



AEWC^{Ltd}

Animal Ecology & Wildlife Consultants

Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan

Calcot Farm Bungalow

**Horsham Road
Steyning
West Sussex
BN44 3AA**

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25-086
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The information and data which has been prepared and provided is true and has been prepared and provided in accordance with the 'Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal' and 'Code of Professional Conduct' issued by the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM). We confirm that the opinions expressed are our true and professional bona fide opinions.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 AEWCLtd were commissioned by Batcheller Monkhouse Ltd on behalf of their client to produce a Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (HMMP) for the site at Calcot Farm Bungalow, Horsham Road, Steyning, West Sussex, BN44 3AA at grid reference TQ 17912 14488 to help inform the proposed development of the site.
- 1.2 A Protected Species Walkover survey was conducted on the site in November 2025 by Ivana Murphy, Qualified Ecologist. The survey concluded that the proposed works are restricted to the modified grassland with a significant buffer to the hedgerows along the eastern and northern boundaries, bar the small section requiring removal. Therefore, there is considered to be no likely significant impacts to the fauna or flora populations within the local area from the proposed works provided the recommendations detailed within this report are adhered to.
- 1.3 Biodiversity Net Gain calculations were carried out for the site in November 2025 with an estimated positive (i.e. gain) BNG of 10.22% for habitats and an estimated increase of 0.14 hedgerow units which corresponds to a 13.31% increase.

Site Location

- 1.4 The proposed development site is located at Calcot Farm Bungalow, Horsham Road, Steyning, West Sussex, BN44 3AL at central grid reference TQ 17912 14488. The site lies on the northern edge of Steyning, approximately 1.4km south of the village of Ashurst. The surrounding landscape comprises agricultural fields, hedgerows, pasture, and scattered woodland blocks, with small watercourses and wetland areas associated with the nearby River Adur valley. The nearest major road is the A283, located approximately 2.3km to the south. See Figure 1.
- 1.5 The site is approximately 0.64ha and largely comprises a grass field (modified grassland) and an area of hardstanding (developed land; sealed surface), with native hedgerows along the eastern and northern boundaries. The field is used for pasture and to grow hay. See Figure 2.

Proposed development

- 1.6 The proposed development consists of construction of two access tracks using an unsealed hardstanding surface. A short section of hedgerow will require removal from the eastern boundary. Ecological enhancements built into the development include hedge planting and grassland enhancement. In terms of the BNG metric, these are sufficient to offset the loss of the existing habitats on the site. The majority of the habitat area on site will not be negatively affected by these proposals.



FIGURE 1: SHOWING THE SITE LOCATION



FIGURE 2: AERIAL VIEW OF THE SITE SHOWING THE SITE BOUNDARY



FIGURE 3: EXISTING ON-SITE HABITATS



FIGURE 4: PROPOSED ON-SITE HABITATS

2 Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan

2.1 A habitat walkover survey was undertaken by AEWC Ltd in November 2025 to map the habitats present on site and assess their condition. The findings of this survey informed the BNG assessment and metric calculations completed in November 2025. This HMMP has been prepared with reference to the habitat walkover survey, the BNG Report and Metric calculations, and the site plans submitted during the planning process. It has been prepared to support the Biodiversity Gain Plan and provide guidance on the establishment and long-term management of the proposed habitat enhancements.

2.2 Habitat or species-specific recommendations are given in **bold** below.

General

2.3 A toolbox talk will be prepared and given by the ecologist to the site contractors to ensure they are aware of the potential ecological constraints on the site.

Responsibilities

2.4 The landowner is responsible for ensuring this HMMP is implemented.

Habitat Protection, Enhancement and Management

General

2.5 In order to enhance the habitat for wildlife, the **planting schemes for the development will use native species or species with known benefit to wildlife** wherever possible.

2.6 In line with best practice, **the use of peat in composts or topsoil will be avoided.**

2.7 **Management of the habitats within the site to attain the required condition as detailed within the Biodiversity Net Gain metric for the site shall be the responsibility of the landowner.**

2.8 A suitability qualified ecologist or land manager will be appointed by the landowner to carry out monitoring of habitats during years 5 and 15 following implementation of management plans. Additional monitoring requirements will be determined by the appointed person during the standard monitoring visits.

Hedgerow

Hedgerows

2.9 The standard time to reach the target condition is 12 years as stated within the BNG metric. A monitoring visit must be carried out by a suitably qualified ecologist or land manager after 5 years to identify the current condition of the hedgerows and whether they are developing as expected. A further monitoring visit must be carried out after 15 years, unless an earlier visit is considered necessary based on the initial results. Condition of the hedges will be assessed against the Biodiversity Metric 4.0 – Technical Annex 1 – Condition Assessment, or subsequent revisions. A report of all

monitoring visits shall be submitted in writing to the landowner who will pass the reports to the Local Planning Authority.

2.10 The soil should be prepared 1-2 weeks prior to planting by digging a trench or individual planting holes. A shallow trench is preferable to individual holes, as this allows for more natural intermixing of species however care must be taken not to damage any existing shrubs. Depth and width should be at least twice the root ball size. Any compacted soil should be broken up for good root penetration. A 5cm layer of mulch should be spread to suppress weeds.

2.11 **The new hedgerow planting must take place between October and March**, and ideally January. Avoid planting in freezing weather or when the ground is waterlogged. New hedge planting will be protected from the works area through heras fencing.

2.12 The development also includes native hedgerow planting (corresponding to a biodiversity net gain for this linear habitat feature); this **planted hedging will comprise a mix of native berry and nut-bearing species.**

2.13 **All new hedge planting will comprise of ‘Species Rich Mixed Native Instant Hedging’ and is commercially available in 1m lengths where the plants are established and ‘knitted together’ and include at least 8 species of the below per 6m of hedging. Plants will be spaced 30cm apart.**

- Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*)
- Blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*)
- Guelder rose (*Viburnum opulus*)
- Spindle (*Euonymus europaea*)
- Crab apple (*Malus sylvestris*)
- Holly (*Ilex aquifolium*)
- Hazel (*Corylus avellana*)
- Field maple (*Acer campestre*)
- Buckthorn (*Rhamnus cathartica*)
- Wayfaring tree (*Viburnum lantana*)
- Gorse (*Ulex europaeus*)

2.14 In the first 1 – 2 years after planting, weekly watering will be required during dry periods to encourage root establishment. Regular, light trimming outside of nesting bird season (March to August), ideally in late winter (January–February) to retain winter berries for birds, with any damaged growth removed.

2.15 A 5cm mulch layer can be applied in spring and/or autumn to suppress weeds and retain soil moisture.

2.16

Years 2-5:

2.17 **Hedges will be trimmed once to twice a year for the first five years** in winter, early spring or late autumn outside of nesting bird season (March to August), or at the end of summer to ensure a dense structure.

- 2.18 In the long-term, the hedging must then be cut on a three-year rotation (in late summer or late spring), cutting no more than 1/3 of the hedging within the site each time, again avoiding nesting bird season. Each section of hedging should be trimmed on all sides every three years and should aim to be maintained at least 1.5m wide. Any large gaps which begin to appear should be planted up with suitable species.
- 2.19 This cutting regime will ensure that a good yield of berries and flowers are produced by the hedgerow every year and that diverse hedgerow structures and heights are present for wildlife within the local area.

Year 6 onwards:

- 2.20 **After the first five years, the hedging will then be cut on a three-year rotation, cutting no more than 1/3 of the hedging within the site each time, avoiding nesting bird season. Once established, each section of hedging must be trimmed on all sides every three years and aim to be maintained at least 1.5m wide.** Any large gaps which begin to appear will be planted up with suitable species.

Modified Grassland

- 2.21 The proposed enhancement of a 0.26ha area of modified grassland along the eastern boundary and its long-term management in accordance with the recommendations above will ensure suitable habitat conditions to deliver a minimum BNG of 10.22% habitat units.
- 2.22 Initial grassland creation works should be undertaken during suitable weather conditions in either spring (March–May) or autumn (September–October), following completion of the works.
- 2.23 Ground preparation will involve the creation of areas of bare ground through cultivation or scarification to provide a suitable seed bed.
- 2.24 Should time elapse and this soil become colonised by weeds, these should first be cleared before seeding, again the soil should be harrowed or lightly tilled to create a fine tilth.
- 2.25 The existing modified grassland will be retained and managed to maintain a continuous, structurally diverse sward in good condition. Areas of bare ground or poor vegetation cover should be monitored annually and overseeded where necessary using a UK native grass and wildflower seed mix appropriate to the soil type, drainage and regional conditions. Any overseeding should be undertaken in accordance with the seed supplier's recommendations to maintain the quality and continuity of the grassland.
- 2.26 The development of the modified grassland is expected to occur gradually over a number of growing seasons, with some species taking several years to establish fully. Habitat condition should therefore be expected to improve incrementally over the management period.

Year 1 Establishment

- 2.27 In the first year of establishment, the grassland should be mown regularly to a height of 75-150mm, preventing excessive weed growth and to develop a varied sward structure. Clippings should be removed following each cut to minimise nutrient accumulation and encourage the growth of a diverse range of plant species.

- 2.28 Should prolonged dry periods occur during the establishment, water lightly. During initial development, monitor for growth and fill in any areas where growth is not occurring with fresh seed mix. The mowing regime will remove scrub as necessary.

Years 2-5:

- 2.29 From the second year onwards, the modified grassland should be managed through one or two cuts per year. The principal cut should be undertaken between late July and September, with a second autumn cut if required. All arisings should be removed to prevent nutrient enrichment. Where appropriate, up to one-third of the grassland may be left uncut on a rotational basis each year to provide structural diversity.
- 2.30 Dominant and/or invasive species should be regularly checked for, and spot-treated or removed as required. These include, but are not limited to, dock, thistles, common nettle, creeping buttercup, greater plantain, and cow parsley. Any invasive species listed on Schedule 9 of The Wildlife and Countryside Act must be immediately removed.
- 2.31 Additional seed will be sown in naturally occurring or created bare patches in subsequent years with a suitable seed mix, in order to aid the increase in floral diversity. Rank species such as common nettle, spear thistle, creeping thistle, broad leaved dock, curled dock and common ragwort will be controlled if they begin to dominate; this will be achieved by a spring cut as necessary, spot-spraying or hand pulling.
- 2.32 Long-term management of the grassland will seek to maintain and enhance a diverse sward characteristic of good condition modified grassland, with a range of native grasses and wildflowers present and limited encroachment by scrub, invasive species, or nutrient-demanding vegetation.

Bats and Birds

- 2.33 To enhance the site for bats and birds known to be present within the local area it is recommended that two bat boxes and two bird boxes be installed within the site. Boxes could be installed on existing retained trees within the site or integrated into the new development.
- 2.34 Ideally bat boxes would be woodcrete or similar hard-wearing material (rather than the less durable wooden boxes) and should be installed at least 3m above the ground (where safe installation is possible), sheltered from strong winds and exposed to the sun for part of the day (usually south or south-west facing).
- 2.35 Example tree mounted bat boxes are shown below: Schwegler 1FF bat box (below left, suitable for pipistrelle bats *Pipistrellus* sp.), and a Schwegler 2F bat box (below right, suitable for long-eared bats *Plecotus* sp.), or similar bat boxes.



- 2.36 Example integrated bat boxes are shown below: Integrate Eco Bat Box (below left), Habibat Bat box - Plain for rendering (below centre) and a Schwegler 1WI Summer and Winter bat box (below right) or similar bat boxes.



- 2.37 Tree hung bird boxes should comprise a mix of traditional '32mm round-holed' (below left: which are suitable for tits, sparrows, redstarts and nuthatches) and open-fronted boxes (below right: these are suitable for pied wagtails, robins and wrens) and also ideally be woodcrete or similar hard wearing material (rather than the less durable traditional wooden boxes). Boxes should be installed with an aluminium nail or screw to prevent tree damage between 2m and 4m above ground for round-holed and low down, below 2m, well hidden in vegetation for open-fronted boxes and (unless shaded by buildings or trees) be facing north or east.



- 2.38 Integrated bird boxes should comprise of swift bricks which are suitable for a range of species (below left), these should be installed at a minimum of 4m above the

ground, north or east facing and with open flight access, or sparrow terraces (below centre) which should be installed in line with vegetation such as trees or hedge lines to allow the birds the use of jumping off points and be installed a minimum of 3m above the ground on a north or east elevation. Where suitable overhanging eaves are present house martin cups (below right) may also be suitable.



Summary and Review

- 2.39 The management and monitoring measures set out within this HMMP are intended to ensure the successful establishment, maintenance and long-term enhancement of the habitats proposed as part of the development.
- 2.40 Implementation of the management prescriptions detailed within this HMMP will support the achievement and maintenance of the target habitat conditions required to deliver the Biodiversity Net Gain objectives of the development.
- 2.41 Habitat management should be reviewed periodically to assess progress towards the target habitat conditions. Where habitats are not developing as expected, appropriate remedial measures should be implemented to ensure the biodiversity enhancements are successfully established and maintained.

3 References

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