

Arborweald Environmental Planning Consultancy

LANDSCAPE, ARBORICULTURE & ECOLOGY
SURVEYS* PLANS* ASSESSMENTS* MITIGATION* SOLUTIONS &
METHODOLOGY*

Woodland Enterprise Centre, Hastings Road, Flimwell, East Sussex TN5 7PR

Telephone: (01580) 879 221 Mobile 07530326017

E-mail: david.arborweald@outlook.com Website: www.tree-planning.co.uk



Ecological Enhancement Scheme Pursuant to
Sevenoaks District Council Planning Approval
Condition 4: Decision Notice 20/02676/FUL

Residential Property: Pound Hill, Chart Lane, Brasted, Kent TN16 1LR

March 2021

Surveyors: D K-Spall BSc (Hons) Ecol., FDS Arb., MArborA. &
A. Livingstone DTLLS Level 6 (Arb. & Countryside), ND Level 4 Arb.

Report Author: D K-Spall

Checked in Accordance with British Standards, Published Guidance and Industry Best Practice by: D K-Spall

DKS/883 Ecology

Contents

1.0. Introduction.....	3
1.1. Legislation.....	3
1.2. Relevant Plans and Documents.....	3
2.0. Rationale	3
3.0. SDC Planning Condition 4.....	4
3.1. Planning Condition 4	4
3.1.1. Enhancement in Accordance with AEPC Ecological Appraisals	4
4.0. Ecological Implementation Timetable	4
Table 1: Development and Ecological Measures / Design Strategy Timetable	5
4.1. Pre-development Commencement Work	5
4.1.1. Bats	5
4.1.2. Nesting Birds	6
4.1.3. Nest Searches and Resulting Actions.....	6
4.1.4. Nest Protection Measures.....	6
5.0. Bat Roost Enhancement	7
5.1. Artificial Bat Roost Specification and Placement.....	7
Fig 1: Schwegler 1 FF Bat Box.....	7
Figure 2: Schwegler 2FN Bat Box	8
6.0. Conclusion	8
Appendix 1: Ecological Enhancement Plan.....	9
Appendix 2: Ecological Watching Brief Audit Form	10
References.....	12

1.0. Introduction

Arborweald Environmental Planning Consultancy (AEPC) has been commissioned by Mr Simon Lambert (property owner), to provide an Ecological Enhancement Scheme pursuant to Sevenoaks District Council (SDC) Planning Condition 4. AEPC has conducted surveying and provision of this report for the purposes of the enhancement of biodiversity in accordance with British Standard 42020: Biodiversity – Code of practice for planning and development (BS42020:2013) and as part of required measures to discharge the planning condition. This report has been based on studying the SDC Approval Decision Notice with Planning Condition, relevant plans, a thorough ecological site assessment (AEPC Reports; DKS/590, 2018; DKS/819, 2020) and consultation with Mr Simon Lambert, resulting in, ecological enhancement measures being informed by appropriate ecological evaluation, site conditions and effective biodiversity enhancement measures. This approach, therefore, shall achieve sustainable biodiversity enhancements in association with the proposed development. This report forms part of a planning condition package and should be assessed in conjunction with other referenced reports including the AEPC Landscape Scheme Report (DKS/883 *Landscape*, March 2021).

AEPC is a multidisciplinary environmental planning consultancy qualified to provide a professional service in the fields of arboriculture, ecology and the natural landscape. It is led by its founder; David Kavanagh-Spall who is a trained Arboriculturist and Ecologist, and professional member of the Arboriculture Association. David has over 23 years' industry experience. Alex Livingstone has over 25 years' experience in the Arboriculture, Forestry and Countryside / Ecology Management industry including, commercial, charity and educational sectors. Assessments, findings and statements are based upon professional qualifications, experience and knowledge, and published professional guidance/recommendations and legislation.

Acronyms, names and dates in brackets acknowledge referenced material; full references can be found at the end of the report.

1.1. Legislation

Wildlife and Countryside Act *as amended* (1981), Countryside and Rights of Way Act (2000), The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2010/2014) and The Protection of Badgers Act (1981).

1.2. Relevant Plans and Documents

All plans and documents referenced within SDC Planning Approval Notice (20/02676/FUL).

2.0. Rationale

This report provides information based on habitat evaluation with measures to enhance habitat to the benefit of biodiversity. The **purpose** of this report is to provide

the methodology and recommendations to conserve habitat within the context of the approved development and to create new opportunities for the enhancement of biodiversity. The **objectives** being, conservation of habitat and net habitat enhancement through appropriate landscape treatment, achieved through development area planting in accordance with the Planning Approval Notice's Condition 3 (DKS/883 *Landscape*) and utilising the property's suitable habitat for the installation of bat boxes. No liability is accepted for any costs claims or losses arising from the use of this report and survey.

3.0. SDC Planning Condition 4

SDC have provided an Approved Planning Notice (20/02676/FUL), through development proposals meeting the relevant planning policies which were supported by consultant assessments in specialist areas including, work undertaken by AEPC (DKS/819, 2020 and DKS/819a, 2020). Under Planning Condition 4, further ecological work is required for the **purpose** of general habitat conservation and with an **objective** of net enhancement of biodiversity.

3.1. Planning Condition 4

SDC Condition 4 states: *"No development shall be carried out above the damp course of the hereby approved development until a scheme to promote ecological enhancement has been submitted and approved in writing by the local planning authority with a scheme of implementation. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details and shall be maintained thereafter."* This report takes account of Condition 4 and ecological appraisals and evaluations undertaken (DKS/590, 2018; DKS/819, 2020).

3.1.1. Enhancement in Accordance with AEPC Ecological Appraisals

Measures for habitat planting enhancement are specified within AEPC's Landscape Scheme submission (DKS/883 *Landscape*, 2021) and include, shrub and hedgerow planting, enhancing green networks for foraging, nesting and commuting (Table 1). The nett sum of planting and established garden habitat provides an increased plant mass and diversity and according enhanced habitat. The property was particularly assessed as having potential for bats (DKS/819, 2020) and accordingly, appropriate bat boxes are to be erected prior to the completion of development (Table 1). The property owner is responsible for ensuring that the Ecology Enhancement Scheme is implemented and in accordance with the implementation timetable (Table 1).

4.0. Ecological Implementation Timetable

In order for measures to provide effective ecological enhancement they shall be implemented in compliance with a specified timetable (Table 1).

Table 1: Development and Ecological Measures / Design Strategy Timetable

Planning Condition Accordance	Activity	Comments	Date
Condition 3	Landscape Scheme Planting (AEPC, DKS/883 <i>Landscape Report</i> , March 2021)	In association with the Planning Approved development; increased plant mass & plant diversity including hedgerow & shrubs / trees to be planted & established.	Planting to be undertaken in the period between September – March & when practically possible during and / or post construction completion.
Condition 4	Erection of 4 bat boxes	Bat boxes shall be erected on to 4 mature oak trees. The property's long rear garden, locates these boxes in trees unaffected by property artificial light & close to trees external to the property in areas of optimal bat habitat.	Bat boxes can be erected at any time during development and shall be erected prior to the completion of development.

4.1. Pre-development Commencement Work

Ecological assessments have found an absence of presence of notable and statutorily protected species. The property, however, was found to offer the potential for bats and birds. Accordingly, a precautionary approach shall take place through the development process, with regards to bats and birds.

4.1.1. Bats

Whilst it is envisaged and remains the case, that the dwelling will remain absent of roosting bats, a pre-development commencement internal and external inspection shall take place, in accordance with an appropriately cautious approach. The timing of the survey is important in terms of bat lifecycle and according use of roost types and, to ensure minimal delays in development progress. Where development is to take place in spring – summer; **April** is the earliest that a survey shall be undertaken and only where the commencement of development is programmed to start in April; in particular, transitional roosts can be identified in April or potentially early maternity roosts. Where development is programmed in from May to August; a **May** survey shall take place; **early May** if the development is programmed in May or **mid – late May** if development is programmed between June and August. Surveying in May will ensure that the dwelling can be inspected for presence/absence of roosting bats particularly, maternity roosts. Where development is proposed for autumn; **August** or **September (September if more clement weather / temperatures support)** survey shall take place. Surveying in August or September (as close to development commencement as possible and practicable) will ensure that the dwelling can be inspected for presence/absence of roosting bats including young, this is also the time for bat swarming around important mating sites (unlikely at property).

Where indicators of presence were found, a number of licensed emergence/re-entry surveys would have to be conducted to identify species, ascertain use and estimate

population(s). Survey data would then be utilised to help inform a mitigation plan and obtain the legally required licence to facilitate development.

Where bat absence continues to be confirmed, development can progress with no further bat surveying required unless development were planned during the winter period. Whilst there have been no indicators of hibernating bats and suboptimal habitat for such; a hibernation survey would precede winter development.

4.1.2. Nesting Birds

Where development is due to commence during the nesting season (February – September *inclusive*), a search for active nests will be undertaken with, findings recorded in AEPC's audit sheets (Appendix 2). Time of development commencement will be dependent upon the findings of the nest searches.

4.1.3. Nest Searches and Resulting Actions

Where active nests are present on site; development will be postponed or limited to protect the nest(s) and ensure that it is not disturbed.

Postponement of development: Will occur where two things cannot be guaranteed: Firstly, a 2m non-disturbance zone cannot be provided around the nest(s) and secondly unfettered access to continuous habitat from the nest(s) including trees cannot be provided. In such a circumstance, development cannot commence until chicks have fledged and are independent from on-site parent reliance.

Limited development operations: Development operations can commence but in limited fashion where, active nests are present. Development operations must provide a minimum 2m non-disturbance zone around nests and provide unfettered access to continuous habitat from the nest(s) including trees and shrubs. Operations can only commence in previously protected areas, once chicks have fledged and are independent from on-site parent reliance.

Where there are no active nests present, development operations can commence however, ecological methodology must be accorded with, where new nests are built during development.

4.1.4. Nest Protection Measures

Where it is appropriate for development to commence with active nests on site, the following methodology shall be accorded with:

Active nests within site, must be protected by barriering / coning off the nests and connective habitat; ensuring that there is a minimum 2m non-disturbance zone around nests.

5.0. Bat Roost Enhancement

The wider off-property surrounding grassland and woodland habitat continues to provide suitable habitat for a number of species including Leisler *Nyctalus leisleri* and noctule *Nyctalus noctula*, with garden trees on the northern boundary providing ideal artificial roost locations for these species (Appendix 1). A group of 4 oak trees run along the northern boundary; connectivity to the approved development (west of trees) is fragmented however, connectivity to trees external to the site to the east, within grassland to woodland edge habitat is present. This edge type habitat is the optimal roost location on site most favouring Leisler and noctule bat species. This area of the garden is closer to the rear boundary than the dwelling area and consequently will not be exposed to artificial light.

5.1. Artificial Bat Roost Specification and Placement

Schwegler bat boxes (or similar) which provide roosting for varied species but particularly Leisler (Fig 1) and noctule (Fig 2), to be attached on the south to south west side of the group of oak trees (Appendix 1) and located where there are relatively unobstructed flight lines into the artificial roosts, where they receive partial direct sunlight at some stage of the day and located between 4 – 6m above ground level. Four boxes to be attached (two of each type) ideally to 4 trees at different heights and aspects (where possible) to provide maximum potential for bat roost utilisation. Artificial roosts should be erected in accordance with the implementation timetable (Table 1).



The Schwegler 1FF box is sufficiently spacious as a summer or nursery roost site & its open bottom facilitates free falling waste & accordingly, no cleaning is required. Suitable for tree hanging.

Box material is a blend of clay & concrete (Woodcrete); no leaking, warping or cracking & has relative longevity lasting >20 years. Woodcrete's breathable material maintains a stable internal temperature. A roughened rear wood panel helps to compensate for seasonal weather fluctuations & depending on species temperature requirements, the Woodcrete (cooler) or wood (warmer) surfaces can be selected by the bat species utilising the box.

The attributes of the box provide opportunities to a number of species, including Leisler and noctule. Please be aware that once bats utilise the box, they may only be disturbed by licensed bat workers.

Specification: Height: 43cm x Width: 27cm x Depth: 14cm with an entrance hole of 12cm x 24cm.

Attachment: Schwegler Aluminium Tree Friendly Nail.

Fig 1: Schwegler 1 FF Bat Box



A 2 entrance box; front & rear; facilitating rear entrance & front exit. Domed roof facilitates warmth providing roosting clusters. Open bottom facilitates free falling waste & accordingly, no cleaning is required. Suitable for tree hanging.

Box material is a blend of clay & concrete (Woodcrete); no leaking, warping or cracking & has relative longevity lasting >20 years. Woodcrete's breathable material maintains a stable internal temperature.

Box attributes favour noctule species.

Please be aware that once bats utilise the box, they may only be disturbed by licensed bat workers.

Specification: Height: 36cm x Diameters: 16cm x 14cm, with entrance holes of >3cm x 9cm

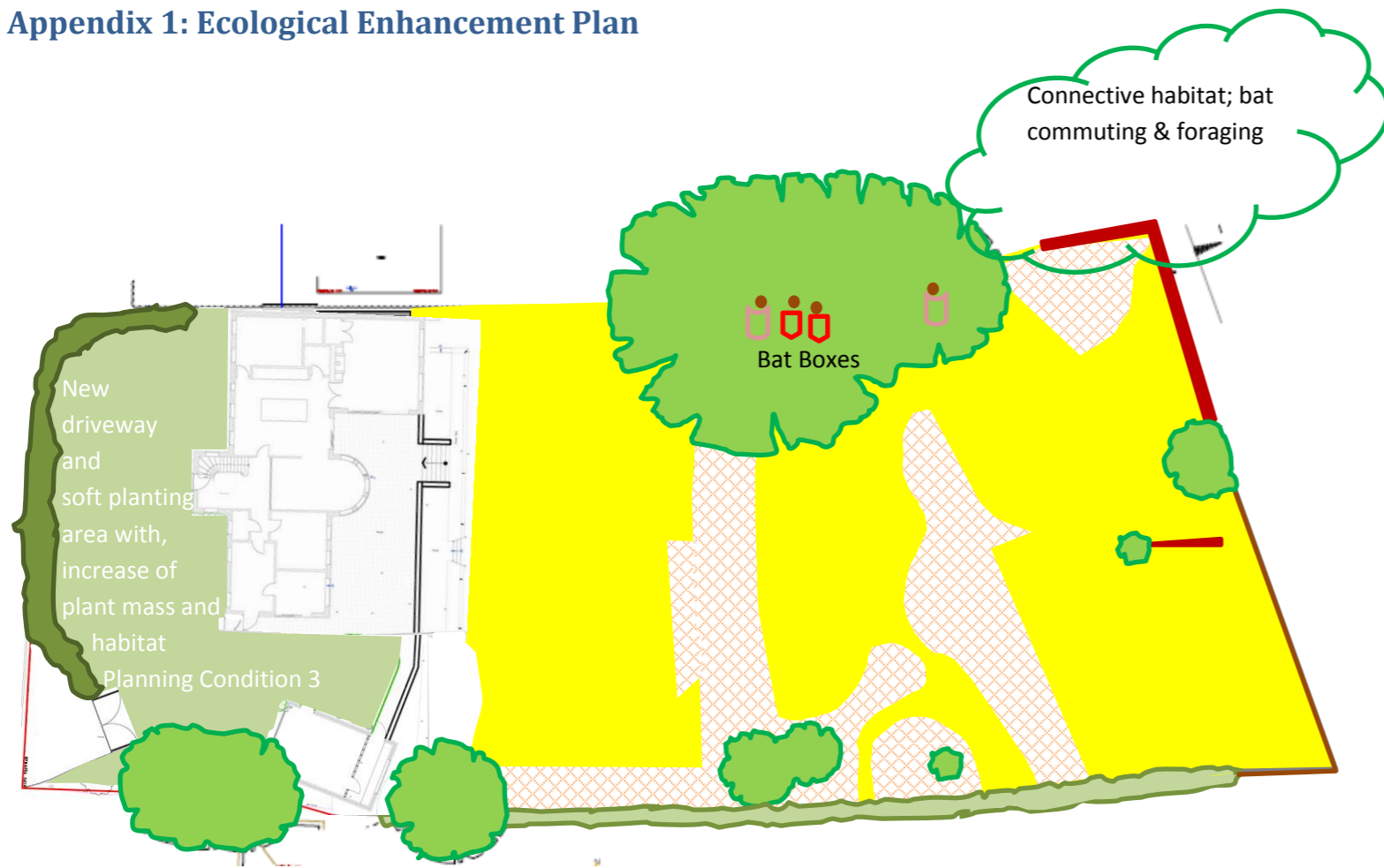
Attachment: Schwegler Aluminium Tree Friendly Nail.

Figure 2: Schwegler 2FN Bat Box

6.0. Conclusion

Development of the site in full compliance with this Scheme for Enhancement of the Site for Biodiversity Purposes, will help ensure that, the **purpose** of habitat and fauna protection, impact mitigation and habitat creation is met. Also, the **objective** of providing mitigation through the development process and development associated biodiversity enhancement is met. Therefore, we respectfully request that the Local Planning Authority approve this report as being in accordance with Planning Condition 4 of the planning approval and that it therefore helps in discharging the Condition.

Appendix 1: Ecological Enhancement Plan



Key	
Trees / Large Shrubs:	
New Common Yew Hedgerow:	
Deciduous Hedgerow:	
Amenity lawn:	
Shrub and flower beds	
Bat boxes located in 4 English oak & within optimal garden area: Schwegler 2FN and Schwegler 1FF .	
Client and Project	
Simon Lambert.	
Planning Approved domestic development; house remodel & extension	
Not to-scale	
Drawn by: David Kavanagh-Spall	
Date: 18 March 2021	
Reference: DKS/88S Ecology Planning Condition 4	

Arborweald Environmental Planning Consultancy
Hastings Road
Flimwell
East Sussex TN5 7PR

Telephone: 01580 879 221 Mobile: 07530326017

Email: david.arborweald@outlook.com Website: www.tree-planning.co.uk

Appendix 2: Ecological Watching Brief Audit Form

Company:

Inspector:

Site:

Reference Number:

Inspection Date:

Development Status

Pre-development

Development phase

Development paused

Status of Protection Measures

Where required previous remedial measures implemented

All protection measures in place in full compliance with the Landscape (Arboricultural) and Ecological Reports (LER)

All protection measures not in full compliance with the LER

Remedial measures required due to the following outside the development area:

Ground contamination Changed soil levels Excavations Vehicle movements

Cement washings Material storage Water run off Ground compaction

Unauthorised tree works

Remedial measures required due to the following barrier condition:

Barrier erections do not accord with LER Barrier not in place

Barrier not intact Ground protection not in place

Any other faults/breaches

Details

Where remedial measures required:

Details

Where alternate protection measures are proposed:

General Comments

Date of next inspection:

Copied to client Copied to Site Manager Copied to Local Planning Authority

References

British Standard Institute (BSI). (2013). BS42020; Biodiversity – Code of practice for planning and development, BSI

Collins, J. (ed.). (2016). Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists Good Practice Guidelines (3rd edition), Bat Conservation Trust

Natural England (NE). (2015). Standing Advice Species Sheet Wild Birds, NE

NE. (2015). Bats: surveys and mitigation for development projects, NE