Development Management – Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: AWDM/0247/24

Site: Units 2-3 Downlands Retail Park, Worthing

Proposal: Discharge of Condition 13 Ecology & Landscape Enhancement of Planning Permission AWDM/2026/22

Recommendation: Approve

The condition requires:

> **13) Ecology & Landscape Enhancement:**
> The development hereby approved shall not be brought into use until further details of a programme of ecological and landscape enhancements to the wider retail park, based on the details set out in the design and access statement, have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved detail.
> **Reason**: In the interests of sustainability and to help address the climate emergency.

Planning History:

AWDM/2026/22: External alterations, amalgamation and refurbishment of existing Units 2 & 3, including associated works to the car park including new trolley bay and servicing areas and widening of use to enable the sale of food and drinks, and associated non-food goods from the Unit. **Approved 20-09-2023**

Consultations:

Tree Officer: No Comment.

Relevant Planning Policies:

Worthing Local Plan 2020 - 2036
National Planning Policy Framework (CLG 2023)
Planning Practice Guidance (CLG)

Planning Assessment

Submitted: Ecological Design Strategy ECO-REP-001-01-EDS Revision 01. Lizard Consultants, 20th February 2023.

Planning permission was granted in September 2023, following resolution by the Committee of 12th July 2023. Minutes of the meeting refer to the importance of maximising provisions for biodiversity. Condition 13 was applied to ensure this. Whilst policy DM18, which requires a 20% biodiversity net gain for previously developed sites, does not apply to changes of use, there is a requirement under part b) of the policy that development should lead to enhancement.

The application referred to biodiversity enhancements to the existing landscaped buffer with tree belt, which lies to the east and south of the retail park. The strategy includes these provisions and gives their number and detailed specifications including bird & bat boxes, log piles for invertebrates, and solitary bee 'hotels' and hedgehog shelters.

The Strategy also describes maintenance, with several of these provisions requiring little or no routine maintenance but visual inspection and for instance, replenishment of log pile material. Annual monitoring would take place over the first three years and in years 5,7,10 and five yearly for at least 30 years. An informative can reflect this and that an ecologist's report be prepared at each review, and be made available to the Council on request.

Recommendation: Approve

Case Officer:	Stephen Cantwell	Date: 17/06/2024
Authorised by:	James Appleton	Date: 21/06/24

Informative - Biodiversity Monitoring

The applicant is reminded that annual monitoring is required of the ecological compensation and enhancement measures contained in the approved Ecological Design Strategy. This should take place over the first three years following the development hereby approved and thereafter in years 5, 7,10 and five yearly for at least 30 years. The ecologist's report should be prepared at each review, and be made available to the Council on request.