

JAMES BLAKE

A S S O C I A T E S

Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy

for

**Overway House , Bury Road, Nowton,
Suffolk, IP29 5NB**

on behalf of

Mr Ben Fisher

January 2024


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James Blake Associates Ltd have made every effort to meet the client’s brief. However, no survey ensures complete and absolute assessment of the changeable natural environment. The findings in this report were based on evidence from thorough survey: It is important to remember that evidence can be limited, hard to detect or concealed by site use and disturbance. When it is stated that no evidence was found or was evident at that point in time, it does not mean that species are not present or could not be present at a later date: The survey was required because habitats are suitable for a given protected species, and such species could colonise areas following completion of the survey.

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Non-technical Summary

Site:	Overway House , Bury Road, Nowton, Suffolk, IP29 5NB
Ordnance Survey National Grid Reference:	TL 86624 61056
Report Commissioned by:	Mr Ben Fisher
Date of report:	January 2024

Considerations	Description	Potential impacts
Production of an ecological enhancement strategy	Enhancement measures include a proposed wildflower area and 1B Schwegler Nest Box. An owl box has already been installed and woodland management is ongoing.	Improvement of conditions on site and within the adjacent habitats for birds, small mammals and invertebrates.
Discharge of conditions relating to ecology	This report should enable the discharge of Condition 4	

1. INTRODUCTION

Background

1.1 James Blake Associates Ltd. (JBA) was commissioned by Mr Ben Fisher to provide an ecological enhancement strategy for the proposed development site at Overway House, Bury Road, Nowton, Suffolk, IP29 5NB (Ordnance Survey National Grid Reference: TL 86624 61056, taken from the centre of the site).

1.2 This letter report addresses Condition 4 of DC/23/0402/FUL (West Suffolk Council). The conditions are as follows:

Prior to any works above ground level, a Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy for protected and Priority species prepared by a suitably qualified ecologist shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The content of the Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy shall include the following:

a) Purpose and conservation objectives for the proposed enhancement measures;

b) detailed designs or product descriptions to achieve stated objectives;

c) locations, orientations and heights of proposed enhancement measures by appropriate maps and plans (where relevant);

d) persons responsible for implementing the enhancement measures; and

e) details of initial aftercare and long-term maintenance (where relevant).

The works shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details and shall be retained in that manner thereafter.

Reason: To enhance protected and Priority species & habitats and allow the LPA to discharge its duties under the NPPF 2023 and s40 of the NERC Act 2006 (Priority habitats & species).

1.3 The site has planning permission (planning application ref: DC/23/0402/FUL) for the installation of a 20kw domestic solar panel array.

- 1.4 JBA undertook an ecological walkover survey of the original application site which was to the north-west of Overway House; however, the red line boundary has since been altered and only consists of land within the residential garden of Overway House. No further surveys are considered necessary.
- 1.5 This report covers the application site (red-line boundary) and the requirement to provide further details regarding ecological enhancements.

Site Location

- 1.6 The site is located to the south of Cooper Lane, adjacent Nowton Cricket Club, in the village of Nowton, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk. Immediately adjacent habitats include woodland to the northeast and south, residential properties and private gardens to the east and Nowton Cricket pitch to the west. Nowton Park is located less than 0.1km to the north, with the A134 located approximately 0.8km to the northeast. The remaining wider landscape is predominantly arable fields interspersed with fragmented woodland and villages (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Site location plan



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Aims and objectives

- 1.7 The aim of this report is to provide an ecological enhancement plan for the site to be used in support of the development to enable the discharge of Condition 4 on the grant of planning permission (ref: DC/23/0402/FUL).
- 1.8 It should be noted that the proposed works are within an existing residential garden and therefore enhancements have been suggested accordingly, considered the small scale and nature.

Wildlife Legislation and Planning Policy

- 1.9 The relevant wildlife legislations and planning policies are listed below:
- Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 (as amended) (WCA). [Amended by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act (2000)].
 - The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act, 2006 (NERC).
 - The Wild Mammals (Protection) Act, 1996.

2. BIODIVERSITY ENHANCEMENT STRATEGY

Purposes and conservation objectives for the proposed works

- 2.1 The purpose of the proposed works outlined within this document is to enhance the site for wildlife following construction.
- 2.2 As the proposed works are within an existing residential garden, the conservation objectives for the proposed works are to enhance the area for general wildlife which are usually found within residential gardens, such as pollinators and birds, where appropriate. These measures will contribute to the biodiversity interest of the area in the long term.

Detailed design to achieve the stated objectives

- 2.3 An owl box has already been installed within the woodland immediately adjacent the site and it is recommended that a single '1B Schwegler Nest Box' is also installed on a suitable tree either on site or close to the site, where possible (see Figure 2). The bird box should face north-west to north-east mounted to a height of at least 3m. Please note that these can be replaced with similar products if not available at time of construction (to be agreed with ecologist).

Figure 2: 1B Schwegler Nest Box (nhbs.com)



- 2.4 A wildflower area within the residential garden is proposed for spring 2024 which will incorporate several flower species suitable for pollinators and other invertebrates. Planting should include that of local provenance, where possible.

- 2.5 The existing woodland is currently managed to encourage wildlife and, if not already, it is suggested that log piles are created throughout this area. If any trees are felled during management, these should remain in place to provide deadwood habitat for invertebrates such as stag beetles.

Details of initial after care and long-term maintenance

- 2.6 Bird boxes should be inspected and cleaned annually outside of the breeding season; the breeding season is deemed to be between March and September. Damaged boxes should be replaced as and when required.

Persons responsible for implementing the works

- 2.7 Initial installation and then future maintenance of the various forms of enhancement are to be undertaken by the landowner or suitably appointed contractor (e.g. gardener/landscaper).

3. Conclusions

- 3.1 A Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy has been drawn up of which will increase the site in its ability to support wildlife through the addition of new planting and wildlife boxes.
- 3.2 Management of the existing woodland is already taking place and this should be continued in perpetuity.
- 3.3 It should be noted that the proposed works are within an existing residential garden and therefore enhancements have been suggested accordingly, considering the small scale and nature.
- 3.4 The Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy was required by the grant of planning permission; this report should enable Condition 4 to be discharged.