

Biodiversity Enhancement and Management Plan

Application Details

Site: Ferring Country Centre, Rife Way, Ferring, Worthing, BN12 5JZ

Grid Reference: 508997, 102777

Site Area: ~ 4,500m²

Local Planning Authority: Arun District Council

Date: 4 August 2026

1. Introduction

This Biodiversity Enhancement and Management Plan accompanies the planning application for the change of use of an existing grass field, currently utilised on an occasional basis as an overflow car park, to a dedicated overflow car parking area.

The proposal seeks to formalise an established use of the land while delivering measurable biodiversity enhancements through the creation of new habitats and wildlife corridors.

The scheme includes:

- Establishment of a native horse-friendly hedgerow.
- Creation of a dedicated wildflower area.
- Long-term ecological management of these habitats.
- Protection of existing grassed areas outside designated parking zones.

2. Existing Site Conditions

The site comprises approximately ~ 4,500m² of managed grassland.

The field is currently used occasionally as an overflow car parking area during busy periods and events. As a result, the existing habitat is largely improved grassland of relatively limited ecological value.

An in-house botanical survey has been completed by a member of our dedicated horticulture team.

Full details can be found at Appendix 1 (Field Assessment).

A summary of the findings is as follows:

The botanical survey indicates that the field supports a limited range of common grassland species, with vegetation largely dominated by grasses and white clover. Other species recorded, including yarrow, creeping buttercup, ribwort plantain, greater plantain, dandelion, spear thistle and ragwort, are all widespread and commonly occurring in the local countryside. No rare, protected or notable plant species were identified, and there is no evidence of species-rich grassland or habitat of significant botanical importance. The survey findings suggest the site has relatively low biodiversity value, characteristic of improved or semi-improved grassland, with limited ecological distinctiveness

In addition, there are no ponds, woodland areas or significant ecological features that would be adversely affected by the proposal.

3. Biodiversity Enhancement Objectives

The objectives of the proposal are to:

- Increase habitat diversity across the site.
- Provide food sources for pollinating insects.
- Create habitat and nesting opportunities for birds.
- Improve landscape character.
- Establish wildlife corridors along field boundaries.
- Enhance biodiversity value compared with the current baseline condition.

4. Proposed Biodiversity Enhancements

4.1 Native Horse-Friendly Hedgerow

A new mixed native hedgerow will be planted along one field boundary.

As horses may have access to adjacent land, species known to be generally unsuitable or potentially harmful to horses will be avoided.

The proposed planting mix may include:

- Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*)
- Field Maple (*Acer campestre*)
- Hazel (*Corylus avellana*)
- Dog Rose (*Rosa canina*)

The following species will not be used:

- Yew
- Cherry Laurel
- Privet
- Laburnum

The hedgerow will be planted incrementally along the northern boundary edge, to ensure sustainability and suitability of specific tree species relative to the ground and environmental conditions.

Benefits include:

- Nesting habitat for birds.
- Shelter for small mammals.
- Improved connectivity for wildlife movement.
- Seasonal flowers and berries for pollinators and birds.

4.2 Wildflower Area Creation

An area will be permanently designated as a wildflower area.

This area will be excluded from parking use and managed specifically to encourage wildflowers and pollinating insects.

Suitable species include:

- Oxeye Daisy
- Common Knapweed
- Birds-foot Trefoil
- Selfheal
- Yarrow
- Red Campion
- Meadow Buttercup
- Field Scabious

The area will provide:

- Valuable nectar and pollen sources.
- Habitat for bees, butterflies and other pollinating insects.
- Improved ecological resilience.
- Enhanced visual appearance of the site.

4.3 Habitat Margins

Where practical, grass margins adjacent to the hedgerow and wildflower areas will be maintained with reduced mowing frequency.

These margins will create transitional habitat areas and support insect populations.

5. Establishment Works

All hedgerow planting shall be undertaken between November and March.

Wildflower establishment shall occur during appropriate seasonal conditions using a native seed mix suitable for West Sussex soils.

Any vegetation clearance works shall avoid the bird nesting season where possible.

6. Long-Term Management

Hedgerow

Years 1-2:

- Water during prolonged dry periods.
- Replace failed plants annually.
- Maintain weed-free planting strip.

Years 3 onwards:

- Trim every 2-3 years.
- Maintain a minimum height of 2 metres where practical.
- Allow flowering and berry production.

Wildflower Area

- One annual cut in late summer.
- Cuttings removed from site.
- Spot treatment of invasive weeds if required.
- Avoid fertilisers and pesticides.

7. Monitoring

An annual inspection shall be undertaken by the site manager to review:

- Hedgerow establishment.
- Wildflower area condition.
- Evidence of pollinator activity.
- Any required remedial management.

Failed planting shall be replaced during the next planting season.

8. Conclusion

The proposal formalises an existing overflow car parking use while delivering biodiversity enhancements that exceed the site's current ecological value.

The creation of a dedicated wildflower area together with a new horse-friendly native hedgerow will provide long-term habitat improvements for birds, pollinators and small mammals, ensuring a positive contribution to local biodiversity and landscape character.

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04/08/26

Appendix 1 – Site Survey

Species Present in the Carpark field – 4/11/2025 – Kallum McElroy

Inspection area - 0.5m² square

Number of inspected areas – 10

Inspected areas were randomly selected.

Area number	Species Present	Spread
1	• White Clover – <i>Trifolium repens</i> • Various grass species	Both the white clover and multiple species of grass were growing abundantly in the inspected area.
2	• Various grass species • White Clover – <i>Trifolium repens</i> • Greater Plantain – <i>Plantago major</i>	Both the white clover and multiple species of grass were growing abundantly in the inspected area. Only one specimen of <i>Plantago major</i> present
3	• White Clover – <i>Trifolium repens</i> • Creeping buttercup – <i>Ranunculus repens</i> • Yarrow – <i>Achillia millefolium</i> • Spear Thistle – <i>Cirsium vulgare</i> • Various Grass Species	Multiple grass species, white clover, buttercup and yarrow were growing in large numbers through the inspected area. Only one specimen of <i>Cirsium vulgare</i> was present
4	• White Clover – <i>Trifolium repens</i> • Various grasses • Creeping Buttercup – <i>Ranunculus repens</i> • Yarrow – <i>Achillia millefolium</i> • Ribwort plantain – <i>Plantago lanceolata</i>	Multiple grass species, white clover, buttercup and yarrow were growing in large numbers through the inspected area. Only 2 Ribwort plantain specimens present
5	• Buttercup – <i>Ranunculus repens</i> • Yarrow – <i>Achillia millefolium</i> • White Clover – <i>Trifolium repens</i> • Various grass species	A good, well dispersed mix of all recorded species.

Species Present in the Carpark field – 4/11/2025 – Kallum McElroy

6	• Ribwort plantain – <i>Plantago lanceolata</i> • White clover – <i>Trifolium repens</i> • Yarrow – <i>Achillia millefolium</i> • Greater Plantain – <i>Plantago major</i> • Various grass species • Dandelion – <i>Taraxacum officinale</i>	A good, well dispersed mix of at least 5 specimens of each species included inside of the inspected area, with the exception of <i>Taraxacum officinale</i> , which had only one specimen.
7	• Ribwort plantain – <i>Plantago lanceolata</i> • Greater Plantain – <i>Plantago major</i> • Various grass species • White clover – <i>Trifolium repens</i>	The grasses and white clover were heavily dispersed within the inspected area, whereas there were only 2 instances of <i>P. lanceolata</i> , and one instance of <i>P. major</i>
8	• Various grass species • White clover – <i>Trifolium repens</i>	The entire square was densely packed with grass and clover, so much so that there was nothing else growing in the inspected area
9	• Various grass species • White clover – <i>Trifolium repens</i> • Yarrow – <i>Achillia millefolium</i> • Ribwort plantain – <i>Plantago lanceolata</i> • Ragwort – <i>Jacobaea vulgaris</i>	The grass, yarrow and white clover covered most of the inspected area, with 2 instances of <i>P. lanceolata</i> and a single instance of <i>Jacobaea vulgaris</i> present
10	• Various grass species • Creeping Buttercup – <i>Ranunculus repens</i>	The entirety of the square was covered with grass, with a few pockets of creeping buttercup dispersed throughout.