

Biodiversity Enhancement Statement
In Support of the Biodiversity Enhancement Layout Plan
(Planning Condition Discharge)

Site: Hawksbourne Woods, Rusper Road, Horsham, RH12 4QS
Development: 6 Eco Lodge Accommodation

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Purpose of this Document

Submission context

This Biodiversity Enhancement Layout is submitted to discharge the following planning condition:

“A Biodiversity Enhancement Layout, providing the finalised details and locations of the enhancement measures contained within the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (David Archer Associates, November 2023) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.

The enhancement measures shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details prior to occupation and all features shall be retained in that manner thereafter”.

The locations of all biodiversity enhancement measures are shown on the accompanying drawing titled “Biodiversity Enhancement Layout Plan”, which forms part of the submission.

For ease of reference, the drawing is reproduced in Appendix A of this document and should be read in conjunction with the wider approved drawing set submitted to the Local Planning Authority.

Relationship to approved documents

This document:

- Confirms the final biodiversity enhancement measures to be delivered on site
- Identifies their type, specification, quantity and location
- Demonstrates compliance with;
- National Planning Policy Framework
- Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006
- Policies 31 and 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015)

This document shall be read alongside:

- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (David Archer Associates, November 2023)
- Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (Petrow Harley Ltd, February 2024)
- Soft Landscaping Written Specification
- Woodland Management Plan 2024-2034

- Landscape Management and Maintenance Plan (LMMP)
- Approved Soft and Hard Landscaping Drawings
- Biodiversity Enhancement Layout Drawing

Objective

The purpose of this layout is to:

- Define final biodiversity enhancement measures and locations
- Demonstrate policy compliance and measurable ecological gain
- Ensure implementation prior to occupation
- Secure long term habitat retention and management

Existing Ecological Baseline

Site Context

The site lies within a mixed deciduous woodland landscape containing:

- Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland and PAWS areas
- Mature oak, hornbeam coppice, ash and field maple canopy
- Clay soils with seasonal wetness and gill stream influence
- Existing seasonal ponds, deadwood habitat and shaded woodland floor
- No confirmed presence of protected species was recorded within the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal. However, the habitat mosaic provides potential suitability for protected and priority species, including dormice, amphibians, reptiles, and invertebrates.

These characteristics indicate high ecological sensitivity and enhancement opportunity.

Landscape Containment

Vegetation structure and woodland enclosure:

- Restrict visual intrusion
- Provide strong ecological connectivity
- Support long term habitat resilience

Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy

Biodiversity enhancements derive from three coordinated and evidence led sources:

- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (David Archer Associates, November 2023), which identifies ecological constraints, opportunities, and recommended enhancement measures.
The biodiversity enhancement measures set out within this document directly implement the ecological enhancement recommendations identified in the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, thereby fulfilling the requirements of the planning condition.
- Approved Soft Landscaping Design, which provides the spatial structure for native planting, habitat connectivity, ecological corridors, and woodland-edge buffering, ensuring that enhancement measures are integrated sensitively within the landscape framework of the development.
- Woodland Management Plan, which secures long term habitat management, structural diversification, invasive species control, deadwood retention, and the continued ecological functioning of the woodland environment beyond the initial establishment phase.

Together, these coordinated elements deliver measurable site-wide biodiversity enhancement and ensure that ecological gains are implemented, secured, and maintained for the lifetime of the development.

Ecological Enhancement Measures

All biodiversity enhancement measures shall be installed in accordance with Biodiversity Enhancement Layout Plan (BEL-01) prior to first occupation and shall be retained thereafter.

Faunal habitat features

Bird boxes

- Three Schwegler 1B (or equivalent) installed
- Located on mature retained trees
- Minimum 3m height
- Positioned away from direct south sun and prevailing wind

Bat boxes

- Three Schwegler 1FF / 2F (or equivalent) installed
- Located on mature retained trees
- Minimum 5m height
- Positioned southerly to receive sun for part of the day
- Clear of any obstructions for access

Insect houses

- Two units in warm, sheltered woodland edge positions
- Provide overwintering habitat for beneficial invertebrates

Hedgehog house

- One hedgehog house
- Located in a sheltered area
- Located away from Rusper road within sheltered woodland habitat

Aquatic habitat

A wildlife pond has been created and approved as part of the development and is included within this enhancement layout.

The development includes:

- Shallow sloping margins for amphibian access
- Marginal and aquatic planting
- Integration within woodland setting

This delivers significant biodiversity uplift beyond baseline conditions

Soft landscaping ecological habitats

Native planting and buffers

- Woodland appropriate native shrubs and trees
- Informal structure reflecting natural woodland edge
- Enhancement of habitat connectivity

Infrequently cut grassland corridors

- Minimum 2-3m width
- Located as shown on approved drawings
- Managed for wildflower and invertebrate diversity

Deadwood habitat

- Retention of fallen timber
- Creation of habitat/log piles
- Support of fungi, invertebrates, amphibians and small mammals

Woodland Management Plan enhancements

Strategic woodland measures include:

Structural diversity

- Ride and glade management
- Age class diversification
- Selective thinning and regeneration

PAWS restoration

- Gradual conifer removal
- Native broadleaf regeneration
- Long term ancient woodland recovery

Veteran tree retention

- Protection of existing veteran and future veteran trees
- Habitat continuity for specialist fauna

Pond and wet habitat management

- Maintenance of 50% dappled shade
- Pond creation

Invasive species control

- Removal of rhododendron and similar nonnative species

These actions provide landscape scale ecological enhancement.

Spatial Arrangement of Enhancements

Enhancement features are distributed as follows:

- Woodland interior – bat boxes, deadwood, veteran trees
- Woodland edge & clearings – bird boxes, insect houses, hedgehog habitat
- Grassland corridors – pollinator and reptile habitat connectivity
- Aquatic zone – wildlife pond and marginal planting
- Managed woodland areas – rides, glades, PAWS restoration

All locations correspond with approved landscape drawings.

Implementation Timing

Timing

All biodiversity enhancements measures shall be:

- Installed prior to first occupation
- Implemented in full accordance with the approved Biodiversity Enhancement Layout Plan, Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (David Archer Associates, November 2023), and associated approved drawings and specifications

Long term management

All habitats and biodiversity enhancement features shall:

- Be retained and maintained in accordance with the approved Woodland Management Plan and Landscape Management and Maintenance Plan
- Be protected from removal, damage, or inappropriate management for the lifetime of the development
- Be subject to ongoing maintenance, monitoring, and replacement where necessary to ensure continued ecological function and habitat value

Long term stewardship secured through the Woodland Management Plan and LMMP will ensure that biodiversity enhancements deliver sustained ecological benefit and contribute to the resilience and favourable condition of the surrounding woodland environment in perpetuity.

These arrangements ensure that biodiversity enhancement measures are secured, managed and maintained for the lifetime of the development in accordance with the requirements of the planning condition.

Conclusion

This Biodiversity Enhancement Layout demonstrates that the proposed development will deliver clear and measurable ecological enhancement in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework, Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, and Policies 31 and 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

The coordinated package of enhancement measures, informed by the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Soft Landscaping Scheme, and Woodland Management Plan, will:

- Deliver quantifiable biodiversity enhancement through the provision of species-specific habitat features including bird boxes, bat boxes, insect habitat, hedgehog refuge, deadwood retention, and a purpose designed wildlife pond
- Strengthen the ecological resilience and long-term condition of the surrounding ancient and semi-natural woodland through structural diversification, PAWS restoration, native regeneration, and invasive species control
- Enhance habitat connectivity across the site via native woodland edge planting, infrequently cut grassland corridors, and aquatic habitat integration
- Secure long term ecological function through embedded management within the Woodland Management Plan and Landscape Management and Maintenance Plan
- Ensure that all enhancement measures are implemented prior to first occupation and retained thereafter in accordance with the approved Biodiversity Enhancement Layout Plan

Collectively, these measures provide biodiversity gain that is proportionate to the scale and context of the development while reinforcing the wider woodland landscape as a coherent and resilient ecological resource.

The development therefore represents a policy-compliant and environmentally beneficial form of sustainable rural tourism that both conserves and enhances biodiversity in accordance with national and local planning objectives.

Appendices

Appendix A – Biodiversity Enhancement Layout



Appendix B – Example of a wildlife pond

