

## **Soft Landscaping & Habitat Enhancement**

**Application Number:** 21/00299/FUL

**Site Address:** Roe Farmhouse Catterall Lane Catterall Preston Lancashire

**Proposal:** Erection of an agricultural workers dwelling

**Decision Date:** 7 October 2021

### **Relevant Conditions**

Condition Number 6 – Habitat Enhancement

6. Prior to the commencement of development a Landscape and Habitat Creation and Management Scheme, including a timetable for implementation, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Scheme shall identify the opportunities for biodiversity enhancement on site including (but not limited to):

- Native tree and shrub planting
- Hedgerow planting
- Bird Boxes
- Bat Boxes

### **Layer Planting**

Layer-planting creates different layers which interact and form niches which can be exploited by wildlife. As set out, the native broadleaf deciduous woodland wraps around the south, west and northern boundaries of the site and areas which will form the curtilage. These trees all overhang the areas and create an opportunity to introduce woodland edge plants which will interact and enhance this woodland edge. The proposed soft landscaping scheme has been designed to be a woodland edge with 3 interacting layers of planting.

**Trees / Upper layer.** *Few gardens have space for large oaks and chestnuts but smaller trees such as birch, rowan, holly, flowering cherry, crab apple and hawthorn offer seeds and berries as well as a place for lichens and mosses to establish<sup>1</sup>.*

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.rhs.org.uk/wildlife/hedge-and-woodland-edge-habitats>

*Prunus spinosa* offers foraging for wildlife in both spring and winter

Indicated on landscaping plan as T1 and T2 planted at 8 metre centres.



Spring blossom for pollinators and insect predators



Sloe berries in autumn for birds and other foragers.

### Upper Layer Schedule

| Number | Key | Name                               | Size                                       | Centres |
|--------|-----|------------------------------------|--|---------|
| 1      | T1  | Blackthorn – <i>Prunus spinosa</i> | Selected Standards with a girth of 10-12cm | 8 M     |

**Understorey.** Make up the layer below the tree canopy with a mix of shrubs. Among those rich in food for wildlife are elder, butcher’s broom, mahonia, *Sarcococca* and dogwoods.

The understorey layer will be situated in an area around the upper layer. The area will be planted with a range of flowering ground cover shrubs.

*Cornus sanguinea* (dogwood) offers foraging for wildlife in both spring and winter



Spring blossom for pollinators and insect predators

Berries in autumn for birds and other foragers.



*Red robin – photinia* offers foraging for wildlife in spring and ground cover for wildlife



Spring and summer flowers for pollinators and insect predators

holly (*Ilex aquifolium*) - offers foraging for wildlife and ground cover for wildlife



Spring and summer flowers for pollinators and insect predators

## Understorey Schedule

| Planting area (sq m)                  | Number | Key | Name                              | Size         | Centres |
|---------------------------------------|--------|-----|-----------------------------------|--------------|---------|
| 14 square metres.                     | 1      | S1  | <i>Cornus sanguinea</i> (dogwood) | 20 – 30cm 5L | 1 M     |
| <b>Total number of plants in area</b> | 2      | S2  | <i>Red robin – photinia</i>       | 40 – 60cm 5L | 2 M     |
| 7                                     | 4      | S3  | holly ( <i>Ilex aquifolium</i> )  | 30 – 40cm 3L | 1 M     |
| <b>Hedgerow Planting</b>              |        |     |                                   |              |         |

### Landscape Operations

All materials and workmanship shall generally be in accordance with the following documents- BS 3936 Nursery Stock and BS 4428 Code of Practice for General

Areas for tree planting shall wherever possible have clearance. of unsuitable material to a depth of 900mm below ground level within a 2m radius of each tree with a minimum of 600mm topsoil. Areas for shrub planting shall have clearance of unsuitable material to a depth of 600mm with a minimum of 400mm topsoil, the bottom layer being made up of approved subsoil and the formation broken up if necessary to ensure drainage. Apply 50mm layer of approved peat free planting compost over the whole surface of planting areas and cultivate into the soil. Bring levels to an even grade, firm the soil and reduce the top 25mm to a fine tilth working in ENMAG or similar approved

Proposed grass seeding / turf areas shall have a minimum of 100 granular fertiliser at 70g/m<sup>2</sup>. mm topsoil which is to be brought to even grades and a fine tilth prior to seeding / turfing. Finished grass levels are to be 20mm above hard surfaces. Turf to be Rolawn Medallion or similar approved. Verges to Gubberford Lane are to be seeded with Germinal Amenity A18 Mixture sowing rate 35g/m<sup>2</sup> or similar approved.

Plant material to be the sizes and dimensions as stated in the schedule and shall be healthy with good fibrous root systems. Trees and shrubs to conform to BS 3936 and the HTA's National Plant Specification. Supply, delivery and storage of plants shall comply to the Plant Handling Code published by CPSE. Heavy standard and extra heavy standard trees are to be planted in pits 600mm deep and 1m diameter, single staked and secured with approved tree ties fixed 25mm from the top of the stake. All stakes shall be 75mm diameter round section, straight with bark removed. All shrubs are to be planted in pits large

Prior to hedgerow planting cultivate a strip 600mm wide and 300 enough to easily accommodate the roots. mm deep 300mm from the fence line and incorporate a 75mm layer of bulky organic

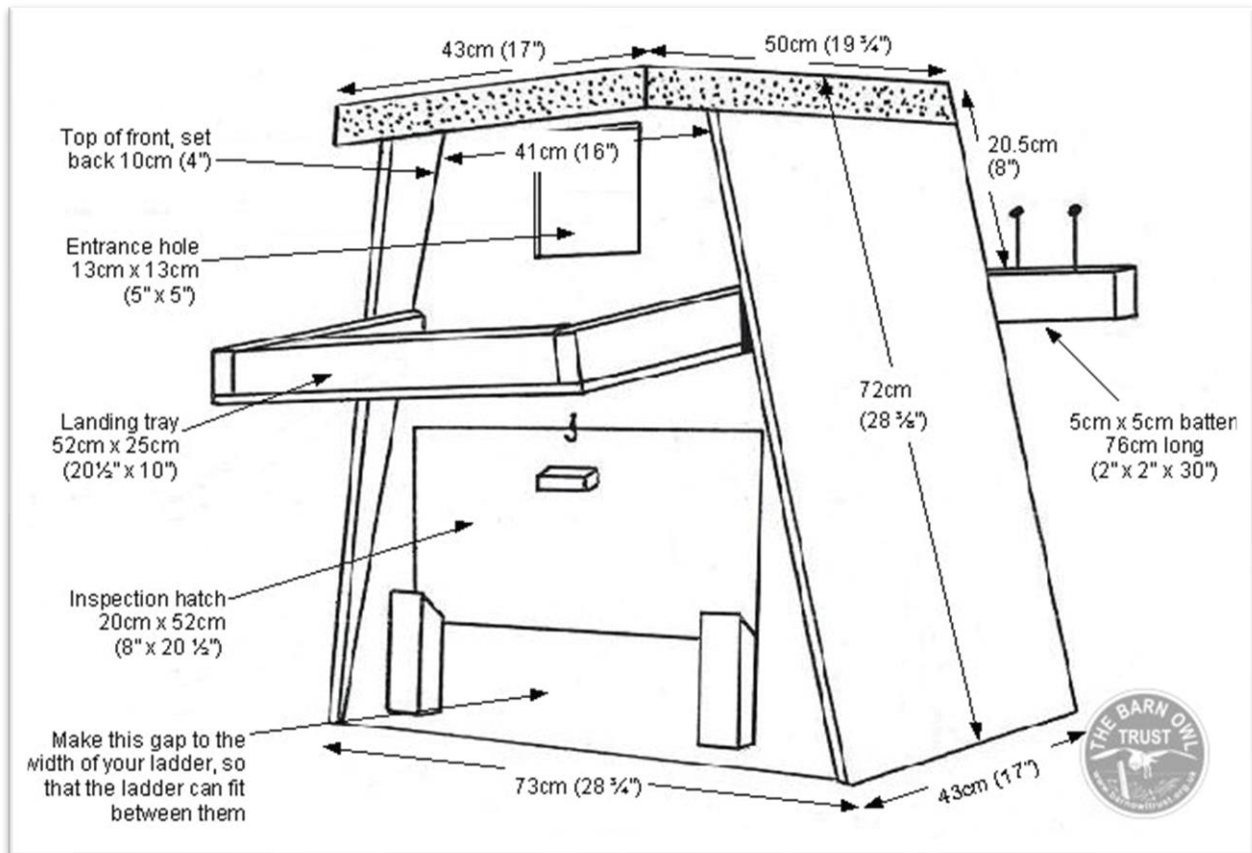
On completion of planting and when the soil is moist apply amen matter. ity grade bark mulch to all planted areas and 1m diameter circles to base of all trees planted in grass to a settled depth of 50mm.

### Maintenance

Maintenance shall include regular grass cutting, watering, weeding, pruning, adjustment and repair of tree stakes and ties and other horticultural operations necessary for the proper growth of the plants to keep areas neat in appearance. The defects liability period shall be 5 years following practical completion. During this period any trees, shrubs or other plants that are removed, damaged, die, fail to show leaf or are below specification shall be replaced

as soon as is reasonably practical unless the Local Planning Authority gives its written consent to any variation. All replacement stock shall comply with the original specification and be obtained from a reputable supplier.

## Barn Owl Nest Box



- Entrance hole: Optimum size: 130 x 130mm; minimum size: 100 x 100mm; maximum size: 150 x 150mm.
- Floor area of nest chamber: Good size range: 0.2 to 0.4m<sup>2</sup>; absolute minimum: 0.16m<sup>2</sup>.
- Depth from bottom of entrance hole to nest must be not less than 450mm.
  - *NB: owl boxes with less depth may be acceptable if placed within the branches of a tree that a fallen nestling could climb, however, deep owl boxes are so much safer that we no longer recommend boxes with less depth.*
  - *The ideal size for Barn Owl boxes is 1m<sup>2</sup> (floor area) x 1m depth but such big boxes are generally impractical.*
- For any Barn Owl nestbox less than 700mm deep, an **exercise/landing platform** below the entrance hole is vital for the safety of young fledglings. Climbing/jumping young birds can get from the platform onto the roof of the box and (ideally) onto other nearby perching places.
  - The platform must have a generous raised edge suitable for Barn Owls to grip easily and it should be positioned, and have sufficient shelter and drainage, to prevent rainwater being deflected into the box entrance.
- Interior must remain dry during prolonged heavy rain coming from any direction.
- All sides should overhang the floor. Outdoor nestboxes usually have drainage holes. However, any nestbox that actually *needs* drainage holes (to let rainwater out) is a very poor design and should not be used.
- There must be sufficient height difference between the nest and the external platform so as to prevent the accumulation of a continuous (internal/external) layer of pellet debris allowing rainwater to soak through the debris to the inside thereby chilling the nest contents.
- Roof should be covered in thick roofing felt guaranteed for not less than 10 years. Very steeply sloping roofs may not need covering but any apex join must be permanently waterproofed.
- Human access for easy clearing-out of nest debris is essential.

- Timber liable to decay within 20 years must be treated with long-lasting preservative: either pressure treated (tanalised) or surface treated including all edges of all component parts before assembly (follow product instructions and make sure all parts are dry before assembly). Plywood used must be manufactured using a waterproof adhesive (EN-314-2, Class 3).
- All screws/nails and any metal fittings used should be rust proof.
- Measures aimed at reducing the chances of entry by other species (such as Jackdaws and Beech Martens) are to be encouraged provided that they do not significantly reduce the box's suitability for Barn Owls.
- Should be substantially constructed yet light enough to permit safe erection using basic equipment. Normal treebox weight range is 13-18kg. Total weight should not exceed 25kg and a tree box under 10kg is probably not substantial enough.
- Should not be constructed from tropical hardwood unless the timber is certified as sustainably grown (FSC approved).
- Barn Owl boxes should be supplied with information that specifies an erection height of not less than 3m above ground level and stresses the importance of positioning within the tree branches in the case of boxes that have less than 450mm internal drop.
  - Information provided with owl boxes should also cover the following subjects:
    - foraging habitat requirements, nestbox positioning to maximise the chances of occupation (entrance hole visibility), the need for clearing out debris so as to maintain internal depth, nest box erection and attachment methods, human safety issues.