



Robson Ecology Ltd.



Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy

for

**Liberty House Holiday Let, Hepworth Road, Market
Weston, Suffolk, IP22 2PF.**

Commissioned by:	Paul Betts
Project Number:	REP23023
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Project Ecologist:	Odette Robson BSc (Hons) PhD MCIEEM

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REP23023	Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy: Liberty House Holiday Let, Hepworth Road, Market Weston, Suffolk, IP22 2PF.	Final	28 th November 2023

Disclaimer

The findings detailed in this report are based on evidence from thorough review of existing documents, where every effort has been taken to provide an accurate assessment of the site. No liability can be assumed for omissions or changes since the surveys were undertaken.

This report was instructed by Paul Betts, and following the brief agreed. Robson Ecology has made every effort to meet the client's brief.

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Summary

Site:	Liberty House Holiday Let, Hepworth Road, Market Weston, Suffolk, IP22 2PF.
Grid Reference	TL 98407 77372
Planning reference	West Suffolk Council: DC/22/1867/FUL
Commissioned by	Paul Betts.
Lighting	No lighting directed towards sensitive habitats (mature trees; vegetated ditches; bird and bat boxes).
Biodiversity Enhancement	Bird Boxes: targeting house sparrow, song thrush, and spotted flycatcher. These high conservation priority species are likely to be present in the area and use boxes of the types specified.
	Bat Boxes: Targeting local species that use bat boxes.
	Hedgehog gaps at base of garden fence.

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1 Introduction

1.1 Background

The report is required to discharge Condition 7 of a planning consent for Liberty House, Hepworth Road, Market Weston, Suffolk, IP22 2PF (West Suffolk Council, WSC: Ref DC/22/1867/FUL). Planning permission was achieved on 20th December 2022 for *partial change of use of existing garage/storage outbuilding (class C3) into holiday let (sui generis)*.

This document presents a Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy (BES), as required to discharge the planning condition relating to ecology. The BES must be approved by the Local Planning Authority (LPA) and their consultees prior to occupation. The BES shall be adhered to and implemented throughout the construction period strictly in accordance with the approved details, unless otherwise agreed in writing by West Suffolk Council (planning authority).

1.2 Planning Condition

The following condition which relates to ecology has been requested for the site as part of the planning consent and as detailed in the decision notice (WSC Ref. DC/22/1867/FUL).

1.2.1 Condition 7: Prior to occupation:

Prior to occupation details of biodiversity enhancement measures to be installed at the site, including details of the timescale for installation, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Any such measures as may be agreed shall be installed in accordance with the agreed timescales and thereafter retained as so installed. There shall be no occupation unless and until details of the biodiversity enhancement measures to be installed have been agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

1.3 Ongoing Management and Maintenance - Post-completion

Management and maintenance during, and post, construction (buildings work and conversion) is required (Table 2.1). Monitoring effectiveness and uptake of the habitat boxes should be carried out to ensure that conservation aims and objectives are being met and identify any contingencies and/or remedial actions to achieve the fully functioning biodiversity objectives of the scheme.

Table 2.1: Management during and post-construction

Feature	Action Required	Frequency
Bird boxes	<p>Check for presence and damage – replace if damaged/missing.</p> <p>Clean out bird boxes once a year (October to January): Brush out any loose material and pour boiling water throughout the box. Allow to dry completely before replacing the box.</p> <p>Check the boxes are safely and securely fixed to the building/tree and adjust fixings if necessary.</p>	Annually – during and post building / conversion works
Bat boxes	<p>Check for presence and damage – replace if damaged/missing. Maintenance/cleaning is not required for bat boxes.</p> <p>Check the boxes are safely and securely fixed to the tree and adjust fixings if necessary.</p> <p>Some branch and Ivy removal may be necessary to ensure flight-access into the box is not obstructed.</p> <p>Only a bat-licensed ecologist can legally open/move a bat box.</p>	Annually – during and post building / conversion works
Hedgehog Links	Check these are accessible and remove any obstructions (if needed).	Annually – post construction
Tree/shrub management	Manage trees and hedgerows in line with good arboricultural practice.	October to February, as required, and outside the nesting bird season.

1.4 Lighting Considerations

Lighting at the site will be minimized to encourage bats to use the site, both during the construction phase, and on completion. Guidance from the Institute of Lighting Professionals and the Bat Conservation Trust (ILP 2023, 2018; ILE 2012, BCT 2009) has been used to inform the following considerations:

- The areas highlighted in yellow on Appendix A will be maintained as dark zones. No lighting will be directed towards these areas which could be used as commuting corridors by bats.
- LED luminaires will be used where possible (No UV elements: Metal halide, fluorescent sources will not be used).
- A warm white spectrum (ideally <2700Kelvin) will be used to reduce the blue light component.
- Peak wavelengths higher than 550nm will be used to avoid the component of light most disturbing to bats (Stone, 2012).
- Internal luminaires can be recessed where installed in proximity to windows to reduce glare and light spill.
- Specialist bollard or/and low-level downward directional luminaires to retain darkness must be used along access track and parking areas (where this is feasible and meets safety standards).
- Only luminaires with an upward light ratio of 0% and with good optical control will be used (See ILP 2011).
- Luminaires will be mounted on the horizontal to avoid upward tilt.
- Any external security lighting will be set on motion-sensors sensitive to large moving objects only, and short (<1 minute) timers.
- All external lighting will be kept to the minimal feasible level and be directed downward: Baffles, hoods or louvres will be used to reduce light spill and direct it only to where needed.
- Lighting will be appropriately directed to avoid illuminating the mature retained trees, boundary hedges and ditches, and enhancement habitat boxes (on the building and trees).
- There will be no task lighting adjacent to, or directed towards, any mature trees or hedges during the construction phase of the development.
- Construction work will not be carried out at night, or within half an hour of dawn or dusk.

2 Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy

The addition of ecological enhancements listed below will enhance the value of the site for bats, birds, hedgehogs, invertebrates, and other wildlife, as encouraged through the NPPF, and to help achieve local biodiversity targets.

2.1 Bat Boxes

Bat boxes will be installed on the mature Ash tree in the garden, as shown in Appendix A. Woodcrete boxes are more durable and longer-lasting than wooden alternatives. Two Schwegler 2F will be located together on a single tree facing south-east and south-west to receive sun for part of the day: This gives bats a choice of thermal opportunities. Boxes will be sited out of reach of cats and 4m to 6m above ground level. There must be unobstructed flight access enabling entry/exit for bats, but with suitable flight-lines in close proximity: Some branch pruning may be necessary, and Ivy-clearance/management. The access hole is at the base so that the boxes are self-cleaning and do not require any maintenance.

Bat boxes will be left in perpetuity and will only be opened or moved by individuals licenced by Natural England to survey and handle bats. Annual checking (from the ground) must be carried out to ensure the boxes are securely and safely fixed to the tree.

2.2 Bird Boxes

Bird boxes targeting local and national priority species have been specified; Spotted flycatcher, song thrush, and house sparrow. These species are likely to be present in the area and regularly use boxes of the type specified. House sparrow and spotted flycatcher are listed on the Birds of Conservation Concern red-list (Stanbury *et al.*, 2021) and are Species of Principal Importance for conservation of biodiversity in England (SPIE) - formally BAP species. The song thrush is amber-listed but remains a SPIE species.

Nest boxes will be to BTO/RSPB specification, and of woodcrete in preference to wood construction: This material is durable, has good thermal properties and lasts longer than wooden alternatives.

Location of bird-boxes on the site is shown on the enhancement plan (Appendix A), and specification in Appendix B.

2.2.1 Open-fronted Bird Box (Tree-Mounted)

Song thrushes and spotted flycatcher use open-fronted nest-boxes: Schwegler 2H open-fronted nest boxes will be fixed to the multi-stemmed sub-mature Ash tree, as shown in Appendix A.

Boxes will face away from the prevailing wind direction, and not be directly south-facing. A height of 2-4m above ground is usually appropriate, and cats must not be able to access the boxes.

2.2.2 House Sparrow Terrace (Building-Mounted)

The BoCC red-listed house sparrow has been recorded locally and will readily use nesting boxes. Sparrow terraces, such as the Schwegler 1SP (see Appendix B), are suitable for buildings. A house sparrow terrace will be installed under the eaves on the northern elevation of the Holiday Let, where there is close access to mature boundary hedge/ditch.

2.3 Hedgehog Links

Hedgehog links will be created within the new fence which separates the garden of Liberty House from the Holiday Lett curtilage, enabling small mammals to move between the gardens. These will be small gaps (13cm x 13cm) at ground level, along each fence line or at approximately 20m intervals.

3 References

Bat Conservation Trust. (2009). Bats and lighting in the UK- bats and the built environment series www.bats.org.uk

Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019

ILP (2023) Institute of Lighting Professionals. Bats and Artificial Lighting at Night. Guidance Note GN08/23.

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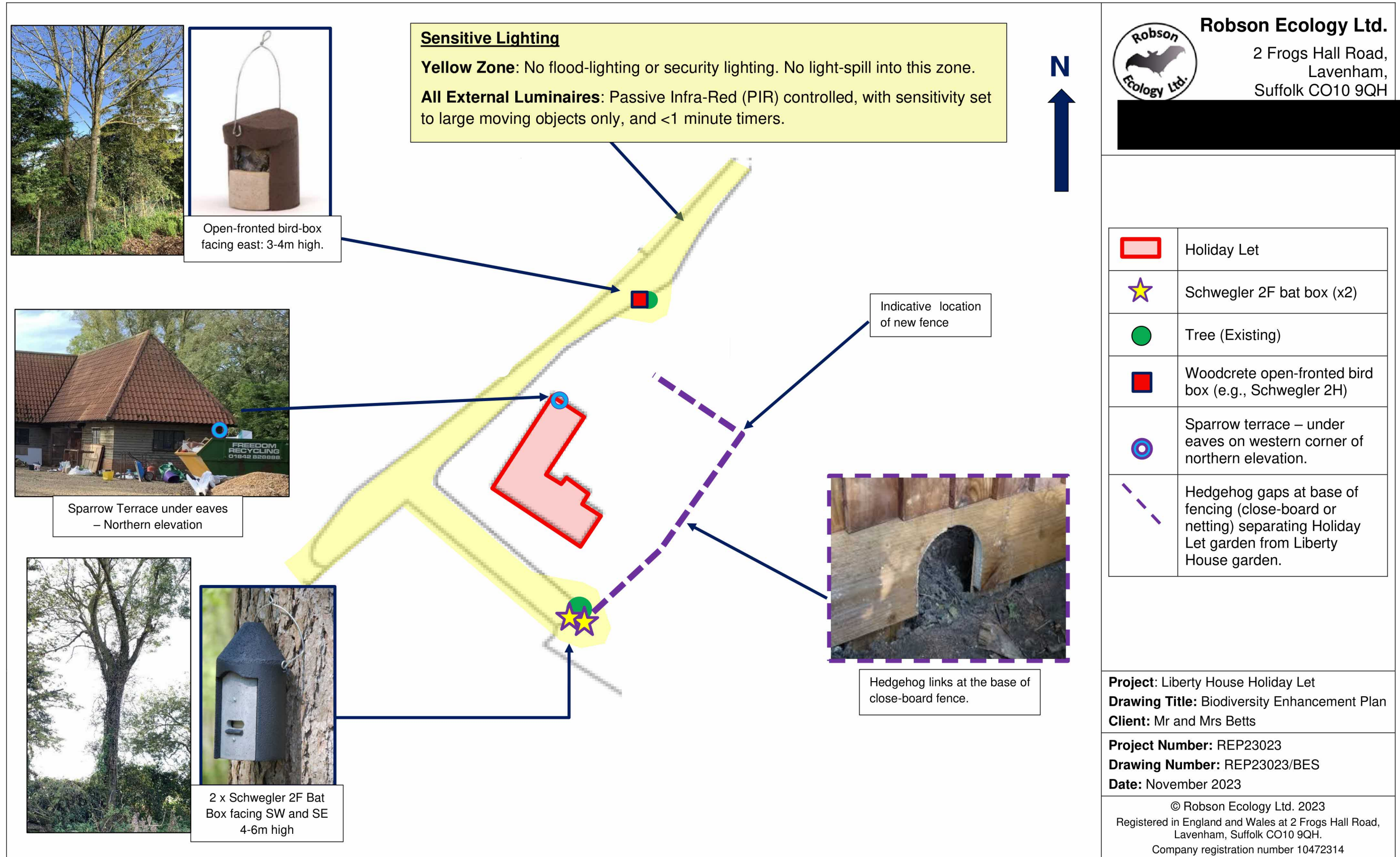
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Stanbury, A., Eaton, M., Aebischer, N., Balmer, D., Brown, A., Douse, A., Lindley, P., McCulloch, N., Noble, D., and Win I. (2021). The Status of Our Bird Populations: The Fifth Birds of Conservation Concern in the United Kingdom, Channel Islands and Isle Of Man and Second IUCN Red List Assessment of Extinction Risk for Great Britain. *British Birds* 114: 723-747.







Stone, E.L., Jones, G., Harris, S. (2012). Conserving energy at a cost to biodiversity? Impacts of LED lighting on bats. *Glob. Change Biol.* 18, 2458–2465.

UK BAP from URL <http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-5717>

Appendix A: Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy



Appendix B: Habitat Box Specification

Habitat Box	Specification (or similar and approved)	Suggested Suppliers (suggestions only - other suppliers are available)
 	<p>Schwegler 2F Bat Box</p> <p>Multi-purpose bat box for pipistrelles – tree-mounted. Manufactured from long-lasting Woodcrete, a blend of wood, concrete and clay which will not rot, leak, crack or warp, and will last for at least 20 - 25 years.</p>	<p>https://www.nhbs.com/2f-schwegler-bat-box-general-purpose</p> <p>https://www.arkwildlife.co.uk/product/schwegler-2f-bat-box/</p> <p>https://gardenature.co.uk/product/2f-standard-bat-box</p>
 	<p>Schwegler 1SP Sparrow Terrace</p> <p>This terrace provides nesting opportunities for three families. Made of wood-concrete mix, this terrace is durable, breathable and will last many decades. The terrace can be fixed on to the surface of a suitable wall or incorporated into the wall. Place the terrace two metres or more above the ground or install directly into the wall. Cleaning is advisable but not necessary. The front panel can be removed by turning the screw hook.</p> <p>As high as possible – below eaves.</p>	<p>https://www.arkwildlife.co.uk/Item/Wildlife_Habitats~Ark_Environmental~Bird_Nest_Boxes/SC-1SP-G/Schwegler_1SP_Nest_Box_-_Sparrow_Terrace_-_Grey.html</p> <p>https://www.nhbs.com/1sp-schwegler-sparrow-terrace?bkfno=185099&ca_id=1495&gclid=Cj0KCQiAuf7fBRD7ARIsACqb8w4AWI5RsmDqLh7jXGzu_nDHRExlrOJ_OKJb4S_NBLQZQ05UIFFuKBAAAgQmEALw_wcB</p>
 	<p>Schwegler 2H Open-fronted Bird Box</p> <p>Should always be installed on the outside walls of houses, barns, garden sheds, etc. It is designed to be hung so that the entrance is to one side (at an angle of 90° to the wall). The front panel can be removed for cleaning.</p> <p>2-4m high.</p>	<p>https://www.arkwildlife.co.uk/product/schwegler-2h-open-nest-box/</p>