BIODIVERSITY ENHANCEMENT PLAN

25th September 2026

The Foal Barn, Wineham Lane, Henfield, West Sussex, BN5 9AN

Client: Sarah Platt

Agent: Fowler Architecture and Planning

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At the time of writing, standard methodologies have been used which are accepted by Natural England and other statutory bodies. No responsibility will be accepted where standard methodologies change and where Government, national bodies and industry subsequently modify standards.

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SUMMARY

- ABR Ecology Ltd were commissioned by Sarah Platt to produce a Biodiversity Enhancement Plan (BEP) for The Foal Barn, Wineham Lane, Henfield, West Sussex, BN5 9AN. The BEP is required to discharge Condition 11 of planning application DM/26/0128 for "*Change of use of land from agricultural use to equestrian use, erection of stable building, and construction of all-weather outdoor riding area; with associated hard/soft landscaping, and access arrangements.*" from Mid Sussex District Council.
- To ensure the proposed development is compliant with Section 19 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and local planning policy, biodiversity enhancements are detailed including the provision of hedgehog-friendly fencing, bird nesting features, grassland enhancement and creation of new grassland, hedgerows and a ditch.
- Evidence of the above biodiversity enhancements must be supplied to Mid Sussex District Council once completed to ensure compliance and fully discharge Condition 11 of DM/26/0128.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 ABR Ecology Ltd were commissioned by Sarah Platt to produce a Biodiversity Enhancement Plan (BEP) for The Foal Barn, Wineham Lane, Henfield, West Sussex, BN5 9AN (central grid reference: TQ 23777 19449). The BEP is required to discharge Condition 11 of planning application DM/26/0128 for "*Change of use of land from agricultural use to equestrian use, erection of stable building, and construction of all-weather outdoor riding area; with associated hard/soft landscaping, and access arrangements.*" from Mid Sussex District Council.

1.2 Condition 11 of DM/26/0128 from Mid Sussex District Council states:

11. No works shall be carried out above slab level, unless and until a Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy for protected, Priority and threatened species, prepared by a suitably qualified ecologist in line with the recommendations of the Ecology & Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment Version 3.0 (ABR Ecology Ltd., June 2026), 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 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, Priority and threatened species and allow the LPA to discharge its duties under paragraph 187d of NPPF 2024 and s40 of the NERC Act 2006 (as amended) and to accord with policy DP38 of the Mid Sussex District Plan 2014 - 2031.

Site context

1.3 The site is situated within West Sussex and is approximately 1.68 hectares (ha) and comprises of horse paddocks. The site consists of grassland, gravel tracks and native hedgerows. The site is situated within a rural setting surrounded by arable and pastoral farmland. The Rive Adur is present to the north of the site.

1.4 The application site is considered to hold the potential for commuting and foraging bats, dormice, hedgehogs, nesting birds and reptiles and amphibians. Full details of the assessment of the site can be found in the accompanying 'Ecology & Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment (ABR Ecology Ltd, 2026).

2. LEGISLATION AND PLANNING POLICY

Legislation and UK BAP priority habitats/species

Legislation

2.1 In England, all bats, dormice *Muscardinus avellanarius*, otters *Lutra lutra*, white-clawed crayfish *Austropotamobius pallipes* and great crested newts *Triturus cristatus* are legally protected under the Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019.

2.2 A number of species are also listed under Annex II of the EC Habitats and Species Directive 1992 due to their rarity, including barbastelle *Barbastella barbastellus*, Bechstein's bat *Myotis bechsteinii*, greater horseshoe *Rhinolophus ferrumequinum*, lesser horseshoe *Rhinolophus hipposideros*, great crested newt, white-clawed crayfish and otter.

2.3 The above named species and adders *Vipera berus*, slow worms *Anguis fragilis*, grass snakes *Natrix helvetica*, common lizards *Zootoca vivipara*, common frog *Rana temporaria,* palmate newt *Lissotriton helveticus*, smooth newt *Lissotriton vulgaris*, water voles *Arvicola amphibius* and several invertebrate species are also protected under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (WCA) 1981 (as amended).

2.4 Schedule 9 of the WCA 1981 includes non-native, invasive species including (but not limited to) Himalayan balsam *Impatiens glandulifera* and signal crayfish *Pacifastacus leniusculus*. Badgers *Meles meles* are legally protected under The Protection of Badgers Act (1992).

2.5 All birds, their nests and eggs are protected under Section 1 of The WCA 1981 (as amended) and it is thus an offence, to intentionally kill, injure or take any wild bird; intentionally take, and damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while it is in use or being built.

2.6 Some wild bird species, such as barn owls *Tyto alba*, are afforded additional protection under Schedule 1 of the WCA 1981 (as amended). This legislation makes the disturbance of any wild bird included in Schedule 1 illegal while it is building a nest or is in, on or near a nest containing eggs or young; or disturbance of dependent young of such a bird.

2.7 Certain species are listed under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 as species of 'principal importance' (JNCC, 2007) such

as hedgehog *Erinaceus europaeus*, due to their national decline; under Section 40, Local Planning Authorities have a duty to conserve these species.

Protected habitats and sites

2.8 A number of sites designated for nature conservation are afforded legal protection due to being of international importance. The UK National Sites Network includes Special Protection Areas (SPAs) for birds and Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) for habitats; Ramsars, designated for important wetland habitats, do not form part of the National Sites Network but are protected in the same way.

2.9 Habitats listed under Annex I of the EC Habitats and Species Directive 1992 are included due to their rarity and importance to the maintenance of protected species populations. Examples include estuaries, northern Atlantic wet heaths with *Erica tetralix*, and blanket bogs.

2.10 Other nationally protected sites include Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), National Nature Reserves (NNRs) Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) and Protected Road Verges which are designated under the WCA 1981 and strengthened by the NERC Act 2006.

2.11 Several habitats are listed under Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006 including certain hedgerows, arable field margins, grassland, fen, swamp, marine habitats, woodlands and rivers.

National and local planning policy

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

2.12 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities, 2026) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. In the context of this report, Section 19 of NPPF 'Conserving and enhancing the natural environment' is relevant and applicable and includes six plan-making policies 'N1' to 'N6'.

2.13 New developments and projects are supported where plans promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species; and identify and pursue measurable net gains for biodiversity.

2.14 To ensure this application is compliant with Section 19 of NPPF, enhancements for biodiversity, such as the inclusion of bat roosting and/or bird nesting boxes, are required as part of the development.

The Mid Sussex District Plan 2014-2031

2.15 The Mid Sussex District Plan (2014-2031) (Mid Sussex District Council, 2014) Policy DP38 Biodiversity states the following:

'Biodiversity will be protected and enhanced by ensuring development:

- *Contributes and takes opportunities to improve, enhance, manage and restore biodiversity and green infrastructure, so that there is a net gain in biodiversity, including through creating new designated sites and locally relevant habitats, and incorporating biodiversity features within developments; and*
- *Protects existing biodiversity, so that there is no net loss of biodiversity. Appropriate measures should be taken to avoid and reduce disturbance to sensitive habitats and species. Unavoidable damage to biodiversity must be offset through ecological enhancements and mitigation measures (or compensation measures in exceptional circumstances); and*
- *Minimises habitat and species fragmentation and maximises opportunities to enhance and restore ecological corridors to connect natural habitats and increase coherence and resilience; and*
- *Promotes the restoration, management and expansion of priority habitats in the district; and*
- *Avoids damage to, protects and enhances the special characteristics of internationally designated Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation; nationally designated Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty; and locally designated Sites of Nature Conservation Importance, Local Nature Reserves and Ancient Woodland or to other areas identified as being of nature conservation or geological interest, including wildlife corridors, aged or veteran trees, Biodiversity Opportunity Areas, and Nature Improvement Areas.*

Designated sites will be given protection and appropriate weight according to their importance and the contribution they make to wider ecological networks.

Valued soils will be protected and enhanced, including the best and most versatile agricultural land, and development should not contribute to unacceptable levels of soil pollution.

Geodiversity will be protected by ensuring development prevents harm to geological conservation interests, and where possible, enhances such interests. Geological conservation interests include Regionally Important Geological and Geomorphological Sites'.

2.16 **It is the developer/landowner's responsibility to ensure that the proposed development proceeds in full compliance with this report and/or any update version report thereafter, that works are undertaken lawfully, in compliance with national and local policy, and in accordance with all conditions of the obtained planning consent.**

3. BASELINE SURVEY INFORMATION

Former ecological appraisal

3.1 An Ecology & Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment was commissioned and completed by ABR Ecology Ltd (2026). The initial report details all pre-works habitats present on-site including full botanical species lists and an evaluation of the site for a range of protected species. The completed Ecology & Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment (2026) can be accessed via the Mid Sussex District Council planning portal (2026) under the associated application DM/26/0128.

Habitats

3.2 Habitats on-site include artificial unvegetated; unsealed surface, modified grassland, ruderal/ephemeral, a native hedgerow, a native hedgerow with trees, a native hedgerow with trees associated with a bank or ditch and a culvert. The majority of the site is comprised of modified grassland. The full species lists are provided within the associated report by ABR Ecology Ltd (2026).

3.3 *Artificial unvegetated; unsealed surface:* Situated in the south and east of the site. Gravel tracks provide access into and around the site.

3.4 *Modified grassland:* The site is predominantly horse grazing paddocks and consists of both 'poor' and 'moderate' condition modified grassland. The main paddock area has been assessed to be in 'moderate' condition, and the dominant species was Yorkshire-fog *Holcus lanatus*. The other two areas of modified grassland in the north and south were assessed to be in 'poor' condition and were populated with species such as Yorkshire-fog, dandelion *Taraxacum agg.* and perennial rye-grass *Lolium perenne*.

3.5 *Ruderal/ephemeral:* Small areas of ruderal are present to the east of the site, consisting of wild parsnip *Pastinaca sativa*, broad-leaved dock *Rumex obtusifolius* and Yorkshire-fog.

3.6 *Native hedgerow:* A 31m long native hedgerow is present in the east of the site and separates the gravel track from the area of ruderal. The hedgerow is predominantly hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna*.

3.7 *Native hedgerow with trees:* A 22m long native hedgerow with pedunculate oak *Quercus robur,* elder *Sambucus nigra* and blackthorn *Prunus spinosa* is present on the eastern boundary of the site.

3.8 *Native hedgerow with trees associated with bank or ditch:* A 212m long hedgerow with trees and an associate ditch is present to the north of the property and separates the northern area of modified grassland from the remainder of the site. The ditch lies to the north of the hedge and connects to another ditch which runs into the River Adur to the north of the site.

3.9 *Culvert:* An underground culvert is present in the east of the site.

Protected and vulnerable species

3.10 Full results for the site's potential to support protected and vulnerable species can be found in the accompanying report by ABR Ecology Ltd (2026). Mitigation for species is provided within this report.

4. BIODIVERSITY ENHANCEMENTS

4.1 Biodiversity enhancements are provided below to ensure compliance with Section 19 of the National Planning Policy Framework and local planning policy. A plan of the enhancements and full specifications are also provided in Appendix B. **Evidence of the enhancements including photographs must be supplied to the Local Planning Authority once installed to ensure compliance with this biodiversity enhancement plan and to fully discharge Condition 11 of DM/26/0128.**

Bird nesting boxes

- One 'Vivara Pro WoodStone House Sparrow Nest Box' (https://www.nhbs.com/vivara-pro-woodstone-house-sparrow-nest-box) will be installed on the west elevation of the new building. The nest box will be installed at eaves level and no external light fixtures will be permitted within 3m of the box.

Hedgehog-friendly fencing

- Any new close-boarded fencing installed on site around the boundaries must incorporate a minimum of one 'hedgehog highway', or custom 130mm by 130mm ground level hole along every run of fencing / boundary line.

Biodiversity Net Gain

4.2 Please see the Ecology & Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment (ABR Ecology, 2026) for full site plans and further information on the statutory metric that has been undertaken.

Grassland enhancement

4.3 The northern parcel of modified grassland will be enhanced to neutral grassland in 'moderate' habitat condition.

4.4 General management prescriptions:

- *Ensure that livestock / horses have not been wormed within at least 4 weeks prior to being put onto the pasture as this will impact wildflower growth and associated invertebrate populations. Ideally, livestock/horses will be wormed once they have been brought off the pasture but not before.*
- *During establishment any perennial weeds will be removed as necessary to ensure these do not outcompete the wildflowers.*

4.5 Initial establishment (first 5 years):

Autumn of Year 1

4.6 In Autumn of Year 1, any perennial weeds such as docks, thistles and nettles will be removed from the existing area of grassland using repeated cultivation. The existing area will be cut short (>3cm) with all arisings removed and then chain harrowed and heavily scarified/harrowed to create patches of bare ground (aiming for 50% of area). Following this, the 'EM1F Basic General Purpose Wildflowers' seed mixture (https://wildseed.co.uk/product/mixtures/wild-flower-only-mixtures/basic-general-purpose-wild-flowers/) will be applied at a rate of 1.5g/m^2 in September-October to help reduce the competitiveness of grass in the Autumn of the first year. Following the application of the seed, the area will be gently rolled to ensure good seed-soil contact, ensuring seed is not buried deeply.

4.7 Sowing should not take place during excessively wet conditions and during still wind conditions when the soil is saturated but not flooded.

Year 2

4.8 In Year 2 if the seed mixture establishment has been successful, the following prescriptions will be followed; where establishment has not been successful, the seed mixture application will be repeated in the Autumn and the following prescriptions set back:

January-February – Light winter grazing: The grassland will then be lightly sheep/horse grazed in January-February (not in excessively wet conditions) to reduce grasses, aiming for a sward height of 2-3cm by the end of February.

March-April – rest the grassland: Remove livestock and do not cut or disturb, allowing yellow rattle to emerge.

May-late-July – Flowering and seed setting period: Let yellow rattle go to seed. No cutting until yellow rattle has set and dropped seed (usually late July).

Late July-early August – cut: Cut when yellow rattle pods are brown and rattling. Leave rows for 24-48 hours and turn them to ensure seeds drop into grassland. Then remove **all** cuttings to reduce fertility.

August aftermath grazing/cut: Graze for a few weeks to keep regrowth short (5-7cm sward height) or cut.

If seed establishment has not been successful in Year 2, the seed and harrow exercise as outlined under Year 1 will be repeated.

November-December - reintroduce light winter grazing, keep sward open but avoid heavy poaching (no heavy grazing in very wet conditions for long periods).

Years 3-5

4.9 After sowing, continue hay cut and/or grazing as above aiming to keep the grass short (5-7cm) (ensuring hay cut is carried out in July to allow yellow rattle seed has set and can drop). Continue mowing/grazing through winter and early spring as necessary. Stop grazing by end of April and leave until July/August only once yellow rattle seeds are brown and rattling. Leave rows for 24-48 hours then turn them to ensure seeds drop into grassland if required. Then remove all cuttings to reduce fertility.

4.10 If yellow rattle numbers dropping and species diversity reducing, carry out seed application as outlined in Year 1. Repeat Year 2 prescriptions.

Years 5-30

4.11 Long-term management will begin once species diversity in the sward is achieved. The management as outlined in Year 2 will apply with the exception of scarification/harrowing, unless yellow rattle numbers are decreasing and competitive grasses are beginning to outcompete wildflowers. In this event, supplementary wildflower seeding will need to occur immediately following scarification/harrowing in September-October. Continue with light winter grazing to keep grasses short and sward open.

4.12 Where invasive weed species establish, mowing/targeted cutting prior to setting seed in late summer will be undertaken. If there is a particularly persistent problem with weeds such as docks, the grassland should be grazed short and then the problem weed topped before the weed has set seed. Where management does not prove effective, stands of invasive weeds (such as docks/thistles/nettles) will be spot treated as appropriate as a last resort and when there is a particular persistence.

Years 3+ (as required)

4.13 Spread supplementary seed mixture as necessary in response to poor uptake of establishment by broadcasting seeds. Sowing must be undertaken in still wind conditions when the soil is saturated by not flooded. Any excessive areas of bare ground to be reseeded.

Creation of species-rich native hedgerows and species-rich native hedgerow with trees

Year 1

4.14 Undertake ground preparation of the planting holes for new hedge whips; ensure soil is not compacted and is friable/loose, remove any obstructions such as larger stones and add an appropriate soil improver. Dig a hole large enough for the roots to spread out evenly ('pit-planting') or use 'notch' planting as planting method. Position a cane just off-centre on the windward side at least 1ft below the bottom of the hole.

4.15 At least 5 native woody species must be used in the specification for the new species-rich native hedgerows (see below for suggested species list, alternative native woody species can be used):

Table 1: Species-rich native hedgerow species list:

Common name	Taxonomic name	Abundance
Hawthorn	*Crataegus monogyna*	20%
Blackthorn	*Prunus spinosa*	20%
Dogwood	*Cornus sanguinea*	20%
Elder	*Sambucus nigra*	20%
Pedunculate oak	*Quercus robur*	20%

4.16 When hedge whips arrive, ensure these are sheltered from frost and wind. Ensure that prior to planting the roots are placed in a bucket of water to soak root system thoroughly before planting (allow at least 1hr). Plant bareroot whips between November and March during the dormant season.

4.17 Bareroot hedge whips will be planted in a double staggered row using five plants per metre, leaving 50cm between whips in the same row and 40-50cm between two parallel rows. Position the hedge rows between 75cm – 1m from the site boundary wall/fence to ensure sufficient space for the hedge to fill out.

4.18 Following soaking of the root systems, the planting holes/notches will be drenched with water. Each whip will be planted using mycorrhizal fungi such as Rootgrow which will be spread into the bottom of each planting hole or dipped on the roots by mixing the Rootgrow with water in accordance with the manufacturer's specifications. Each whip will be placed into position ensuring that the soil mark is at ground level, ensure the whip

is in a good position adjacent to the cane and watering pipe/channel. Backfill with good quality enriched compost and carefully heel in each whip to ensure good root to soil contact. Install guard around the whip.

4.19 Ensure that hedge whips are kept well-watered during establishment (Year 1); during periods of very dry/hot weather, water whips thoroughly.

4.20 Hedgerows with trees: The trees within the species-rich native hedgerow with trees (Elder and Pedunculate oak) must be marked with a long cane, to establish difference between the new trees and the shrubs. These trees will not be cut and left to grow to full maturity within the hedgerow.

Years 1-5

4.21 Undertake two annual inspections in the early spring and autumn. Replace weak or diseased specimens with the same species and remove any perennial weeds around the base of the whips within first 5 years. Check canes and spiral guards are in good order and replace/repair as necessary. In Years 1-3, undertake a formative prune in the spring and autumn on the top of the hedge whips, undertaking cutting on a 45-degree angle around 1cm above a node/bud to encourage side shoots. Each subsequent cut will be 15cm above the former cut to ensure that the hedge whips do not become 'leggy'.

4.22 For the species-rich native hedgerow with trees, care must be taken whilst pruning to avoid cutting the tree whips to establish into full sized trees.

Years 6-30

4.23 In Year 6 remove spiral guards and canes and dispose of/recycle responsibly. Undertake two annual inspections of the hedges in the early spring and late winter, hedges will be lightly pruned to retain hedge structure (avoiding the new trees within the species-rich native hedgerow with trees).

Ditch creation

4.24 A suitable small landscaping machine will be used to cut and remove the turf from the required area of modified grassland. This turf will be carefully stored on-site and maintained whilst the ditch is dug. The turf will not be allowed to dry out and stored for a minimal period.

4.25 The ditch works will ideally take place during the late autumn following flowering or early spring when it is not overly wet with good ground conditions. Where works take place during summer, extra care must be taken to avoid turves drying out.

4.26 Once the ditch has been profiled and dug within the area of modified grassland, the turf will be carefully translocated to the base of the ditch, ensuring the soil below the turf is of a fine tilth with no obstructions; the turves will be carefully pressed down to ensure good contact with the exposed soil. The sides of the bank will be sown with 'Waters Edge 80/20 Grass & Wildflower Seed Mix' (https://green-tech.co.uk/product/pro-wet-moist-soils-80-grass-mix-wildflower-seed) at 5g/m^2. Any areas of broken turf will be oversown / re-seeded with the same seed mixture in the same quantity.

4.27 The turves within the ditch will be kept well-watered during the initial few months if works are undertaken at a time of year when it is warmer.

5. REFERENCES

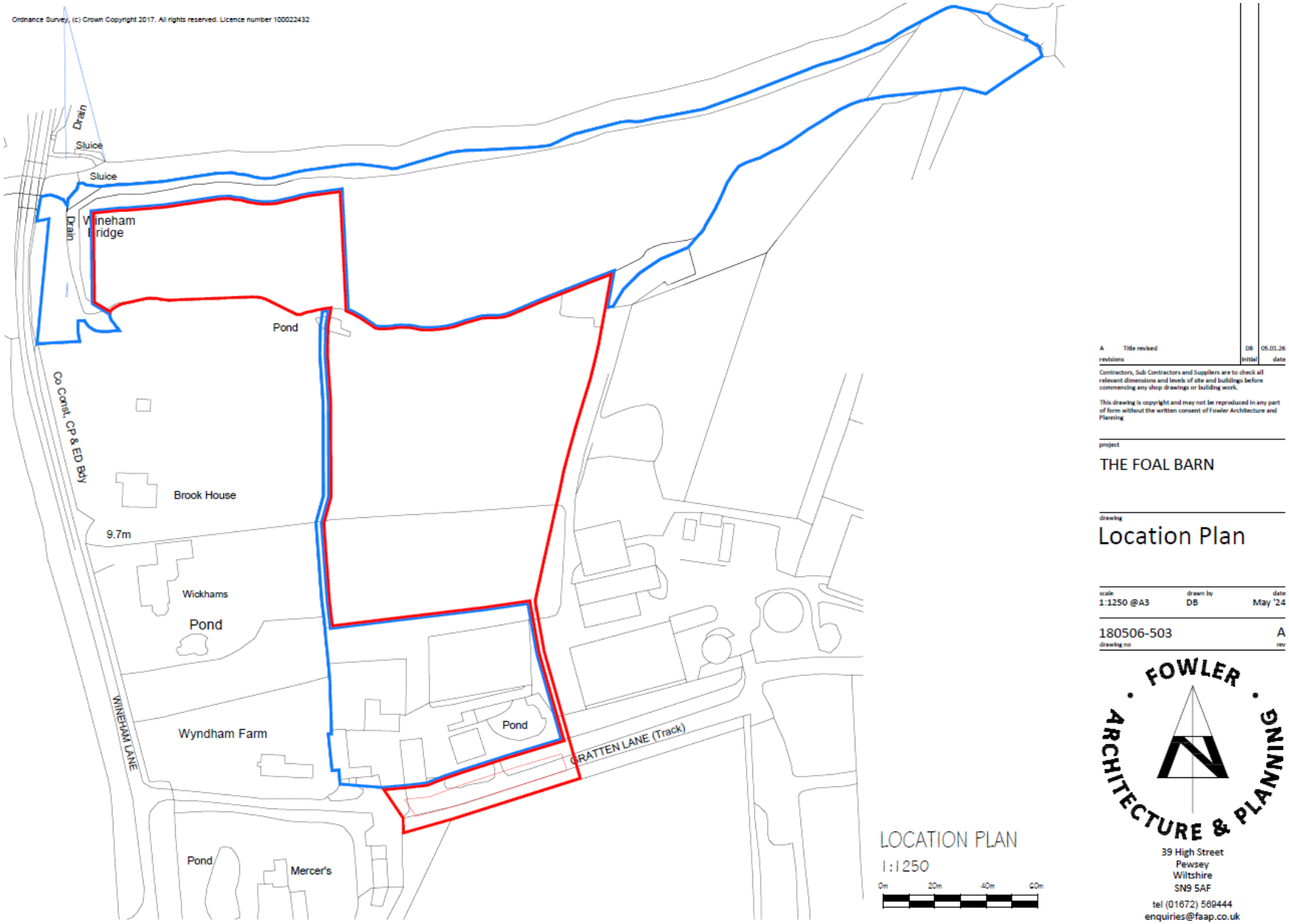
ABR Ecology Ltd (2026). *Ecology & Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment – The Foal Barn.*

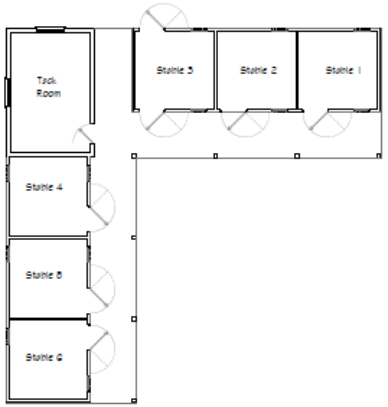
Department for Communities and Local Government (2005). *Circular 06/2005: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation – Statutory Obligations and their Impact within the Planning System*.

Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (2026). *The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).*

Mid Sussex District Council (2014). *Mid Sussex District Plan, Mid Sussex 2014-2036.*

Appendix A: Site location plan and proposals





Plan
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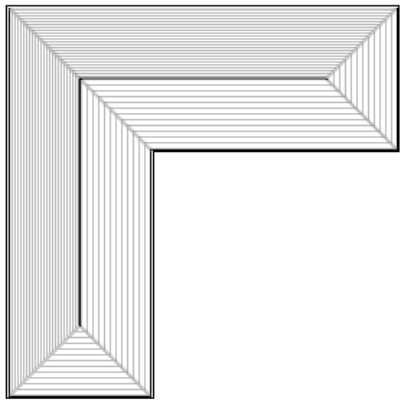

Roof Plan
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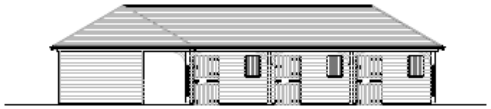

South Elevation
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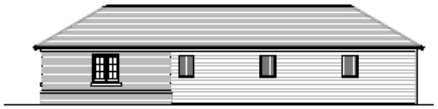

West Elevation
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North Elevation
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East Elevation
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revisions			date
C	Title revised	DB	05.05.26
B	redesign	DB	21.08.25
A	redesign	DB	22.05.25

Contractors, Sub Contractors and Suppliers are to check all relevant dimensions and levels of site and buildings before commencing any shop drawings or building work.

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project
THE FOAL BARN

drawing
Stable Design

scale	drawn by	date
1:100 @A1	db	April '24

drawing no	rev
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SECTION A-A
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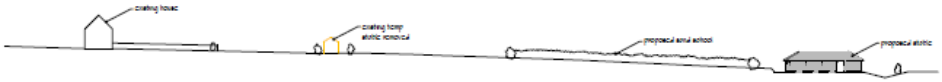

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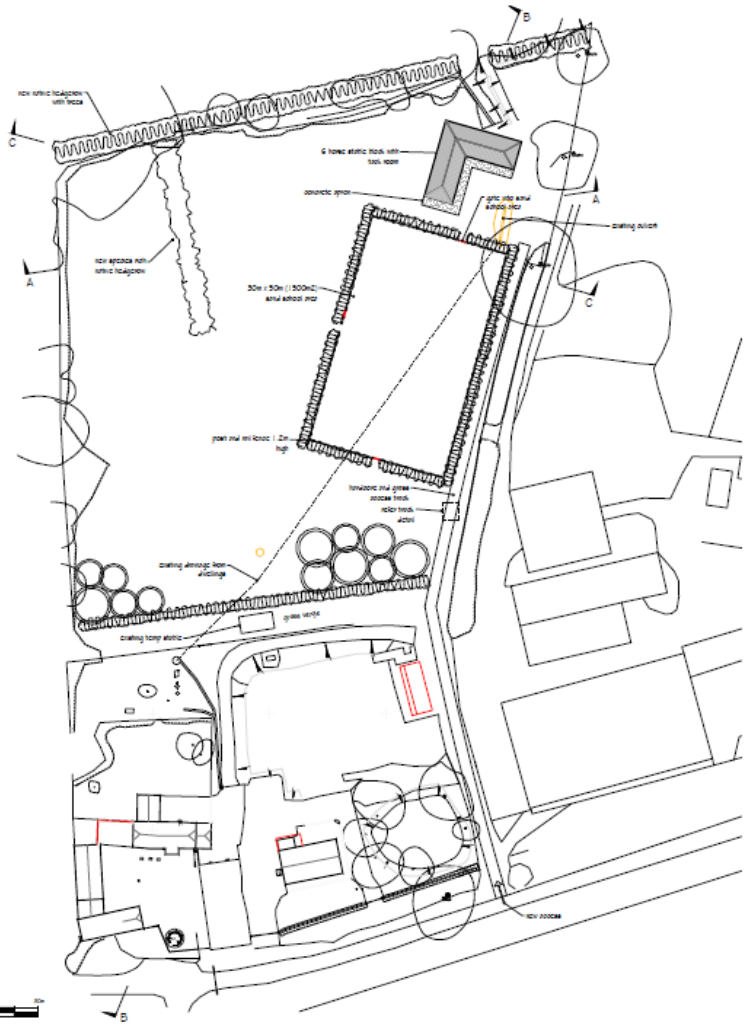

SITE PLAN
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New tree

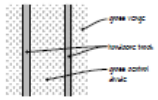
Existing tree

Tree to be removed

New hedgerow with trees

New species rich native hedgerow

Post and rail fence 1.2m high



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revisions		date
C Manege amended	DB	29.05.26
B Section C added	DB	27.04.26
A Title revised	DB	05.01.26

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project
THE FOAL BARN

drawing
Site Plan

scale	drawn by	date
1:500 @A1	db	Sept '25

drawing no	rev
180506-500	C

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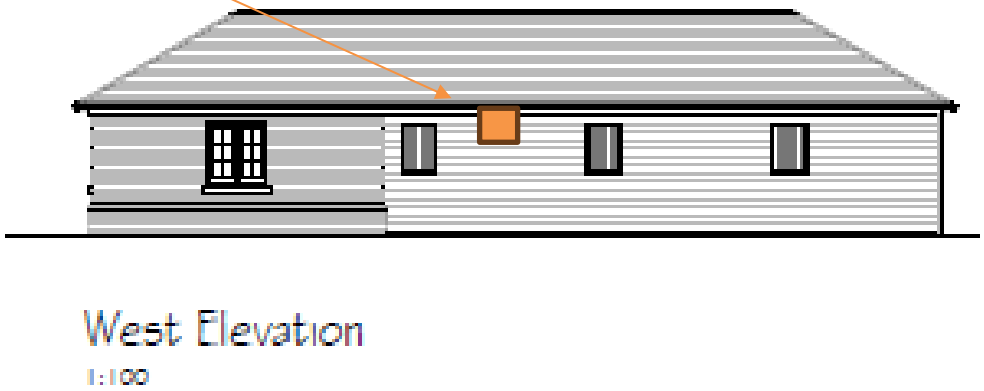
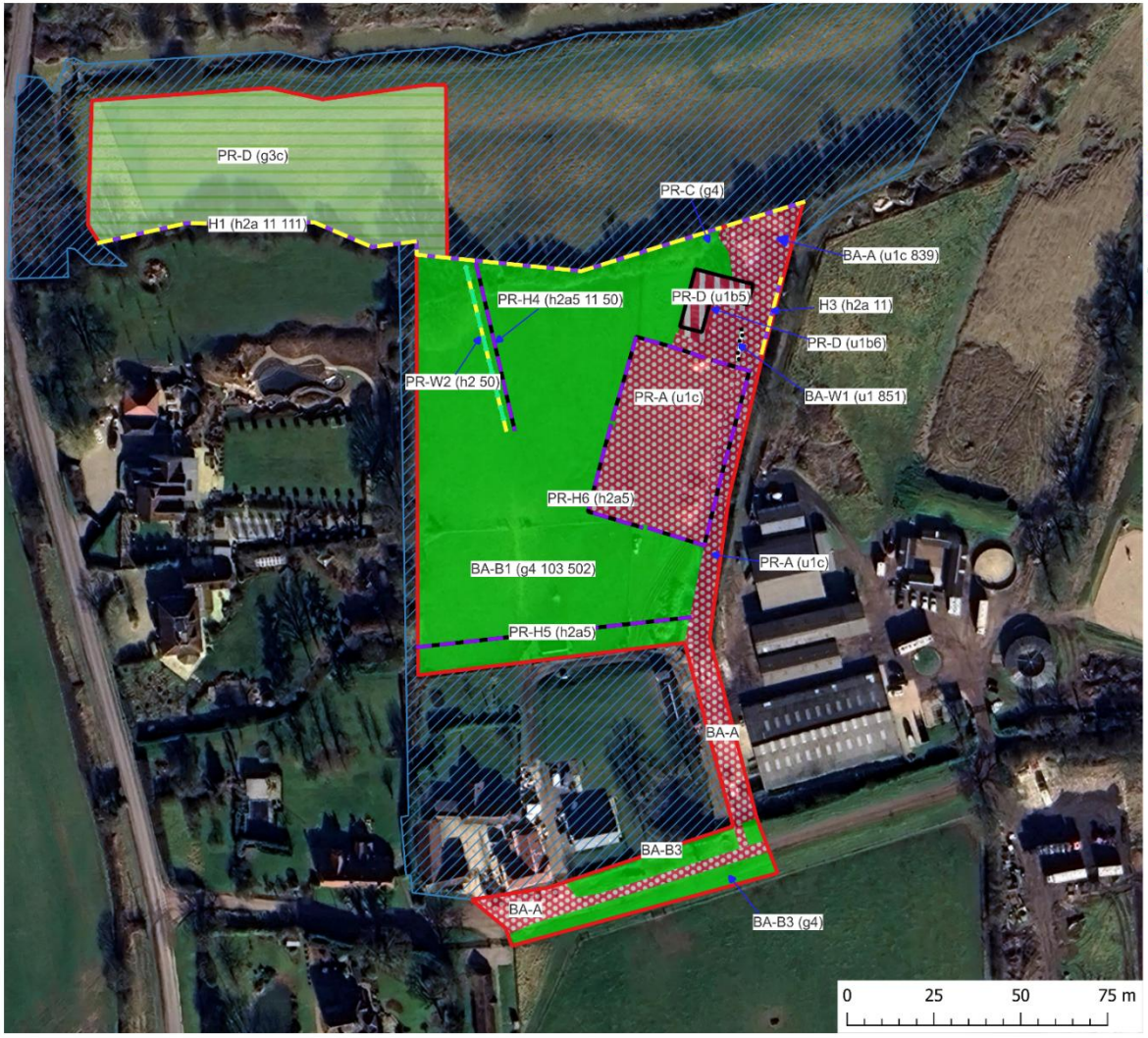
Appendix B: Biodiversity compensation, mitigation, and enhancement plan

One 'Vivara Pro WoodStone House Sparrow Nest Box' will be installed as close to the eaves as possible on the west elevation. These can be purchased by the applicant from: https://www.nhbs.com/vivara-pro-woodstone-house-sparrow-nest-box

Hedgehog fencing design example



Post-development habitat map



Legend

- Red Line Boundary
- Blue Line Boundary
- Building

Hedgerows

- Native hedgerow - associated with bank or ditch
- Native hedgerow with trees
- Species-rich native hedgerow
- Species-rich native hedgerow with trees - associated with bank or ditch

Watercourses

- Culvert
- Ditches

Habitats

- Artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface
- Developed land; sealed surface
- Modified grassland
- Other neutral grassland

Secondary codes:	Description:
11	Hedgerow with trees
50	Ditch
103	Horse grazed
111	Hedgebank
502	Seasonally wet
839	Track
851	Culvert

Project name:	The Foal Barn
Drawing title:	Post-development habitats map
Client:	Sarah Platt
Produced by:	EP
Scale:	1:1150 @A3
Date produced:	08/06/2026
Drawing no:	001-080626SP
Revision no:	00

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