

Dale Elliot

Landivar Architects

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4th August 2023 (Updated 16th November 2023, & 18th January 2024)

Dear Dale,

Covering Letter accompanying Ecological Design Strategy for Land the Rear of 28-34 Longhill Road, Ovingdean, BN2 7BE – Discharge of Condition 8

The Ecology Partnership was commissioned by Landivar Architects to help produce an Ecological Design Strategy (EDS) for the proposed development to the rear of 28-34 Longhill Road, Ovingdean, BN2 7BE.

In 2023 planning permission was approved for “Erection of 6no. four bedroom two storey houses with new vehicular access, car parking, cycle parking and refuse storage facilities” (Planning Ref: BH2022/03894). As part of this approval however, a number of planning conditions were needed to be discharged prior to start of works. The EDS is required in order to discharge Condition 8 as detailed below:

“No development shall take place to plots E and F until an ecological design strategy (EDS) addressing enhancement of the site to provide biodiversity net gain, including a sensitive lighting strategy for bats, specification for swift bricks, bat boxes, bee bricks, landscape planting of high wildlife value and biodiverse green roofs has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The EDS shall include the following:

- a) purpose and conservation objectives for the proposed works;*
- b) review of site potential and constraints;*
- c) detailed design(s) and/or working method(s) to achieve stated objectives;*
- d) extent and location /area of proposed works on appropriate scale maps and plans;*
- e) type and source of materials to be used where appropriate, e.g. native species of local provenance;*
- f) timetable for implementation demonstrating that works are aligned with the proposed phasing of development;*
- g) persons responsible for implementing the works;*

h) details of initial aftercare and long-term maintenance;

i) details for monitoring and remedial measures;

j) details for disposal of any wastes arising from works. “

An EDS has already been produced for plots 1-4 (A-D), as such this EDS covers plots 5 and 6 only (E+F). This document is a supporting letter and should be read in conjunction with the EDS and Landscape plans produced for the site by Landivar Architects.

Conservation Objectives

The conservation objectives for the development are as follows:

- Ensure works avoid potential harm to protected and notable species
- Avoid any potential impacts on Ovingdean Copse Local Wildlife Site (LWS) as a result of construction as well as long-term.
- Provide new roosting opportunities for bats
- Provide new nesting opportunities for birds
- Provide new opportunities for invertebrates
- Maintain opportunities for hedgehog

Ecological Constraints

The Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and follow-up surveys for badgers and bats identified the following ecological constraints on site:

Ovingdean Copse LWS

This non-statutory designated site is located within the eastern edge of the site and is designated for its supportive function as a green corridor within the local area, comprising a large strip of priority woodland habitat. Without suitable protection there is a risk development could negatively impact this LWS, which would not be in line with national and local planning policy.

Badgers

Whilst no setts were found within the area associated with plots 5-6, historic badger activity has been noted in the adjacent plots to the south-east. Owing to their transient nature, it is possible new setts may be created on site prior to works. Badgers and their setts are protected under the Protection of Badgers Act 1992. Without suitable mitigation there is a risk of an offence being committed in relation to badgers during ground works.

Reptiles

Grassland, shrubs and brash/log piles on site was determined to be of low suitability for reptiles. All reptiles are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Without suitable mitigation there is a risk of an offence being committed in relation to reptiles, during site clearance.

Nesting birds

Trees, shrubs and scrub on site were determined to be suitable for nesting birds. Under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (As amended), all wild birds, their nests and eggs are protected by law. Without suitable mitigation there is a risk of an offence being committed in relation to nesting birds, during site clearance.

Hedgehog

Shrubs and brash on site are suitable for hedgehog. Under the Wild Mammals Protection Act (1996), it is an offence to unnecessary suffering to hedgehog through certain means. Without suitable mitigation there is a risk of an offence being committed in relation to nesting birds, during site clearance.

Methods to achieve conservation objectives

Avoiding harm to protected species

In order to avoid harmful impacts on protected species the site works will follow strict sensitive working practices as detailed in the accompanying Construction and Environmental Management Plan (CEMP: Biodiversity) which includes individual method statements for each species. These include update badger survey prior to ground works, checks of vegetation for active birds nests by an ecologist prior to clearance, sensitive two-stage cut of vegetation, careful dismantling of log piles and brash piles outside of reptile hibernation period. A sensitive lighting strategy has also been produced to ensure that the development does not result in any long-term significant impacts on commuting bats. On the basis that all methods detailed in the CEMP: Biodiversity and Bat Sensitive Lighting Strategy are adhered to, then this conservation objective would be achieved.

Protection of Ovingdean Copse LWS

In order to protect the LWS that adjoins the eastern boundary of the site, a biodiversity protection/enhancement zone (BEZ/BPZ) will be established as detailed in the CEMP: Biodiversity. No works will be permitted within the BPZ/BEZ (other than removal of non-native shrubs and planting of native tree species). The protection and enhancement of the BPZ/BEZ will in turn protect the LWS

during construction. Residents of the new dwellings will not be granted access to the BEZ/BPZ with no gates included at the rear of their gardens, and so will also not be able to access the LWS.

The BEZ will be planted with eight new trees, planted as light standards, with each one spaced at least 4m from other planted or existing trees, to ensure sufficient space for long term growth:

- 2 x Wild cherry *Prunus avium*
- 2 x Hornbeam *Betula pendula*
- 2 x Beech *Fagus sylvatica*
- 4 x Field maple *Acer campestre*

In addition to these trees the BEZ will be planted with a diverse mix of native shrub species in the form of whips, spaced at 1.5m intervals, comprising:

- Blackthorn *Prunus spinosa*
- Hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna*
- Common dogwood *Cornus sanguinea*
- Wayfaring tree *Viburnum lantana*
- Guelder rose *Viburnum opulus*
- Hazel *Corylus avellana*

In order to provide a glade within the scrub, a 5x5m area in the centre of the BEZ will not be planted with the any trees or shrubs.

The north-western boundary of the BEZ will be planted with a native hedgerow comprising:

- Blackthorn *Prunus spinosa*
- Hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna*
- Common dogwood *Cornus sanguinea*
- Guelder rose *Viburnum opulus*
- Hazel *Corylus avellana*
- Spindle *Euonymus europaeus*
- Wild privet *Ligustrum vulgare*

Specifications for planting are provided within the Proposed Landscaping Plan.

Provision of new bat roosting opportunities

A total of four new bat boxes will be incorporated into plots 5 and 6. This will increase the roosting opportunities on site for bats, therefore providing an effective enhancement for them. On each building two bat boxes will be incorporated into the north-facing wall. Integrated bat boxes have been used in favour of external boxes as they cannot be removed by the residents and will provide long term opportunities for bats. The model used will be dependent on the availability at the time of construction, however it should ideally be one of the following:

- Vivara Pro Build-in WoodStone Bat Box (CJ Wildlife)
- Vivara Pro Build-in WoodStone Bat Tube (CJ Wildlife)
- Bat Block (Green & Blue)
- Habibat Bat Box (Habibat)
- 1FR/2FR Schwegler bat Tube (Schwegler)
- Ibstock Enclosed Bat Box 'B'/'C' (Ibstock)
- B10 Bat Tube (Cambrian Conservation)

The bat box should be installed as per the manufacturer's specification, and should be located as high as possible on the walls. As these are integrated boxes they must be installed at the same time the exterior walls are being built, as they cannot be retrofitted.

Bat sensitive lighting

The lighting strategy for Plots E and F is the same as the approved strategy for Plots A-D, making use of two additional low-level KOLO Lighting Bollards (See Drawing PJR L15-01-405). As such, it is determined that the external lighting on site will not result in any significant negative effects on commuting/foraging bats.

Provision of new bird nesting opportunities

A total of six new swift boxes will be incorporated into the development of the two plots. This will provide nesting opportunities on site for swifts, therefore providing an effective enhancement for them, as no suitable nesting habitat is currently present. Three swift boxes will be incorporated side by side into the north-facing wall on each dwelling. Integrated swift boxes have been used in favour of external boxes as they cannot be removed by the residents and will provide long term opportunities for swifts. The model used will be dependent on the availability at the time of construction, however it should ideally be one of the following:

- WoodStone Build-in Swift Nest Box Deep (Vivara Pro)
- WoodStone Build-in Swift Nest Box B (CJ Wildlife)

- Manthorpe Swift Brick (Manthorpe Building Products)
- Swift Block (Green & Blue)
- Vivara Pro Cambridge Brick Faced Swift Nest Box (Vivara Pro)
- No. 16/17 Schwegler Swift Box (Schwegler)
- Ibstock Eco-habitat for Swifts (Ibstock)
- Schwegler Lightweight Swift Box Type 1A (Schwegler)
- WoodStone Build-in Invisible Swift Box (CJ Wildlife)

The swift boxes should be installed as per the manufacturer's specification and should be located just below the eaves, where they will be sheltered from the sun. As these are integrated boxes, they must be installed at the same time the exterior walls are being built, as they cannot be retrofitted. A total of 18 swift boxes will be installed across all six plots as per condition 23.

Provision of new invertebrates' opportunities

A single Bee Brick¹ will be incorporated into the south-eastern elevation of each building in accordance with Condition 22. This will provide nesting opportunities for solitary bees, therefore providing an effective enhancement for them. Integrated bee bricks have been used in favour of external features as they cannot be removed by the residents and will provide long term opportunities for solitary bees.

Provision of at least three log piles within the BEZ will provide new opportunities for saproxylic beetles, as well as other invertebrates associated with deadwood. These logs should be sourced from trees that were felled to facilitate the development where possible and should be partially buried to 50cm depth.

The verges along the access road, and the woodland buffer zone at the end of each garden will be seeded with an EM6 calcareous meadow mix from Emorsgate, and all buildings will feature biodiverse green roofs. This, as well as the use of flowering plants and shrubs of known wildlife value within the planting scheme, will provide an abundance of diverse sources of nectar for pollinating insects. Further detail and specifications for planting are provided within the Proposed Landscaping Plan.

The roofs of each building will feature a biodiverse roof system comprising a mix of drought tolerant and hardy native wildflowers, with a diversity of at least 20 different species. Different niches will be created within the green roof with no single ecotone accounting for more than 80% of the roof. The substrate should undulate slightly, as opposed to being completely flat. The substrate will need to have a varied depth of 80 – 150mm with at least 50% at 150mm. This variation in substrate depth will

¹ Produced by Green & Blue

help create different niches within the green roof habitat, further strengthening diversity and providing valuable invertebrate habitat.

Maintain opportunities for hedgehog

All garden fences will include at least two access points for hedgehogs: one on the north-western boundary and one on south-eastern edges. Plots A, E & F have an access point on the north-eastern fence into the BPZ/BEZ. The northern and southern-most gardens will provide access out into the woodland to the north-east. This will allow hedgehogs to move freely between the gardens of the developments for foraging and finding refuge from badgers. This access will comprise a 13x13cm hole in the bottom of the fence.

Timetable of works

Month	Development works	Ecology works ²
Jan/Feb 2024	Set-up tree protection	Update badger survey
	Clear trees and shrubs within works area and non-native shrubs from BEZ to 200mm.	
	Site set-up and hoarding	
	Drain pond with low-powered pump if amphibians confirmed absent by Ecological Clerk of Works (ECoW)	ECoW to confirm absence of amphibians within pond
March/April 2024	Once temperatures exceeding 10°C: Sensitive clearance of remaining habitats on site to take place including draining of pond if not done over winter.	Any suitable bird nesting habitat not cleared before March to be subject to nesting bird check immediately prior to removal, to first confirm absence of active nests. Once temperatures exceeding 10°C: Two-stage cut and precautionary methods to avoid impacts on reptiles, amphibians and hedgehog, under guidance and supervision of ECoW, who will safely capture and relocate any individuals found into the BEZ/BPZ. Log/brush piles to be sensitively excavated under direction of ECoW
Week 1	Demolition and full site clearance	None needed
Week 8	Excavation	Ensure any pits include means of escape for small mammals and badgers. Block off any open pipes or conduits overnight to prevent wildlife entering them.

² Full details for ecology mitigation measures during the works are detailed within the CEMP:Biodiversity document, which should be adhered to throughout the works. (The Ecology Partnership, 2023)

Week 11	Foundations and retaining walls	Install integrated swift/bat boxes, bee bricks, and biodiverse green roof systems.
Week 15	Internal works, doors and windows	
Week 41	External Landscaping	Ensure hedgehog access in rear fences. Ensure wildlife planting follows the specification within the landscape plan
Week 48	Completion	ECoW to survey site and confirm all wildlife features have been incorporated.

Responsibilities

Role	Name	Contact Details
Lead contractor	You Are Home.	Site manager TBC
Landscape Architect	Landivar	Martin Landivar martin@landivar-architects.com 01273 819493
Ecologist/ECoW	The Ecology Partnership	Matt Pendry matthew@ecologypartnership.com 01372 364133

Aftercare and long-term maintenance

Swift boxes should be cleaned out in the winter months (November-February) with a brush and no use of chemicals. Bat boxes and bee bricks do not require cleaning. If any future works could impact a bat box, an ecologist should be consulted to advise. Initial after care of planting on site is detailed in the Landscape Plan. Long term maintenance of planting will be detailed within the LEMP to be produced and approved prior to first occupation.

Monitoring

No monitoring of private residential areas is required post development. Trees within the BEZ would be monitored on an annual basis for signs of disease, as part of the woodland management plan, to be detailed in the LEMP.

Waste disposal

A small proportion of logs obtained from necessary felling on site, will be retained in log-piles within the BEZ. Remaining construction waste will be dispensed of in line with industry best practise.

Kind regards,


A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Chris Jennings', written in a cursive style.

Chris Jennings BSc (Hons) MSc MCIEEM


Director


Appendix 1: Mitigation Plan





 Site boundary


Mitigation/Protection Zones


 Biodiversity Protection Zone
(No Works Permitted)

 Biodiversity Enhancement Zone
(permitted works restricted to
removal of non-native shrubs
& planting of native trees/shrubs only)


 Clear to 200mm outside of nesting
bird season. Sensitive reptile clearance
then required in active period.

 Sensitive clearance for reptiles
during active season


 Previously cleared areas,
no additional mitigation required


 Pond to be drained and carefully
excavated

 Local Wildlife Site Boundary

 Heras fencing (Tree protection)

Retained habitats

 Retained scrub/shrubs

 Retained tree outside BEZ/BPZ

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