



LANDSCAPE AND ECOLOGICAL MANAGEMENT PLAN: REPORT SUMMARY

LITTLE SEFTER FARM, PAGHAM, WEST SUSSEX

Client: Barfoot Farms Ltd.

Our reference: Little Sefter Farm

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1.0 BACKGROUND

1.1 Barfoots Farm Ltd is proposing to extend an existing agricultural barn (**Cover Photo**), with an associated balancing pond (Application Number: P/38/21/PL). Arun District Council permitted full planning permission on 21st July 2021, which included Conditions 4 and 5 as detailed below:

4. *No development above ground floor level shall take place until a detailed Landscape and Ecology Maintenance Plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. The Plan should include the detailed design of the proposed mitigation measures set out at sections 4 & 5 of the Ecological Appraisal by GPM Ecology (08/03/21). The development shall then be carried out in accordance with the approved scheme and timetable.*

Reason: To ensure adequate protection and enhancement of biodiversity interests in accordance with the provisions of the NPPF and policies ENV DM3 & ENV DM5 of the Arun Local Plan.

5. *No development above ground floor level shall take place until there has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority, a landscaping scheme including details of all new hard & soft landscaping and details of trees and hedgerows to be retained, together with measures for their protection during the course of the development. The tree planting should be introduced in a form that is as mature as practically possible so as to ensure it has the desired effect of screening & softening the building on completion.*

The Landscaping details should include mitigation measures proposed in the Ecological Appraisal by GPM Ecology (08/03/21) including the woodland creation, hedge planting, area of grass field margin in the field to the north and balancing pond & ditch outfall.

The approved landscaping details shall be carried out in the first planting and seeding season, following the occupation of the buildings or the completion of the development, whichever is the sooner, and any trees or plants which, within a period of five years from the completion of development, die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased, shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species, unless the Local Planning Authority gives written consent to any variation.

Reason: In the interests of amenity, biodiversity, heritage and the environment of the development in accordance with policies D DM1, LAN DM1, HER DM1, ENV DM3 & ENV DM5 of the Arun Local Plan.

1.2 During September 2021 Sauterelle Garden & Landscape Design and GPM Ecology were instructed by Barfoot Farm Ltd to develop a Landscape and Ecological Maintenance Plan (LEMP) to fulfil the above Conditions.

1.3 In summary the LEMP demonstrates that if implemented to include planting of hedgerow, woodland, arable grass-verge and reeds within the balancing pond as shown within the **Landscape and Ecological Maintenance Plan, Planting Schedule Ref P/38/21/PL**, dated 27th September 2021, (see **Figures 1** and **2**) and as detailed within this document then the development will provide a net biodiversity gain to the application site and surrounds, fulfilling the Conditions as listed above.

2.0 DESIGN AND MAINTENANCE OF BIODIVERSITY IN THE LANDSCAPE PLAN

Aims and Objectives

2.1 The principle aim of this Landscape Ecological Management Plan is to protect and enhance biodiversity features on the site, as required by Condition 4 and 5 of the planning approval.

2.2 These aims will be achieved with the following management prescriptions:

1. Planting of native shrub-tree species and a native hedge to compensate loss of a planted wood,
2. Create an area of 80m x 6m arable grass-verge, to compensate the loss of Stewardship verge,
3. Create an area of potential water-vole habitat and implement a 4-year monitoring program of water-voles and farmland birds associated with these newly created habitats.

Summary of Biodiversity Gain

2.3 The loss of 0.02ha of arable grass verge, planted-up with woodland within the Landscape scheme will be compensated by creating 0.05ha of arable verge within the field north of (see **Photo 1**). The loss of 15 to 20-year-old planted woodland (0.12ha), will be compensated by planting new woodland and a 225m length of hedgerows (see **Photo 2**) covering an area of 0.16 ha. This will result in a +0.03ha gain in arable verge and +0.04ha gain in wood/hedge-cover. In addition, reed planting (wetland biodiversity enhancement) will be included within the balancing pond.

Water-vole maintenance and farmland bird monitoring

2.4 The balancing pond will require maintenance during winter period to ensure leaf litter and pond plants do not impede the functionality of this flood alleviation feature. The pond will be lined with puddle clay and planted with common reed *Phragmites australis*, within two small pockets (each about 4-8m² in area) in the opposite corners of the pond to the intake pipe and outfall ditch, in order to maintain flow and allow the feature to function as a balancing pond. They will be planted as cut stems during May period around the drawdown zone of the pond, to the following specification (SWT 2013¹):

- Harvest reed stems locally, cutting into 20-50 cm lengths, with 2-6 nodes (thickenings on stem)
- Trim the leaves from the upper stem to reduce the need for water whilst the stem roots
- Keep stem bases wet, plant as soon as possible into soil covered by 10-20 mm of water
- Plant stem cuttings so that a node is close to the soil surface (new roots develop at the nodes)
- Plant at densities of 10-15 cuttings per metre square
- Water levels must not overtop the stems during the winter following planting, as this will kill them (dead reed stems act as a snorkel in winter!)
- Successful stems initially look dead but soon send out roots and shoots

2.5 Water-vole monitoring will take place during May, with a base-line survey during Spring 2022, to assess water-vole activity 1km up and downstream along Pagham Rife, from Little Sefter ditch outfall. Once the works are complete reeds will be planted into the ditch during the initial baseline survey visit, using reeds cut and transplanted from the adjacent Rife. Survey visits to assess water-vole activity will take place during May, in the subsequent three-years, after the baseline survey.

2.6 Farmland bird monitoring will take place at the same time and over the same period as the water-vole monitoring, i.e. one dawn survey visit in May to assess habitat development of the new arable grass-verge, hedgerow and wood-shrub areas and birds observed breeding in these areas over a four year period after completion of works.

¹ SWT (2013), How To Create & Manage Reedbeds, Sussex Wildlife Trust, March 2013





Photographs: of key Ecological Features to be Created at Little Sefter



Photo 1: Area of 225m hedgerow planting, to part compensate for the loss of 0.12ha of native shrubs



Photo 2: Area of arable verge to be widened by a further 6m to compensate for the loss of existing verge.