

# **BIODIVERSITY ENHANCEMENTS**

for

## **PROPOSED CONVERSION OF AGRICULTURAL BARN TO RESIDENTIAL UNITS**

at

### **BEECH HEDGE FARM, WESTON DITCH**

#### **Timescale & Duration for Biodiversity Enhancements:**

All enhancements are to be installed prior to occupation of the dwellings and retained / maintained as so installed in accordance with Condition 8 of the Planning Approval DC/21/0710/P3QPA

#### **Bats – Increasing roosting opportunities for bat species:**

It is proposed bat boxes will be included within the Development as a biodiversity enhancement for the site. It is recommended that Schwegler 1FF Bat Box is used. The box is spacious enough to be used as a summer roost or nursery site and is open at the bottom, allowing droppings to fall out so it does not need cleaning. The 1FF is manufactured from long-lasting Woodcrete, which is a blend of wood, concrete and clay which will not rot, leak, crack or warp, and will last for at least 20 - 25 years.

#### **Bat Box Installation Guidance**

- Boxes should be located in a sheltered position, out of strong wind, but exposed to sunlight for part of the day to provide solar warming
- When installed on trees, where possible boxes should be put up in groups of two or three, facing in different directions to allow bats access to a range of temperature conditions. Furthermore, it is recommended that, to avoid competition for bat boxes, bird boxes should also be installed on the same trees
- It should be ensured that the entrance hole to the box is kept clear, so that bats can access it freely
- Ideally bat boxes should be positioned near linear vegetation (e.g. a hedgerow).
- When installing boxes on trees, the ideal position is at around 4-6 metres above ground level. Installation should be as high as possible to try and avoid predation from cats on the ground or nearby structures
- Boxes should be installed out of the direct line of artificial lighting



Schwegler 1FF Bat Box

### **Birds – Increasing nesting opportunities for bird species:**

It is proposed that bird boxes are installed as part of the development. Tree mounted box suitable for tit species (25mm diam. hole) to avoid competition for bat boxes.

### **Bird Box Installation Guidance**

The requirements for nest boxes vary between species. However there are some general rules to follow:

- Boxes should be located in a sheltered position out of strong sunlight, wind and rain. Generally this means that the box should be positioned somewhere between the north east and south east, approx. 2-4m above ground level
- There should be a clear flight path to the entrance hole and be placed so the entrance is not exposed to strong sunlight or winds
- For extra shelter, smaller boxes should be positioned at a slight forward angle
- Boxes should be positioned out of the reach of predators where possible (e.g. cats)
- Position boxes away from bird tables and other feeding areas where possible



Apex Classic Nest Box

### **Habitat Enhancements:**

Hedgerows & trees are important for wildlife as they provide a suitable habitat and food source for many different species, link habitat areas, and act as corridors for flight of bats, birds and butterflies.

The more plant species found in a hedge, the greater the number of other species the hedge can support. Many plant eating insects, for example, depend on a particular plant species, so the more different plants there are, the more potential for insect diversity.

Since different shrub species flower and fruit at different times, this diversity and a good spread of plant species extends the flowering and fruiting period, beneficial to nectar and pollen feeding invertebrates, and thus to their predator species too.

Some species require the presence of just one shrub species to survive in a hedge but others need several for different roles throughout their life. A good example is the thrush which nests in the shrubby structure of the hedge, sings from hedgerow trees, hunts snails in the base of the hedge before swapping to berries later on in the season.

Over half of the priority species associated with hedgerows are dependent or partially dependent, on hedgerow trees. Hedgerow trees, particularly old trees offer nesting sites for birds, bats and bees, they contain the rare deadwood habitat that supports thousands of our invertebrate species, many of which are rare or threatened, and they provide leaf, flower and fruit forage for a huge number of species.

### **Planting (as indicated on drawing 1649 03):**

Native hedging to front of dwellings to include hawthorn, hazel, blackthorn, dog rose, both flowering and berry producing varieties to promote food sources for, birds, bees and insects.