



BIODIVERSITY ENHANCEMENT STRATEGY

Land at 147-149 College Lane,
Hurstpierpoint

A REPORT FOR EARLSWOOD HOMES

This report has been compiled to guide all construction activities to facilitate development at the site

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Strategy completed in 2025

Table 0.1 - Document and Version Control

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The surveys and assessment have been drafted to be in accordance with British Standard for Biodiversity BS42020:2013, Biodiversity - Code for planning and development and; the Code of Professional Conduct published by the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental management.

N.B. It must be noted that investigations of this sort provide only a snapshot in time of the ecological conditions of a site, are limited in extent and cannot capture the full picture of the biodiversity interests at the given location.

Contents

1	Introduction	1
2	Baseline ecological/biodiversity features	3
3	Site enhancement measures.....	4
4	Delivery and Long-term Management.....	5
	Figure 1 Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy Plan and Landscape Plans.....	8
	References.....	9

1 Introduction

Overview of the commission and the proposals

- 1.1. Co-ecology Ltd was commissioned by Earlswood Homes to compile a Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy in relation to the proposed development of land at 147-149 College Lane, Hurstpierpoint. The proposals comprise the erection of seven residential dwellings with associated hard and soft landscaping.
- 1.2. This enhancement strategy has been written to ensure compliance with Condition 7 set by the Mid Sussex District Council (Planning Application Reference: DM/25/1379) relating to the proposed development on-site:

“Condition 7: No development shall be carried out above ground level unless and until a Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy for protected and priority species prepared by a suitably qualified ecologist shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The content of the Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy shall include the following:

- a) Purpose and conservation objectives for the proposed enhancement measures;*
- b) detailed designs or product descriptions to achieve stated objectives;*
- c) locations, orientations and heights of proposed enhancement measures by appropriate maps and plans (where relevant);*
- d) persons responsible for implementing the enhancement measures; and*
- e) details of initial aftercare and long-term maintenance (where relevant). The works shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details shall be retained in that manner thereafter.*

Reason: To enhance protected and Priority species & habitats and allow the LPA to discharge its duties under the NPPF 2021 and s40 of the NERC Act 2006 (as amended).”

Background

- 1.3. The following survey and assessment work was produced to ascertain level of impacts to the previous proposals for the site which encompassed the whole ownership boundary:
 - Ecological Assessment (DFA, 2024a)
 - Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment (DFA, 2024b)
- 1.4. Baseline ecological surveys (DFA 2024) identified the site as dominated by improved grassland with scattered fruit and broad-leaved trees, and hedgerows at the boundaries. The site supports limited ecological value, with moderate bat potential in one tree and low potential in three trees and no notable fauna recorded.

Site Context

- 1.5. The site comprised a parcel of grassland and scattered rural trees, approximately 3.67 hectare (ha) in area, to the east of College Lane (National Grid Ref: TQ 29234 16929). The site is bordered to the south and west by residential properties and gardens, and to the north and east by agricultural pasture. The wider landscape is dominated by agricultural field intersected by native hedgerows. Hurstpierpoint lies 1.3km to the west.
- 1.6. The development area is illustrated with a red line boundary in Figure 1 of this report. The site was dominated by g4 modified grassland and scattered rural trees. No other habitats were present on-site (DFA, 2024a).

Proposed Works

- 1.7. The proposals comprise the construction of seven residential dwellings with associated access, parking, utilities and soft landscaping. The proposals will result in the loss of all modified grassland and the removal of some trees. Proposals include the creation of 0.125ha species-rich grassland, 75 new trees and 0.02ha mixed scrub (DFA, 2024b).

Relevant Legislation and Planning Policy

- 1.8. The following key pieces of nature conservation legislation are relevant to this enhancement strategy:
 - The Environment Act (2021);
 - The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended);
 - Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended);
 - Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006;
 - The National Planning Policy Framework 2024; and
 - Wild Mammals (Protection) Act 1996.
- 1.9. The National Planning Policy Framework (Department of Communities and Local Government, 2024) requires local authorities to avoid and minimise impacts on biodiversity and to provide net gains in biodiversity when making planning decisions.
- 1.1. The following local policies are extracted from the Mid Sussex District Council Adopted Local Plan 2014 – 2031 (adopted March 2018):
 - *DP37: Trees Woodland and Hedgerows*
 “The District Council will support the protection and enhancement of trees, woodland and hedgerows, and encourage new planting. In particular, ancient woodland and aged or veteran trees will be protected. Development that will damage or lead to the loss of trees, woodland or hedgerows that contribute, either individually or as part of a group, to the visual amenity value or character of an area, and/ or that have landscape, historic or wildlife importance, will not normally be permitted.”
 - *DP38: Biodiversity*
 “The District Plan recognises the importance of the protection and conservation of areas of importance for nature conservation and the valuable contribution made by these sites and features in conserving biodiversity and geodiversity of our natural heritage, together with opportunities for education and employment. The District Plan also recognises the importance of the protection and conservation of areas outside of designated areas where these are of nature conservation value or geological interest especially where they contribute to wider ecological networks.”

2 Baseline ecological/biodiversity features

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (Derek Finnie Associates, 2024a)

- 2.1. There are no internationally designated sites within 5km of the site and no Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) within 2km of the site. Therefore, there will be no perceived detrimental impacts to designated sites.
- 2.2. The improved grassland within the Site is deemed to be of Negligible ecological value due to the limited species diversity and the presence of common, widespread species. The mature trees and hedgerows offer some biodiversity value and contribute to the overall ecological permeability of the Site, as such they have been assessed as being of Site value.
- 2.3. No specially protected species, or species of a raised conservation concern, were identified within the Site. Beyond the occasional potential foraging bat, and four trees that had limited bat potential, the Site was assessed as having negligible value to support protected species.
- 2.4. The PEA and BNG assessments previously undertaken of the site identified the following opportunities as post-development site enhancements:
 - Planting of new trees across site to be of native species and local provenance;
 - Creation of species-rich grassland on-site;
 - Creation of native hedgerows to demarcate the site boundary.

Site Walkover (Co-ecology, 2025)

- 2.5. A site walkover was undertaken on the 31st October 2025 by Orlando Campbell BSc (Hons) MCIEEM, an ecologist with other 8 years of experience undertaking ecological appraisals, protected species assessments and Biodiversity Net Gain assessments.
- 2.6. The site visit determined that the habitats on-site were of the same ecological value as determined in the PEA undertaken in 2024, and there were no additional potential impacts to protected species.

3 Site enhancement measures

3.1. Following the recommendations made within the initial ecology reports and discussion with the landowner and design team, a series of measures are described in this document to protect the identified ecological features on-site and within the wider landscape during the construction and operational phase of the development, including:

- *Bats* – The installation of bat boxes on the retained mature trees will provide suitable roosting opportunities for the local bat population. Implementation of a sensitive lighting scheme to avoid any unnecessary overnight lighting over features that could be acting as commuting/foraging corridor for bats.
- *Breeding birds* – The landscape proposals will result, once vegetation has matured, in an increase of nesting opportunities on-site. To increase nesting opportunities in the interim the following nest boxes will be installed on the retained trees (see Figure 1 for indicative locations):
 - Seven Eco Small Bird boxes of varying hole size to be fixed on the retained boundary trees.¹
- *Other enhancements:*
 - Inclusion of suitably sized gaps at the base of any new close-board fencing to allow movement of small mammals such as hedgehogs across the site.
 - Installation of two insect ‘hotels’ on the eastern boundary to enhance the site for invertebrates.
 - The creation of new high quality habitats including species-rich grassland, native hedgerows and native tree planting.

3.2. Indicative locations of all site enhancement measures is shown in the Biodiversity Enhancement Map, Figure 1.

¹ [Eco Small Bird Box](#)

4 Delivery and Long-term Management

Habitat creation

Individual trees

4.1. A total of 75 new trees are proposed to be planted along new access route, and the site boundaries (see Figure 1). While the primary objective is to use native species for biodiversity, a minority of ornamental species are included for aesthetic diversity. Species will include, but not necessarily limited to;

- Field maple *Acer campestre* ;
- Downy service berry *Amelanchier arborea*, 'Robin Hill'
- Silver birch *Betula pendula*
- Hornbeam *Carpinus betulus*
- Kousa Dogwood *Cornus kousa*
- Magnolia *Magnolia x loebneri* Merrill
- Ornamental crab apple *Malus spp.*, 'Evereste'
- Ornamental apple *Malus spp.*, 'Golden Hornet'
- Crab apple *Malus sylvestris*
- Bird Cherry *Prunus avium*
- Ornamental Pear *Pyrus calleryana* Chanticleer
- Pedunculate Oak *Quercus robur*

Grassland

4.2. Proposals include the creation of 0.125ha of species-rich wildflower grassland and 0.05ha of species-rich amenity grassland.

Species-rich wildflower grassland

- 4.3. Approximately 0.125ha of species-rich wildflower grassland will be created along the new access route and western boundary. Grassland will be sown with Emorsgate EM4 Wildflower Meadow Mix².
- 4.4. Grassland will be sown at a rate of 40kg per hectare (total 5kg). Seeding will follow BS 7370-4:1993 (Recommendations for ground cover establishment).
- 4.5. The objective of the species-rich wildflower grassland is to increase floral diversity and provide a resource for invertebrates.

² [EM4 Meadow Mixture for Clay Soils - Emorsgate Seeds](#)

Species-rich amenity grassland

- 4.6. Approximately 0.05ha of species-rich amenity grassland will be created to the west of the new buildings, outside of their curtilage. The grassland will be sown with Wildflower Turf Ltd Species-rich 26, bee friendly turf mix³.
- 4.7. The grassland will be sown at 40kg per hectare (total 2kg). Seeding will follow BS 7370-4:1993 (Recommendations for ground cover establishment).

Native hedgerows

- 4.8. Approximately 0.14km of new native hedgerows will be created along western boundaries of the site. Species will include:
 - Hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna*
 - Hazel *Corylus avellana*
 - Elder *Sambucus nigra*
 - Blackthorn *Prunus spinosa*
 - Holly *Ilex aquifolium*
 - Wild privet *Ligustrum vulgare*
 - Honeysuckle *Lonicera periclymenum*
 - Dog rose *Rosa canina*
- 4.9. Hedgerow plants will be at a density of five plants per m, in two staggered rows.
- 4.10. Hedgerows will be allowed to grow for a minimum of 3 years before being subject to a rotational cutting scheme (avoiding bird nesting season) to maintain health and density.
- 4.11. Planting and management of the hedgerow will follow BS 3998:2010 (Tree work recommendations) for formative pruning.

Native Scrub

- 4.12. Approximately 0.02ha of mixed scrub will be created on the western site boundary to provide sheltering and foraging opportunities for birds and small mammals. Species will include:
 - Dogwood *Cornus sanguinea*
 - Wayfaring tree *Viburnum lantana*
 - Guelder rose *Viburnum opulus*
 - Wild privet *Ligustrum vulgare*
 - Spindle *Euonymus europaeus*
- 4.13. The scrub will be planted following BS 8545:2014 (Trees: from nursery to independence in the landscape) and BS 3936-1:1992 (Nursery stock - Specification for trees and shrubs). Whips will be planted at a density of 4 plants per m².

³ [Species-rich Lawn Turf - Wildflower Turf](#)

Biodiversity Enhancements

- 4.14. Bat and bird boxes will be installed as close as possible to the completion of works on the retained trees, see Figure 1 for a visualisation of the proposed location of boxes.
- 4.15. Bird boxes will be cleaned annually, outside of nesting bird season (March to August, inclusive). Hedgehog holes and insect features will be kept free clear of obstruction.
- 4.16. Once installed, bat boxes can only be disturbed by a licenced ecologist.

Responsibilities & Timings

- 4.17. Implementation of the enhancement measures of the site will be the responsibility of the landowner. The responsible party to oversee the ongoing long-term management of the ecological features of the site will be the responsibility of the residents management company, once identified by the landowner.
- 4.18. Table 4.1 below sets out the approximate timings for the delivery of ecological enhancements and optimal dates for future management tasks. Timings are subject to change and will be updated accordingly.

Table 4.1 Timing of delivery of ecological mitigation and enhancements

	Optimal Month Following Construction											
Task	May	June	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr
Habitat Creation Task												
Scrub Creation						x	x				x	x
Grassland Creation	x				x	x					x	x
Tree Planting						x	x				x	x
Installation of bird and bat boxes	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x

Figure 1 Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy Plan and Landscape Plans (Clive Warwick Landscape Design, 2024)



References

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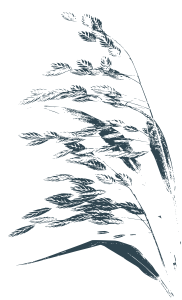
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