

PN.03/67.ROR/0424

Landscaping & Wildlife Nesting Box Details

**PROPERTY: 67 ROYAL OAK ROAD, BEXLEYHEATH, KENT
DA6 7HQ**

PART-RETROSPECTIVE Erection of a 4 bed detached dwellinghouse with associated car and cycle parking provision, refuse storage and landscaping (enlargement of the implemented 3 bedroom dwellinghouse permitted under planning application 21/02245/FUL).

Overview

1. These details concern the new dwellinghouse, 67a Royal Oak Road. The bulk of these details have already been approved under planning permissions 21/02245/FUL and 21/02245/FUL01. This note should be read in conjunction with the Schedule of Materials and Finishes (**SMF/67.ROR/0424**) and Supporting Document 01 (**SD.01/67.ROR/0424**) as well as all Plan Drawings provided which show the proposed landscaping and nesting box features, particularly:

DRAW/67.ROR/0424/003 – Proposed Site Plan (1:200 @ A1)

DRAW/67.ROR/0424/009 – Proposed Drain Connections and SuDS Management Plan (1:100 @ A1)

DRAW/67.ROR/0424/010 – Wildlife Nesting Box Details (1:20 & 1:100 @ A3)
2. Alongside the abovementioned drawings and documents, this Planning Note provides full details regarding landscaping design and wildlife nesting proposals for 67 and 67a Royal Oak Road and, if approved, should remove the need for any pre-commencement or pre-occupation conditions relating to these matters.

Site conditions and pre-existing landscaping features

Soil conditions

3. The site is underlain with Harwich Formation Sands & Gravels (Sandy Soil). A percolation test undertaken in 2023 revealed a good level of permeability and supports the use of permeable paving to new areas of hard surfacing, as detailed in **SuDS/67.ROR/0424** (Surface Water Drainage Design: Sustainable Urban Drainage System Plan).

Site Levels and Gradients

4. The land gently slopes downwards from the house, towards the southern and western boundaries of the site. As works have commenced, the land has been levelled somewhat toward the rear although a gentle gradient remains.
5. The land directly connecting the proposed ground floor rear addition is to be made slightly higher in accordance with the levels shown on the proposed drawings (finished patio height will be 150mm below DPC and door threshold).

External hard surfaces

6. Originally, the front garden had been hard surfaced with concrete. Much of this was overgrown with weeds. The side and rear gardens were greened (see point 9, below).
7. As of today's date (12/04/2024) following commencement of 21/02245/FUL, much of the concrete at the front of the site has been broken up and removed exposing the unmade earth, pending the laying of new paving at the front of 67a Royal Oak Road.

External soft landscape

8. Originally, areas that had once been lawn were almost completely covered with common garden weeds which can be seen in the photographs provided in the original submission (see P/67.ROR/0721 of permission 21/02245/FUL). This had been the case for some years with the large garden proving difficult for the owner to manage.
9. The weeds were cleared in the spring of 2023 which allowed more accurate measurements of the site's exterior to be taken that year. These revealed a wider plot than originally found and the existing and proposed drawings have been updated to reflect this. Currently, the gardens of both houses are either grassed or of unmade ground as works commence.

Mature trees and shrubs

10. There are two mature trees within the site boundary, and three located in neighbouring gardens close to the development which are listed in the table below. These are all positioned along the rear boundary fence and are a significant distance from the site of the proposed building work. None are within felling distance of the development.

Table 1 Existing Trees

Tree	Type	Age	Approx. Height	Condition	Owner
T1	Ash	Mature	10m	Fair	67a Royal Oak Road
T2	Ash	Mature	12m	Fair	13 Oaklands Close
T3	Ash	Mature	9m	Fair	13 Oaklands Close
T4	Cypress	Mature	7m	Fair	67 Royal Oak Road
T5	Oak	Mature	12m	Fair	13 Oaklands Close

Proposal

Impact on existing trees

11. All abovementioned trees are to be retained. The lawn area to be given to 67a remains large and the whole of the garden including the patio will be permeably surfaced, either with grass/vegetation or permeable paving so that the health of the trees are not affected via root severance or any other common works related damage.

Site Levels and Gradients

12. Site levels and gradients will remain largely the same as they are now. A level threshold will be provided between the front door and front garden/driveway in accordance with Part M4(3) Category 3 – Wheelchair User Dwellings. There will be a small step down to the patio from the kitchen extension (150mm). The lawn will gradually slope up to the patio.

Boundary treatments

13. Boundary, dwarf and retaining walls will be constructed of red engineering bricks similar to the facing brick to be used on the proposed house and topped with concrete coping stones.
14. Fence panels throughout the development will be either 1.8m or 1.5m high treated softwood overlap wooden fence panels fixed upon concrete boards and between concrete fence posts, or atop boundary dwarf walls.
15. Please refer to the Schedule of Materials and Finishes (**SMF/67.ROR/0424**) for further detail and images of the abovementioned proposed surfaces/finishes.

Hard landscaping (67 and 67a Royal Oak Road)

16. A SuD(S) compliant permeable paving system is proposed. Driveways, footpaths and patios will be underlain with a permeable bedding aggregate onto which traditional style concrete block paving will be laid with a permeable jointing aggregate swept into the gaps between them.
17. The favoured block paving system is Bradstone Driveway Infilta Block Paving in Autumn, or an equivalent product. A low level block kerb will edge the hedging at the front of the site such as Bradstone Block Kerb Large in Charcoal, or an equivalent product.
18. Please refer to the Schedule of Materials and Finishes (**SMF/67.ROR/0424**) for further detail and images of the abovementioned proposed products.

Cycle storage

19. A ground anchored bicycle storage shed with capacity for 2 adult bicycles will be provided in the rear garden patio, as shown in Drawings 003 and 004. See **Planning Note 01 'Parking Provision'** for further details.

Refuse storage






20. Refuse containers will be stored in the front garden behind the proposed evergreen hedging which will screen views of them from the street, as shown in Drawings 003 and 004. See **Planning Note 03 'Refuse and Recycling Storage and Collection Details'**, for further details.

Soft landscaping (67a Royal Oak Road)

21. A line of Photinia x fraseri ‘Red Robin’ (evergreen hedge) will be planted along the front western boundaryline, screening the refuse storage area. This hardy species thrives in all soil types and shade conditions with an average growth rate of up to 40cm per year and a height that is easily maintained between 1-4m (2m max height is preferred).

22. 4 species of shrub and flowering plants are proposed to be planted within the rear garden, bordering the lawn. The following perennial species are proposed, selected for their ability to thrive in sandy soil, as found onsite, and borders that are either completely exposed to sunlight (per the side border) or partially shaded (per the back border).

Table 2 Proposed flora

Species	Photinia x fraseri ‘Red Robin’ Hedge	Armeria Maritima ‘Alba’ (Thrift – Alba)	Stachys Byzantina ‘Silver Carpet’ (Lamb’s Ear – Silver Carpet)	Viola ‘Bridie’	Helleborus Thibetanus (‘Tibetan hellebore’)
Foliage	Evergreen	Evergreen	Evergreen	Evergreen	Deciduous
Flowering Season	Spring	Spring & Summer	N/A	Summer & Autumn	Spring
Ultimate Spread	4.0 m	0.5 m	1.0 m	0.5 m	0.5 m
Ultimate Height	4.0 m	0.5 m	0.5 m	0.5 m	0.5 m
Hardiness	H5	H5	H7	H5	H5
Pollinator	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Siting	Front garden	Back garden (borders)	Back garden (borders)	Back garden (borders)	Back garden (borders)
Image					

Landscaping Maintenance Schedule

- 23. The Schedule set out in Table 3 below had initially been provided in the SuD(S) Plan approved under conditions application 21/02245/FUL01 and is now submitted for the development as it is proposed to be amended.
- 24. The maintenance of the site will be the responsibility of the Owner, and any future Owner of the dwellinghouse.

Table 3 Maintenance Schedule

When	Action/s
Weekly or Monthly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Tend to garden on a basis as appropriate for the season. 2. In the winter, clear hard surfaced areas of waste plant matter (e.g. leaves) as regularly as necessary to allow rainwater infiltration.
Every 3 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Inspect soakaway. 4. Inspect manholes. 5. Clear drains of waste plant matter. 6. Prune shrubs.

Habitat Enhancement

- 25. Condition 5 of permission 21/02245/FUL requested details of bird nesting boxes/bricks to be submitted to the Local Planning Authority prior to the occupation of the house. It read:
- 26. 5. Prior to occupation of the development hereby approved, details of bird nesting boxes/bricks to be incorporated into the development shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Bird nesting boxes/bricks should be suitable for urban living bird species. The details shall include the exact location, number specification and design of the habitats.

The boxes/bricks shall be installed within the development in accordance with the approved details, prior to the first occupation of the building to which they form part or the first use of the space in which they are contained and shall be maintained as such thereafter.

Reason: To ensure the development provides the maximum possible provision towards creation of habitats and valuable areas for biodiversity.

27. The developer proposes to install 1x Schwegler Swift Nest Box “17B” along the south-facing rear elevation, just below the eaves of the main roof. The box will be bolted on via brackets to make maintenance or replacement of the box or nearby guttering/roof fascias and soffits straightforward and cost-effective. The base of the nest box will be approx. 5.2m above the patio. The exact position and appearance of the proposed Nest Box are shown in Drawing DRAW/67.ROR/0424/010 ‘Wildlife Nesting Box Details’ and further product details are provided in Supporting Document SD.01/67.ROR/0424/01 ‘Swift Nesting Box 17 Series Specifications (Schwegler)’.

Assessment

28. Policy DP11 ‘Achieving high-quality design’ of Bexley’s Local Plan (Adopted 2023) sets out the Council’s requirements for developments in order to achieve high quality buildings and spaces. Regarding landscaping proposals, it states that irrespective of location, development proposals for new buildings, extensions and alterations are expected to **‘b. provide a high standard of landscaping design, appropriate to the proposal and with regard to the character of the surrounding area’**.
29. I consider these landscaping proposals that had previously been approved under the original planning consent as well as conditions application FUL01, to remain appropriate for the site and proportionate to the development as it is now proposed to be amended.
30. Local Plan Policy DP20 ‘Biodiversity and geodiversity in developments’ states **‘Development proposals will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that: (...) c. biodiversity enhancement measures and where appropriate mitigation measures have been incorporated within the design, layout and materials used in the built structure and landscaping.’**
31. The proposals will enhance biodiversity on site through the incorporation of the shrubs, plants and bird nesting box proposed as shown in Drawing DRAW/67.ROR/0424/010 and Supporting Document 01.
32. Point 2 of Local Plan Policy DP21 ‘Greening of development sites’ states **‘Development proposals will be required to provide a high standard of landscape design, having regard to the well-being, water, wildlife and character of the surrounding area, ensuring sustainable planting for the long term and be supported by appropriate management and maintenance measures.’**
33. As previously mentioned, all plant species proposed on site are fairly low maintenance and have been selected for their ability to thrive in the soil

conditions found on site and in the border conditions where planting is planned. Providing that the maintenance plan set out in Table 3 is adhered to, the soft landscaping proposed should endure long term.

34. Point 5 of the same Policy adds that ***'5. Planting and landscaping within developments and ecological buffer zones: (a) will be required to contribute to habitats and features of landscape and nature conservation importance; and, (b) must not include 'potentially invasive, non-native species' and, where found on a site, appropriate measures to remove these species must be taken as part of the redevelopment.'***
35. Regarding point (a), the nesting box will offer a new habitat for small birds in an ideal location that is opposite several mature trees. Regarding point (b), given that the sandy soil on site has been found to be particularly fast draining (see SUDS/67.ROR/0424) most of the plant species proposed are native to warmer climates where these soil conditions are more prominent, although each species proposed is well established in the UK. Despite this, they are not invasive or prone to extensive multiplication and should therefore continue to be considered as appropriate.

Summary

36. The landscaping proposals have previously been approved under consents 21/02245/FUL and 21/02245/FUL01. I consider that the proposals remain appropriate and accord with all relevant current local planning policy for the new house as it is proposed to be extended.
37. Details have also been provided to confirm the type of Wildlife Nesting Box to be provided at the site, delivering the information that was necessary to satisfy Condition 5 of consent 21/02245/FUL. This removes the need for a similar condition to any forthcoming planning consent, should these details be found acceptable.
38. Should you find this document to be insufficient or require any further information, please contact Janine Mustafa of this office at your earliest convenience; janine@langleyscs.co.uk / 02082981707.

Janine R. Mustafa BSc (Hons),

Urban Planning & Design Consultant for Langleys Chartered Surveyors

15/04/2024