevent invasive dominance or over-tidying.

Prescriptions

- Use pollinator-friendly species in accordance with the PEA and RHS Plants for Pollinators guidance.
- Maintain mulch and weed control during establishment.
- Water in prolonged drought for first 2–3 years.
- Replace failures in first 5 years.
- Prune selectively outside bird nesting season.
- Retain flowering and berry-bearing growth where safe and practical.
- Avoid excessive close clipping.

Draft target outcome

Structurally varied shrub planting that provides nectar, pollen, berries and cover through the year.

H8 – New Trees**Description**

Approximately 8 new small trees are proposed to compensate for losses, including species such as field maple, downy birch, wild cherry, rowan and English oak.

Management objectives

- Achieve high survival and successful long-term establishment.
- Deliver future canopy cover and habitat connectivity.
- Avoid premature loss due to poor aftercare.

Prescriptions**Years 1–5**

- Plant to BS8545 good practice or equivalent.

- Install stakes/ties/guards as appropriate.
- Water regularly during establishment and in dry periods.
- Keep bases mulched and weed-free.
- Inspect at least twice yearly for damage, vandalism, disease or failure.
- Adjust/remove ties as needed.
- Replace failures annually in next planting season.

Years 6–30

- Inspect annually to year 10, then every 3 years or as recommended.
- Remove redundant stakes/guards.
- Formative pruning only where needed.
- Retain deadwood features where safe once trees mature.
- Replace any significant early losses where necessary to maintain design intent.

Draft target outcome

Healthy, established tree stock with strong survival and progression into mature landscape structure.

H9 – Ecological Enhancement Features

Features to be provided

Subject to final detailed design, the development should include ecological enhancements recommended in the PEA, such as:

- integrated bat boxes / bat bricks;
- bird boxes including sparrow terraces and generalist nest boxes;
- log piles / deadwood habitat;
- bee bricks and/or bug hotels;
- hedgehog access gaps in fences where feasible;
- retained dark corridors along woodland / hedgerow edges.

Management objectives

- Ensure features remain in place and functional for the lifetime of the development.
- Support bats, birds, hedgehogs, pollinators and saproxylic invertebrates.

Prescriptions

- Maintain bat/bird features in situ for 30 years.
- Replace damaged boxes/features like-for-like.
- Clean bird boxes outside the nesting season where appropriate.
- Bat boxes should only be inspected internally by a licensed ecologist if necessary.
- Maintain log piles in shaded/part-shaded locations; replenish as material decays.
- Ensure fences retain hedgehog gaps where installed.
- Prevent artificial lighting spill onto retained woodland and hedgerows.

Lighting Strategy Principles

In accordance with the PEA, the site should maintain a sensitive lighting scheme to avoid impacts on commuting and foraging bats. Further details are to be secured via condition.

Construction-Phase Ecological Protection Measures to be Carried Forward

The PEA includes measures that should inform implementation and early management:

- nesting bird checks if vegetation removal occurs in the nesting season;
- sensitive vegetation clearance for reptiles under ecological supervision where required;
- protection of badgers and other mammals through good site practice;
- pre-commencement walkover to check for any new badger sett activity;
- trench escape ramps, covered pipes, and daily inspections during construction;
- retention or sensitive relocation of deadwood and habitat piles for invertebrates.

These measures are primarily construction-related but should be reflected in the Construction Environmental Management Plan and site induction materials.

Monitoring Strategy

Purpose

Monitoring will assess whether habitats are establishing and being maintained in line with the approved target conditions and whether remedial action is required.

Who will monitor

The final HMP should identify:

- the responsible management body: e.g. management company, landowner, estate company or another named body;
- the landscape contractor during establishment;
- the Suitably Qualified Ecologist (SQE) responsible for formal ecological monitoring and reporting.

Monitoring approach

Monitoring should include:

- Routine management inspections by the site management body / landscape contractor.
- Formal ecological monitoring by an SQE using:
 - UKHab habitat checks where relevant,
 - Statutory Biodiversity Metric condition assessment sheets,
 - fixed-point photography,
 - target condition review,
 - review of ecological enhancement features.

After the first five years, further monitoring should be undertaken every five years for the remainder of the 30-year period. This will be undertaken by completing the condition assessments for each habitat to ascertain which targets have and have not been met and identify any additional appropriate remedial measures which need to be implemented, where appropriate.

Draft Conclusion

This draft 30-Year Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan provides a validation-stage framework for the management of the retained and newly created on-site habitats at Watermead for a period of 30 years.

It is based on the currently available ecological and habitat plan information and should be read as a draft only. A final plan will be prepared by a Suitably Qualified Ecologist following grant of permission and will incorporate:

- the final approved development layout;
- exact habitat areas and target conditions from the Statutory Biodiversity Metric;
- detailed management compartment mapping;
- agreed monitoring triggers and reporting intervals;
- the confirmed delivery body and funding mechanism; and
- any off-site BNG provision and/or biodiversity credits needed to meet the statutory biodiversity gain objective.