

# JAMES BLAKE

A S S O C I A T E S

## Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy

for

## Marlensdale Farm, Burton End, Stansted, Essex

On behalf of

**Aviary Developments**

**December 2023**


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## Non-technical Summary

<b>Site:</b>	Marlensdale Farm, Burton End, Stansted, Essex
Ordnance Survey National Grid Reference:	TL 52909 23875
Report Commissioned by:	Aviary Developments
Date of report:	December 2023

Considerations	Description	Potential impacts
Production of an ecological enhancement strategy	Enhancement measures include the provision of bat and bird boxes.	Maintaining the suitability of the site for roosting and foraging habitat for bats and birds.
Discharge of conditions relating to ecology	This report should enable the discharge of the associated condition.	

## 1. INTRODUCTION

### Background

1.1 James Blake Associates Ltd. (JBA) was commissioned by Aviary Developments to provide a biodiversity enhancement strategy for the proposed development at Marlensdale Farm, Burton End, Stansted, Essex (Ordnance Survey National Grid Reference: TL 52909 23875, taken from the centre of the site).

1.2 This letter report addresses the following condition:

*Prior to any works above slab level, a Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy 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 to achieve stated objectives;*
- c) persons responsible for implementing the enhancement measures;*
- d) details of initial aftercare and long-term maintenance.*

*Thereafter, the enhancement measures and/or works shall be implemented in full accordance with the approved details and shall be retained in that manner at all times.*

*Reason: To conserve and enhance protected and priority species and habitats and allow the local planning authority to discharge its duties under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), s40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 (priority habitats & species), s17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, in accordance with the adopted Uttlesford Local Plan Policies GEN7, ENV8, and the National Planning Policy Framework (2021).*

1.3 The site has planning permission (planning application reference: UTT/22/2094/DFO) for: *the demolition of existing agricultural buildings and erection of 5 no. dwellings - details of access, appearance, layout and scale. at Marlensdale Burton End Stansted Essex CM24 8UF.*

- 1.4 An Ecological Impact Assessment was undertaken by Sound Ecology in 2017, and updated in 2021 (Sound Ecology, 2021), which found the site to be ‘a former poultry farm with an inhabited detached bungalow, seventeen outbuildings, with associated hard standing and driveways’. A single common pipistrelle maternity roost was recorded in 2017; however, in 2021 no evidence of occupancy was recorded. Brown long-eared bat feeding roosts were identified in three of the outbuildings in 2021. Updated bat surveys were carried out in 2023 by James Blakes Associates (JBA, 2023), which found one common pipistrelle maternity roost and one soprano pipistrelle day roost within the roof space of the bungalow, along with one common pipistrelle day roost in ‘H9’.
- 1.5 This report covers the application site (red-line boundary) and the requirement to provide further details regarding ecological enhancements.

**Site Description**

- 1.6 The site is located south of Bury Lodge Road, in the Hamlet of Burton End, approximately 0.9km east of Stansted Mountfitchet, Essex. The site consists of a bungalow and associated garden, and several disused farmyard and storage outbuildings to the south. An area of semi-improved grassland is found directly to the east, with a treeline and hedgerow bordering the site to the west and south. The wider landscape includes agricultural fields, woodland, London Stansted Airport approximately 1.0km to the east and the M11 approximately 0.5km to the west (see Figure 1 below).

**Figure 1:** Site location plan



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### **Aims and objectives**

- 1.7 The aim of this report is to provide a biodiversity enhancement plan for the site to be used in support of the development to enable the discharge of the required condition on the grant of planning permission.

### **Wildlife Legislation and Planning Policy**

- 1.8 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. ECOLOGICAL ENHANCEMENT STRATEGY**

### **Purposes and conservation objectives for the proposed works**

- 2.1 The purpose of the proposed works outlined within this document is to maintain and enhance the suitability of the site for wildlife following construction.
- 2.2 The conservation objectives for the proposed works are to provide bat and bird boxes on the new buildings, where appropriate. These measures will contribute to the biodiversity interest of the area in the long term.

### **Measures during construction**

- 2.3 A timetable for the implementation of ecological enhancement works has been drawn up (see Appendix A); this also includes general precautionary measures.
- 2.4 During construction:
- No works are proposed for the boundary vegetation; however, if occasional works are required such as cutting back vegetation for management, works should be carried out outside of the breeding bird season (March – September). If this is not possible, a nest check undertaken by a suitably experienced ecologist will need to be carried out on trees to be impacted in anyway, with works only preceding following an ‘all clear’ and within 48 hours of the nest check.

- All trenches left open overnight to be covered or an escape ramp provided to enable hedgehogs, other small mammals etc. to climb out.
- Security lighting will be kept to a minimal level (as necessary for safety and security), to be set on short times, and to be sensitive to large moving objects only. No lighting should illuminate the southwest boundary of the site during the construction and developed stage of the site, due to it's importance as a foraging corridor for bats (Sound Ecology, 2021).
- Bat and bird boxes to be integrated on/into the new buildings and existing bungalow, as well retained boundary trees. Boxes should not be lit by security lighting.
- Initial landscape planting to take place including tree and hedgerow planting on the southeast boundary (Sound Ecology, 2021).

### **Detailed design to achieve the stated objectives**

- 2.5 The proposed site layout plans can be found in Appendix B (FAL Architects, 2022).
- 2.6 There is scope for ecological enhancements to be incorporated into plans such as bird and bat boxes on the existing bungalow and boundary trees, as well as and the new proposed buildings; a map of the locations of these can be found in Appendix C.
- 2.7 A total of seven bat boxes have been recommended to be integrated onto the existing building, as well as the proposed buildings and associated garages. Bat boxes to be installed on the existing and proposed housing should be 2FE Schwegler Wall-Mounted Bat Shelters or similar which can be mounted onto timber cladding, or Vivara Pro Build-in WoodStone Bat Boxes or similar which can be integrated into brick walls during construction.
- 2.8 Two bat boxes have been proposed on retained boundary trees and these should be 2FN Schwegler Bat Boxes or similar. Bat boxes should be installed at least 5m high, facing southeast to south west (with the exception of one bat box facing west on the existing bungalow), and away from artificial lighting.
- 2.9 A total of five bird boxes have been recommended to be integrated onto the proposed buildings and associated garages. These should be Vivara Pro WoodStone House Sparrow Nest boxes or similar which are used by a variety of



bird species and can be either integrated into brick walls during construction or fixed to an external wall using screws and wall plugs.

- 2.10 One bird box has been proposed on a retained boundary tree and this should be a 1B Schwegler Nest Box or similar.

#### **Extent and location of works on scale plans**

- 2.11 The suggested locations of biodiversity enhancements are given on the proposed site layout (Proposed Aerial Perspective View 2 & 3) by FAL Architects (see Appendix B).

- 2.12 Bat boxes should ideally be located between south-east to south-west, at least **3m above ground level** and away from artificial lighting.

- 2.13 Bird boxes should be located between north-west to north-east and should be at least **2m above ground level**, with clear adjacent airspace.

#### **Timetable to implementation demonstrating that works are aligned with the proposed phasing of development**

- 2.14 A timetable for the implementation of ecological works has been drawn up (see Appendix A).

#### **Persons responsible for implementing the works**

- 2.15 Initial construction works and installing the various forms of enhancement to be implemented by the Site Management Team and suitable appointed contractors, such as landscape contractors, fencers, brick layers etc.

#### **Details of initial after care and long-term maintenance**

- 2.16 All bat boxes proposed are 'self-cleaning' and would not require annual cleaning; however, these should be inspected annually from the ground for any damages and should be replaced if broken, following ecologist advice.
- 2.17 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.

### 3. Conclusions

- 3.1 A Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy has been drawn up which will increase the suitability of the proposed development site to further support wildlife by the provision of nine bat boxes and house sparrow terraces. Suggestions for the management of enhancements are included.
- 3.2 The Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy was required by the grant of planning permission; this report should enable the associated condition to be discharged.

### References

JBA (2023) *Bat Report – Marlensdale Farm, Burton End, Stansted*

Sound Ecology (2021) *Ecological Impact Assessment – Marlensdale Farm, Burton End, Essex. Updating 2017 EclA.*

#### Web references:

MAGIC:

<https://magic.defra.gov.uk/>

## Appendix

### Appendix A. Timetable for implementation of ecological works

Timings		Feature/species of interest	Action	Person responsible
When to Undertake	Year			
During construction	From 2024	Small mammals etc.	Trenches to be covered overnight or escape ramp left to enable animals to find their way out.	Site manager
During construction	From 2024	Nesting birds in relation to the adjacent woodland.	Avoid works within March – September. Or following a nesting bird check, with works only preceding following an 'all clear' and within 48 hours of the nest check.	Site manager with advice from Ecological Clerk of Works (ECoW)
During construction	From 2024	Bats and birds	Bird and bat boxes to be erected on building(s) at time of build.	Site manager with advice from ECoW
Post-construction	From 2025	Bats	Annual check for damages from the ground.	Appointed management company or landowner. If boxes require replacing/ fixing then ECoW advice should be sought
Post-construction	From 2025 (between October and February)	Birds	Annual cleaning and check for damages (outside breeding bird season).	Appointed management company or landowner.

**Appendix B. Proposed Site Layout Plan – ‘Proposed Aerial Perspective View 1’ (FAL Architects, 2022)**



## DESIGN – IN CONTEXT



Proposed aerial perspective view 1

**Appendix C. Ecological Enhancements on Proposed Aerial Perspective – View 2 and 3**  
(Base plan produced by FAL Architects 2022, with JBA enhancement mark-up)



# DESIGN – IN CONTEXT



Proposed aerial perspective view 2

Ref: 0616.PL.220929 Material submission

## Ecological Enhancements

- Bat box on proposed buildings - West facing for bungalow mitigation, installed at least 3m high, away from artificial lighting
- Bat box on retained boundary trees - installation requirements as above
- Bird box on proposed buildings - NE to NW facing, installed at least 2m high
- Bird box on retained trees - installation requirements as above



Residential development at Marlensdale  
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# DESIGN – IN CONTEXT



Proposed aerial perspective view 3

Ref: 0616.PL.220929 Material submission

## Ecological Enhancements

- Hedge & tree planting along southeast boundary
- Bat box - SE to SW facing, installed at least 3m high, away from artificial lighting



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