

## **Ecological Enhancement Plan**

*Land Adjacent to Timbers, Chevening Road, Sevenoaks TN13 2SA*

*August 2023*

General Document Information			
<b>Title</b>	Ecological Enhancement Scheme		
<b>Location</b>	Land Adjacent Timbers, Chevening Road, Sevenoaks, TN13 2SA		
<b>Planning App. Number</b>	22/03522/FUL		
<b>Project Lead</b>	Andrew Howes		
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Version	Date	Author	Comments
1.0	03/10/2023	Andrew Howes	Initial Draft
1.1	16/10/2023	Garry Warner	Reviewed Final Document

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**CONTROL SHEET**

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## INTRODUCTION

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This site has Full Planning Consent (Ref. 22/03522/FUL) for the erection of a detached 4-bed property. This specification has been produced to discharge Condition 8 of planning consent Ref 22/03522/FUL, detailed below:

### **Condition 8**

*Prior to development reaching the damp proof course, details of ecological enhancements shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved enhancements shall be implemented prior to first occupation of the dwelling hereby approved and thereafter retained on the site.*

*To provide ecological enhancements on the site, in accordance with SP11 of the Core Strategy.*

This document will ensure compliance with current legislation, official policy, due diligence and agreed standards of best practice relating to development of the site.

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## **BACKGROUND & SITE DESCRIPTION**

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The proposed property sits within the Green Belt and Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), with the adjacent property (Timbers) part of a series of properties front Chevening Road in Chipstead Village. Whilst the characteristics of properties variegates as you move away from the centre of the village (towards Timbers) these properties lining Chevening Road still embody this character (e.g. the volume of dwellings, the local primary school and other community features etc). However, this is in contrast to the M25 which lies to the west of the property and encourages a more urbanized aesthetic to the immediate area.

Permission has been granted to erect a four-bedroom dwelling on the land south-east of Timbers, Chevening Road.

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## **AIMS & OBJECTIVES**

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The aims and objectives of this Ecological Enhancement Plan have been drawn together based on the habitat types present on site and in conjunction with landscaping plan LP01\_landcaping. This Plan provides recommendations for ecological enhancements incorporated into the site development to comply with national and local planning policy and legislation, namely; Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006, National Planning Policy Framework 2012, and BS42020:2013 Biodiversity – Code of Practice for Planning and Development.

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## FLORA ENHANCEMENTS

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The north and east of the property is bound by close boarded fences, whilst a mix of native fauna species and trees line the north east boundary of the property. The southwestern part of the property is characterised by a series of mature trees (e.g. oak) on the neighbours side of the boundary that cross over onto the property. Additional native fruit trees (e.g. cherry and apple) will be planted towards the front boundary boundary to complement the neighbouring trees and enhance the existing fruit trees retained to the rear of the property (no trees will be planted within a 5m boundary of the front of the property to ensure the integrity of the raft foundations). The front (south) of the property will be enhanced with a native beech hedge to encourage an increase in biodiversity, including hedgehogs and other species of birds.

The garden to the rear of the property boasts in impressive and broad mix of shrubs, trees and plants that will be retained and enhanced with additional complimenting species. Current species can be view in attached landscaping plan, but include elderberry, laurel, lungwort, cherry, apple, buddleia, spirea, gunnera and crocosmia amongst others

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## FAUNA ENHANCEMENTS

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All bats are protected species, and all are listed as species of principal importance under the NERC Act. All retained and enhanced sections of hedgerow surrounding the site managed appropriately (as described above) will provide good connectivity, commuting and foraging habitat for bats in the local area. It will be important to reduce levels of artificial nocturnal lighting, preferably avoiding it completely, in the vicinity of the surrounding hedgerows. Where lighting is unavoidable, use the lowest lux possible. Since 2018 there have been changes made by the Bat Conservation Trust to the use of bat-friendly exterior lighting; several previously recommended types of lighting have been phased out during 2020 and should no longer be used. The type of bat-friendly light source (luminaires) now preferred by local authorities are light emitting diodes (LEDs). This is because the light emitted is a narrow beam able to be accurately controlled; this avoids unnecessary light pollution affected areas where light is not needed. Lighting can have a significantly detrimental impact on the foraging and commuting activities of bats when directed towards corridors of connectivity such as hedgerows or directed towards foraging opportunities in flower-rich meadows. It is also detrimental to other wildlife, including flora.

The establishment, enhancement and appropriate management of hedgerows will provide suitable corridors of connectivity, cover and foraging opportunities for a range of species, and nesting habitat for birds. The hedgerows will produce larger quantities of fruit and seeds for over-wintering birds when managed according to the prescription (above) and only cut rotationally every two to three years. This practice will also help to give the hedgerows greater structural variety and density, therefore providing improved nesting habitat. Ecologically well-managed hedgerows also provide a wider range of niche habitats for breeding invertebrates, which become a valuable and vital source of protein for the successful development of fledgling birds. In addition to common species such as blackbird, robin, chaffinch and wren, all hedgerows around the site boundaries could provide nesting habitat for declining farmland species such as yellowhammer and linnet.

Retaining and maintaining existing Buddleia trees to the rear of the property will provide a rich source of nectar for butterflies, wasps, bees and other insects. In July and August garden butterflies such as the Peacock, Red Admiral, Small Tortoiseshell and Comma often visit Buddleia flowers in large groups, as their preferred source of nectar.

Provision of bird, bat and invertebrate boxes will enhance the biodiversity value of the site (see next section).

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## FAUNA BOXES

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### **Birds**

Due to a lack of mature trees on the site and to enhance the caterpillar and butterfly populations in the rear garden, 2 bird boxes are to be installed on western wall of property, equally spaced and facing more mature trees of the neighbouring garden. The chances of occupation are higher if there is good hedge cover nearby as these will provide a good source of insect food for the nestlings when they hatch. Bird boxes require one annual clean in autumn (*i.e.* outside the bird breeding season, which is March to end of August in the UK). Additionally, swift bricks will be installed on the western side of the property to encourage nesting for the declining Swift population.

### **Hedgehogs**

Suitable 'Hedgehog Gates' will be included at the base of any boundary fencing to allow free movement of hedgehogs through the landscape. Furthermore, one 'Eco Hedgehog Nesting Box' should be located in a secluded spot on the site, such as at the base of the beech hedge at the front (south of the property)

*All proposed boxes and fauna enhancements are detailed on the attached landscaping plan LP01\_landscaping.*