



Ecological Compliance & Best Practice

HABITAT ENHANCEMENT PLAN

**LAND NORTH OF LEYLAND GRANGE CLOSE
WORLDS END BURGESS HILL RH15 ORZ**

for

CELLNEX

NB. Information on legally protected, rare or vulnerable species may appear in ecological reports. In such cases it is recommended that appropriate caution be used when circulating copies.

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Habitat Enhancement Plan

CONTROL SHEET

General Document Information	
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INTRODUCTION

This Habitat Enhancement Plan has been produced by Betts Ecology in collaboration with Cellnex to satisfy recommendations relating to biodiversity of the proposed development of a communications tower and associated compound.

This document will ensure compliance with current legislation, official policy, due diligence and agreed¹ standards of best practice relating to the habitat types currently present and scheduled to be developed on site, as well as those present within the immediate surrounding area, to help create a feature that is both ecologically significant and functional in the long-term.

BACKGROUND AND SITE DESCRIPTION

The site for the proposed communications tower is located at the northern edge of the town of Burgess Hill, West Sussex in a semi-rural landscape of residential properties, farmland, woodland and hedgerow. The development site is very small (15m x 10m) and set within a corridor of modified grassland, scattered trees, scrub and denser woodland parallel to the railway line.

A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal was carried out by Betts Ecology in December 2024, during which the ground vegetation observed across the site was not found to be of high ecological value. This survey's findings provide a baseline for the ecological recommendations and enhancements made within this document in addition to those indicated on the Proposed Site Plan.

¹ In particular the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) and British Standard BS 42020: 2013 *Code of practice for biodiversity in planning and development*.

ECOLOGICAL ENHANCEMENTS

Hedgerow

A species rich hedgerow is to be planted around the three available sides of the compound. This will replace any losses and enhance the overall scrub/shrub habitat along the corridor. Management of the hedgerow will require light trimming for the first few years to ensure the formation of a good dense structure. Following that, annual cutting of the inner face may be necessary for site operation, but any subsequent management of the outer face and top should involve trimming only every two or three years to a height approximately 10cm above the previous height to allow the hedge to increase incrementally. The length of the hedge does not warrant a rotational system, but a three-year cutting cycle will maximise the formation of flowers and fruit. Brash piles from site clearance and hedgerow cuts should be accumulated in small heaps in the corners of the wider site or left within the hedgerow. These will serve as additional, dense microhabitats suitable for a wide range of invertebrates and mammals. Once the hedgerow is established, a band of at least 1m of the adjacent grassland should be left uncut to enable hedge base flora to develop and enhance the overall biodiversity value of the feature.

Birds

The site is within a structurally diverse corridor of scrub and trees which will be enhanced by the species rich hedgerow proposed to be planted around the compound. Additionally, one **Schwegler 1FB nest boxes (32mm hole) or similar designs** is to be installed within the more mature trees to the north, on an aspect between north and east, not subject to full sun. Suitable locations are marked on the Habitat Box Plan below. This type of box is designed to attract small hole-nesting passerines generally, including blue tits, great tits, coal tits and house sparrows, although they will also attract other small birds as roosting places during cold weather, and are well-suited for the garden habitats present within the area.

The nest box shall be maintained for the lifetime of the development; yearly, routine monitoring of the site should incorporate a visual confirmation of condition of the

box. If the box is found to be missing or significantly damaged, it should be replaced, and if obstructed, any vegetation cleared.

Bats

One **Schwegler 2FN bat box** or similar general-purpose, woodcrete design should be installed on a mature tree to the north of development site. The box is to be mounted a minimum of three meters above ground level on a south-eastern aspect, with clear flight access and away from artificial light sources. Suitable locations are marked on the Habitat Box Plan below.

The boxes shall be maintained for the lifetime of the development; as with the bird boxes described above, yearly monitoring of the site should incorporate a visual confirmation and count of all boxes, ensuring that none are missing or significantly deteriorating. If a box is absent or its condition is found to have significantly degraded, it should be replaced with a similar model. Please note that once bats have inhabited a roost or nursery site they may only be disturbed by licensed bat workers.

Hedgehogs

The compound fence will not adversely affect hedgehog movement through the landscape being abutted to the existing Network Rail chain-link fence and the boundary hedge will offer additional shrub cover.

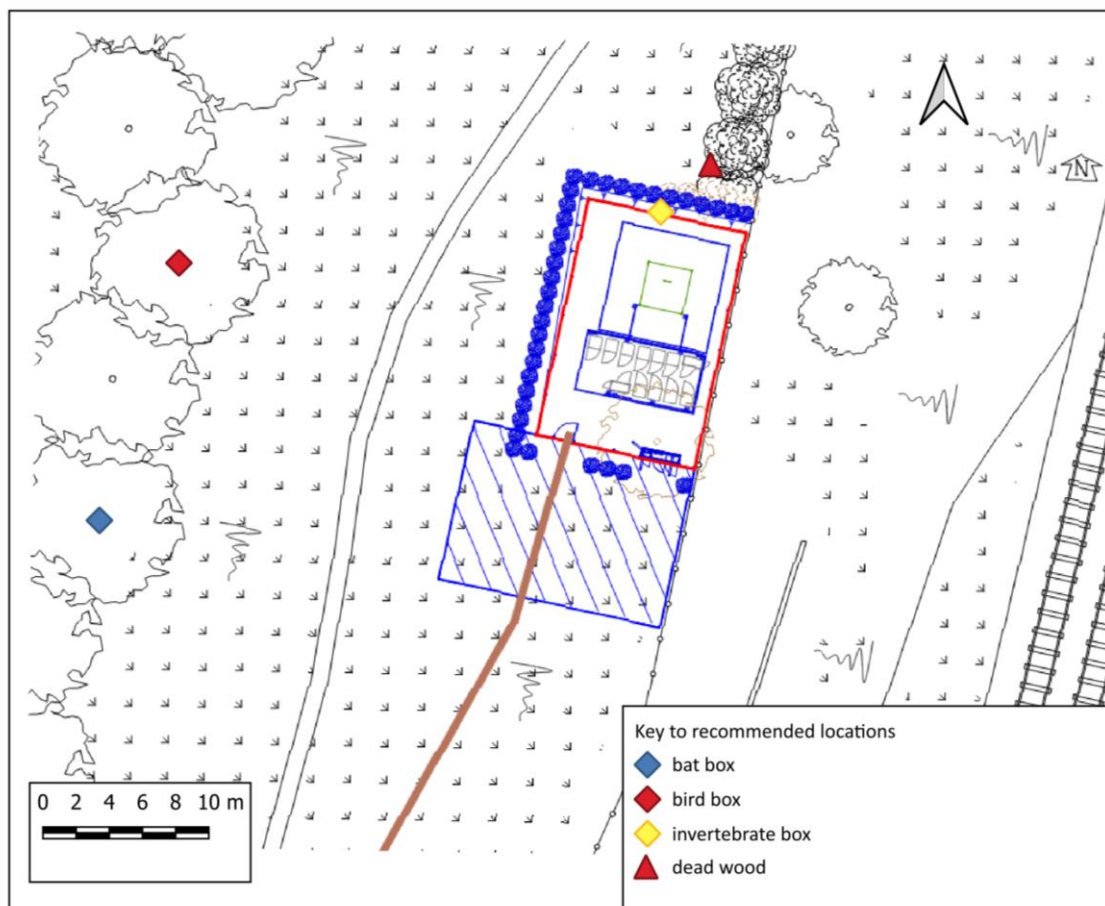
Invertebrates

One dead tree is to be removed for the development. As with brash piles from site clearance and hedgerow cuts, the dead wood should remain in proximity to the site. The tree should be stacked in a damp shady area in the surrounding scrub habitat, preferably left in large sections to maximise the ground contact and therefore retain higher moisture levels suitable for mosses, lichens and fungi, as well as many insects/invertebrates. Suitable locations are marked on the Habitat Box Plan below.

In addition to these habitat enhancements one insect box should be installed in a sunny, south-facing location at a height of 1.5–2.0m such as on the compound fence

or a clear stemmed tree. A design including a mix of tubes and solid wood with holes of 2-10mm diameter are best for attracting a multitude of different invertebrates such as solitary bees, spiders, ladybirds and lacewings. Suitable locations are marked on the plan below.

HABITAT BOX PLAN



Proposed site plan and recommended locations for habitat boxes and dead wood pile.

Habitat Enhancement Plan

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Cesca holds a master's degree with distinction in biological recording and ecological monitoring and a first class honours degree in mathematical engineering. She specialises in botanical identification, recording and statistical analysis to assess biodiversity and changes due to management practice and environmental dynamics and is BSBI joint vice-county recorder for Worcestershire. She has a life-long interest in botany and phytosociology, habitat creation, restoration and management and has been involved in species reintroductions and peatland restoration. Cesca also has extensive experience of working with plants at horticultural nurseries and from many years managing a Soil Association certified smallholding and forest garden.

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