

**SOUTHERN OFFICE**

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By Email Only [REDACTED]

Enplan
St Anne's House
111 High Street
Lewes, BN7 1XY
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Our ref: RS/13104/AH

Dear Cathy:

**Land at Penthorpe School, Church Street, Rudwick: Ecological Watching Brief
Summary Report**

Phlorum Ltd. were present at the site, Land Penthorpe School, Church Street, Rudwick, RH12 3HJ on the 6th January 2026 and the 21st May 2026 to provide a site walkover to confirm the mitigation planting required by the local planning authority as part of the sites retrospective planning application had been carried out.

The site walkover follows on from the conditions of the granted planning permission for the site which states in regulatory condition 3: appointment of a suitable qualified ecologist (ECoW) is required.

Condition 3 states that;

"Regulatory Condition: All mitigation measures and/or works shall be carried out in accordance with the details contained in the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (Phlorum Limited, September 2024), as already submitted with the planning application and agreed in principle with the local planning authority prior to determination.

This will include the appointment of an appropriately competent person e.g. an ecological clerk of works (ECoW) to provide on-site ecological expertise during construction. The appointed person shall undertake all activities, and works shall be carried out, in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To conserve protected and Priority species and allow the LPA to discharge its duties under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and s40 of the NERC Act 2006 (as amended) and Policy 31 of the Horsham Development Framework (2015)."

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As planning permission was granted retrospectively, all works had been carried out. Therefore, the above condition could not be properly carried out in regard to the ecological clerk of works (ECoW) providing on-site ecological expertise during construction.

The condition states that mitigation must be carried out on site to include the recommendations provided in the preliminary ecological appraisal (Phlorum, 2025), which includes a precautionary approach to site clearance in respect to breeding birds, [REDACTED], bats, and great crested newts, in order to minimise any adverse impacts on these species group(s). This would have required a suitably qualified ecologist to walkover the site immediately prior to the works, a toolbox talk for protected species to be given and for any works to remove vegetation and potential hibernacula/refuge areas for protected species to be undertaken under the watching brief of a suitably qualified ecologist, however as noted above, the application is retrospective and works to the site had occurred prior to planning permission being granted.

Horsham district council were consulted on the above matter and it was agreed that as the application is largely retrospective, with no further construction or clearance works proposed, that a post-implementation site survey confirming that the approved scheme has been fully implemented may be an appropriate way to discharge this condition (if required please see correspondence emails between cathy@enplan.net, Shazia.Penne@horsham.gov.uk and amber.howie@phlorum.com dated between 09/05/2025-25/05/2025).

In summary the PEA concludes that in lieu of the recommendations of the PEA being completed, that compensatory planting would be undertaken to include a total of 620 whips planted in the area to the east of the site. Species planted include alder (*Alder glutinosa*), elder (*Sambucus nigra*), hombeam (*Carpinus betulus*) and hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), a further five native select standard trees with a minimum girth size of 10-12cm to be planted and bat and bird boxes were proposed to be installed at the site.

A precautionary approach to any future site clearance was recommended in respect to breeding birds great crested newts, hedgehogs [REDACTED] reptiles and bats to minimise any adverse impacts on these species' groups.

Schedule of Works

Phlorum consultant ecologist, Amber Howie, visited the site on the 6th January 2026, to provide the site walkover to confirm that the above mitigation planting and compensatory habitat had been provided in order to satisfy condition 3.



Four bat boxes and four bird boxes had been installed on mature trees around the existing woodland. The bat and bird boxes had all been installed on suitable large trees in an appropriate location within the wooded area adjacent to the site, in sheltered unexposed positions. All boxes were installed above 2m from the ground as recommended and were at a correct orientation.

The compensatory planting was inspected. The five additional trees proposed had been planted within the wooded area and across the bank top and appeared to be healthy and correctly planted.

The whip planting along the bank had been undertaken but did not appear to have been wholly successful. There were some successful whips remaining on the bank; however, it appeared that many had slipped down the bank or had failed. A total of approximately 105 whips were counted across the bank of the 620 proposed within the landscape plans.

A subsequent site walkover was carried out on the 21st of May 2026. On the second inspection, the bank planting included successful whip planting, totalling between 250-300 successful plants. Whilst the full 620 plants had not been planted, we understand that the landscaping plans and the planting matrix shows 620 plants to be planted in the first stage with the plants thinned out appropriately in year 3 to allow healthy spread and growth of successful plants. We consider that the planting on site observed on the 21st May was appropriate for the size of the area and for the planting matrix year 3 strategy and that any failed plants will be replaced- the Biodiversity Compensation and Enhancement Strategy (BCES) produced for the site by Phlorum (Phlorum, 2026) to satisfy condition 2 should be referred to. The groundskeeper at the site has provided receipt for proof of purchase of plants and we have requested to be undated of the progress of the planting, and to be present for a follow up walkover to inspect the planting yearly for the next five years.

In conclusion, two site walkovers were carried out at the site which confirmed the mitigation requested had been carried out. This included installation of four bat boxes, four bird boxes, planting of five trees and planting of whips along the bank face of the site.

Yours sincerely



Amber Howie
Senior Environmental Consultant

Encs.

Supporting photographs from the site works.

Photo No.	Feature	Photograph of Feature
1	Bat and bird boxes installed at the site	
2	Bat and bird boxes installed at the site	
3	Showing the planting area and large trees and smaller whips.	

4	Showing the planting area and large trees and smaller whips.	
5	Bird boxes were installed at the site	
6	Small whips were planted across the bank top	

7	Small whips were planted across the bank top	
8	Small whips were planted across the bank top	