

Via Email

To [REDACTED] – Director Hounds and Bounds

10<sup>th</sup> November 2025

Re: Lands off Swallowtail Road - Arborfield - Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (HMMP)

Dear [REDACTED]

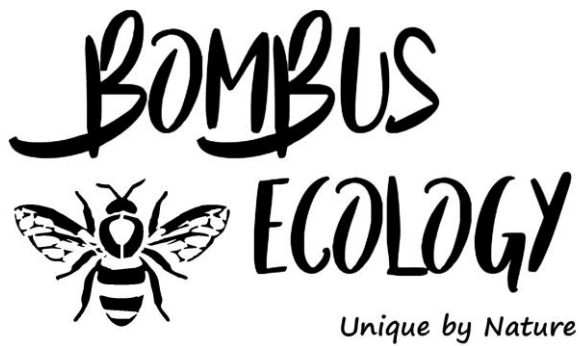
This short letter report will provide a Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (HMMP) to satisfy and discharge a pre-commencement Planning Condition No 4. associated with the full planning approval for the above site.

The original ecological value of is fully described in the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal issued by Bombus Ecology in May 2024 following on site survey in April 2024:

*“The site consists of a small to medium size arable/silage field (3.36 ha) bordered by hedgerows, mature trees. The development area (Site) is a small field that is dominated by, meadow oat grass *Avenula pratensis*, perennial rye grass *Lolium perenne*, annual meadow grass *Poa annua*, common dock *Rumex obtusifolium* and ribwort plantain *Plantago lanceolata*. The site is bounded by hawthorn *Crateagus monogyna* agg. dominant hedgerow managed at time of survey by flail”*



Figure 1 Surveyed Area

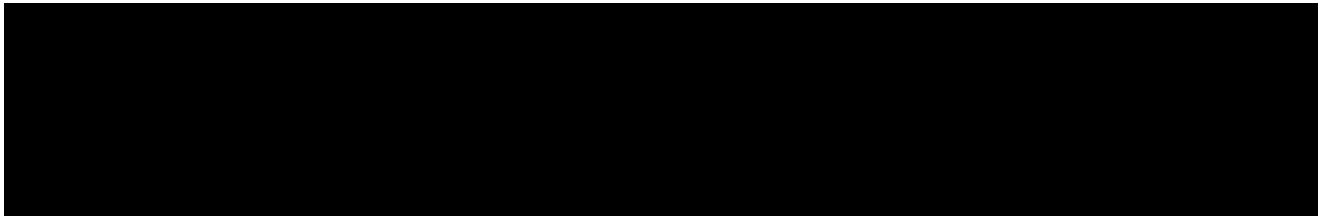


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The newly created areas from Arborfield Final Architecture Plan 02-10 as submitted to planning are as follows:

- Area of hardstanding/car park
- Lengths of native hedgerow
- Planting a 6m wide area of Miscanthus (Elephant Grass *Cenchrus purpureus*) approximately 170m length

The site will also be fenced with 2m post and stock netted fencing.



The native hedgerow will be planted as whips at 6 plants per meter

- 2 X Blackthorn *Prunus spinosa*
- 1 X Hawthorn *Crateagus monogyna*
- 1 X Field Maple *Acer campetstre*
- 1 X Dog Rose *Rosa canina*
- 1 X Beech *Fagus sylvatica*

Planted with a crosscut i.e. two spade marks to a spade blade depth then heeled in with a small stake and rabbit guard.

The new hedgerow lengths will be managed following the prescription outlined below:

**Year One** –check the hedgerow and replace any plants failing to thrive and check rabbit protection.



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**Year Three** – Inspect and Replace any dead stems in hedgerow. If hedgerow thriving check the rabbit protection.

**Year Five** - Check if plants are producing fruit/nuts as this is an indicator of health. – Remove rabbit protection from hedgerow

**Year 10** – If hedgerow is established, consider 'laying' the hedgerow instead of control by flail – this will thicken the hedgerow at the base and establish the optimal shape for the hedge increasing the nectar and fruit production within the hedge thus increasing actual biodiversity/biota increase.

Further management to the hedgerow would include once established:

Pruning – hand pruning of selected areas can increase the overall density of the hedgerow and thus encourage the 'crop' of blossoms, fruit/nuts.

Hedge laying as opposed to flail control as outlined above in Year 10 – when a hedge is established 'laying' the hedgerow increases lower structures to form as opposed to the more modern method of cutting using a flail which leaves the base open.

Any cutting should be carried out late winter/early spring to retain maximum utilisation of berries by predominantly birds and mammals over the mid-winter period.

If the hedgerow was long enough there would be a recommendation for a rotational cut – however this hedgerow is relatively short i.e. really too short for a rotational cut

The elephant grass divider will be planted utilising approximately 1500 plants to cover the approximate area.

- Dig over the area first to aerate the soil and remove any obvious weeds.
- Keep the area around your new plant clear of weeds and excess growth from neighbouring plants.
- This is a species that is not flood tolerant so need to be mindful of this
- Year on Year management will entail replacement of dead plants and eventually cutting to manage height to a required length.



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This is a non-native species that will provide feeding and nesting opportunities for passerine birds once established.

The Car Park will be developed with the aim of providing a clean and safe car park for users with signage to inform them about the facilities and the wildlife that inhabits the site. To this end the following prescriptions will be actioned:

- Bins to be regularly emptied. To avoid smell and rubbish blowing around the site and surrounding areas
- Signage to be erected and maintained to advise users of the facility and about the wildlife of the site.

The main existing habitat that will require maintenance is the grassland:

This should be cut either regularly across the whole site or in a figure of eight pattern to provide an aesthetic approach. In either case the arisings should be removed the net result of this will eventually over time deplete the overall nutritional value of the grassland which will provide a greater diversity within the sward as the dominant grasses are replaced. If the figure of eight type pattern is chosen then the whole site should be cut once in late August/early September and the arisings removed as stated above will eventually increase the diversity. This will also prevent scrub encroachment.

The original hedgerows that bounded site will continue to be managed as they are now because they will be the other side of 2m stock/animal proof fence

### **Management and Responsibility**

Hounds & Bound will have overall responsibility for implementing this plan including all funding and legal responsibilities.

An Ecologist will carry out a monitoring visit after two years of operation – two years is enough time for the new habitats to show establishment rather than after the first year, a letter report will be submitted to the council detailing the works that have been undertaken plus any changes to the original plan as deemed necessary by the ecologist – Management Plans are active documents that need to be reviewed regularly to ascertain are they working towards a desired outcome.



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If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me

Yours Sincerely

David

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