

ECOLOGICAL ENHANCEMENT PLAN

GODFREY HOUSE, COLDHARBOUR ROAD, PENSHURST, KENT,

TN11 8ET

MRS JENNIFER SKARBEK

Application number 23/02971/HOUSE

January 2024

INTRODUCTION

This site has Full Planning Consent (23/02971/HOUSE) for a single storey extension with roof lantern. This specification has been produced to discharge Condition 4 of planning consent Ref: 23/02971/HOUSE, detailed below:

Condition 4

Within 3 months of the works commencing an ecological enhancement plan demonstrating how the site will enhance biodiversity must be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved details will be implemented and thereafter retained.

Reason: To enhance biodiversity of the site in accordance with Policy SP11 of Sevenoaks District Councils Core Strategy.

BACKGROUND AND SITE DESCRIPTION

Godfrey House is a residential property and associated gardens located to the South of the village of Penshurst, Kent. The site lies within the Metropolitan Green Belt and in the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

The site itself comprises the house and outbuildings set within mature gardens bound by hedgerow on all sides. The immediate general area is rural on character and consists primarily of woodland with sporadic residential development.

Permission has been granted for the addition of a single storey extension with roof lantern to the rear of the property.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The aims and objectives of this Ecological Enhancement Plan have been drawn together based on the habitat types present on site. This Plan proposes ecological enhancements to be 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 2023, and BS42020:2013 Biodiversity – Code of Practice for Planning and Development.

RETAINED FEATURES AND BIODIVERSITY ENHANCEMENT

The proposed extension will occupy an area which is currently hardstanding (patio) and so will not require any significant removal of existing planting.

Hedgerows

The site is bound by species-rich native mixed hedgerow, and mixed beech and hornbeam hedging which will be retained and protected as part of the proposals. Within the boundaries additional hedgerows of laurel, beech and hornbeam all exist and will be retained.

The species-richness of all these hedgerows around the site will be enhanced and by managing them in the future for the benefit of wildlife. The simple measure of filling in any gaps with additional native species (such as wild privet *Ligustrum vulgare* and guelder-rose *Viburnum opulus*) will be completed. In addition, only trimming the hedgerow every two to three years will help to ensure “no net losses, but rather net gains for biodiversity”.

Hedgerow bases will not be cut short and not at all during the growing, flowering and seeding seasons, or sprayed, as a varied ground flora is of vital importance for biodiversity.

Trees

A mature horse chestnut tree (*Aesculus hippocastanum*), an Oak tree (*Quercus robur*) and several mature beech trees (*Fagus sylvatica*) and Ash trees (*Fraxinus excelsior*) are present on site and will be retained and protected as part of the proposals. In addition, the planting of several new trees on site has taken place over recent years and 3 further native trees will be planted to further enhance the biodiversity of the site. These will be

2 x Field Maple (*Acer campestre*) attractive to aphids and therefore predators such as ladybirds and many birds as well as having flowers which are a rich source of pollen and fruit which provides food for small mammals

1 x Silver Birch (*Betula pendula*) which can provide habitat for over 300 species of insect.

PROTECTED SPECIES ENHANCEMENTS

Bats

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.

Other species

The establishment, enhancement and appropriate management of hedgerows and flower-rich grassland 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.

Provision of bird, bat and invertebrate boxes will enhance the biodiversity value of the site. The lists of proposed boxes are detailed below.

BIRD, BAT & INVERTEBRATE BOXES

Birds

Three bird boxes are to be installed on south-facing aspects of mature trees, such as the horse chestnut and the two large beech trees to the rear of the property and on the oak tree to the side of the front drive (see Plan below). They will be positioned at a height of at least three metres.

Two boxes will be **Schwegler 1B nest boxes (32mm hole) or similar**, and will attract great tit, blue tit, coal tit, nuthatch and house sparrow.

https://www.wildcare.co.uk/schwegler-1b-bird-box-32.html?gclid=EAlaIQobChMlyOeaxcqChAMVYopQBh1yKQwCEAAYAiAAEgIFHfD_BwE

The remaining nest box will be **Schwegler 1B nest box (26mm hole) or similar**, designed to attract small hole-nesting passerines generally, including blue tits, great tits and coal tits, although they will also attract other small birds as roosting places during cold weather, and potentially bats.

https://www.wildcare.co.uk/schwegler-1b-bird-box-26mm.html?gclid=EAlaIQobChMIxdyti8uChAMVxZVQBh2W3gGVEAAYAiAAEgLUEvD_BwE

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, so they have been sited near hedgerows for this reason. The 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).

In addition to the bird boxes for smaller birds, an owl nesting box will be erected on one of the larger boundary trees. This will be **The Owlbox Sanctuary Barn Owl Box (or similar)**

<https://www.theowlbox.co.uk/shop/dark-brown-barn-owl-box>

Please see plan below for bird box locations.

Bats

Two bat boxes are to be installed south facing aspects of two mature trees - the Beech and the Oak tree along the hedgerow (see Plan below) to ensure they are away from light sources from the property and the road. They will be positioned at a height of at least three metres. These boxes will be **Schwegler 2F general purpose bat boxes (or similar)** suitable for all smaller British bat species.

https://www.arkwildlife.co.uk/product/schwegler-2f-bat-box/?gad_source=1&gclid=EAlaIQobChMI49ngo8qChAMVEYhQBh1EYAC1EAAYASAAEgLDHfD_BwE

Invertebrates

Numerous log piles already exist within the gardens on fields of the property but in addition, two insect boxes are to be installed facing south on two of the smaller trees within the gardens (see Plan below). These are best positioned at a height of approximately 1m from the ground.

1 x Marchena medium insect house (or similar)

<https://www.reallywildbirdfood.co.uk/bees--bugs---butterflies/marchena-medium-insect-house/mih>

1 x Friendly Bug Barn (or similar)

<https://www.reallywildbirdfood.co.uk/bees--bugs---butterflies/friendly-bug-barn/lbt3>

Hedgehogs

There are no fences on site so 'hedgehog gates' to allow free movement of hedgehogs through the landscape are not required. However, one 'Eco Hedgehog Nesting Box' will be located in a secluded spot in the shrub border to the rear of the property (see Plan below).

https://www.amazon.co.uk/Selections-Barkwood-Hogitat-Hedgehog-Shelter/dp/B07QVXB5TW/ref=asc_df_B07QVXB5TW/?tag=googshopuk-21&linkCode=df0&hvadid=310886187971&hvpos=&hvnetw=g&hvrnd=4718854717857921685&hvpone=&hvptwo=&hvwmt=&hvdev=c&hvdvcm dl=&hvlocint=&hvlocphy=9045142&hvtargid=pla-734861308780&psc=1&mcid=ee8aee87729f3bff8112b96c172b7e05

IMPORTANT. The measures outlined in this report will be monitored and managed by the property owner who will undertake regular checks and any maintenance required to ensure the longevity of all suggested measures. Specialist advice will be sought if necessary.



- Bird Box
- Bat Box
- Insect Box
- Hedgehog Box
- Owl Box



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PLANNING

PLANNING

Mr & Mrs J Skarbek

Rear Conservatory extension
 Godfrey House, Coldharbour Rd,
 Penshurst Kent TN11 8ET

Proposed Site Plan

1:200 @ A1

checked: JL date: 25/09/2023

engineered: JL date: 25/09/2023

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