
**Land at Johnson Drive
Finchampstead**

Report for:
Palatine Homes Limited
Ospreys
Scotswood Close
Beaconsfield
Buckinghamshire
HP9 2LJ

INTRODUCTION

Overview

AA Environmental Limited (AAe) has been commissioned by Palatine Homes Limited to produce a Biodiversity Enhancement Plan (BEP) for the above site. This revision has been completed to address the comments raised by the council ecologist. This BEP has been produced using the Nature Conservancy Council document¹ as a guide, with the intention to enhance the value of the site by creating a range of new habitats/opportunities for wildlife. The Plan also details the sympathetic management of these features to maximise their ecological value in the long term. In addition, this report will provide the information to assist with discharging Condition 8 attached to the Decision Notice (Wokingham Borough Council application ref: 223592) which states:

Biodiversity mitigation and enhancements

No development, including site clearance, shall commence until a details of ecological enhancement proposals including enhancements outlined within Section 5.2 and Appendix E and detailed Appendix F of the Ecological Appraisal as prepared by Deepdene (November 2022) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The ecological enhancement scheme shall include provision of minimum one bat brick or box and one bird box per dwelling, log piles, wildlife friendly fencing and native tree and hedge planting and a reptile mitigation and enhancement strategy including details of monitoring maintenance, funding and management responsibilities. The development works are to be carried out in full accordance with the ecological enhancement scheme so approved prior to the occupation of any part of the development or in accordance with a timetable approved in writing by the local planning authority.

Reason: To incorporate biodiversity in and around developments, limit the impact of the scheme on reptiles and to secure a net gain for biodiversity. Relevant policies: Paragraphs 170, 174 and 180 of the NPPF, Policy CP7 of the Core Strategy, Policy TB23 of the Managing Development Delivery Local Plan and Section 41 NERC Act re. UK Biodiversity Action Plan Priority Species (Species of Principal Importance).

An Annotated Site Plan (Figure 1) showing the various enhancement measures has been attached for reference.

Site Description and Proposals

The site is located off Johnson Drive in Finchampstead, centred at National Grid Reference: SU 805651 and covers approximately 1.3 hectares. The site comprised the existing buildings, associated hardstanding and grassland areas. The site was bordered by woodland to the north and east and by residential properties and associated gardens to the south and west.

The consented scheme is for the erection of five residential dwellings with double garages. This will require the demolition of the existing outbuildings and the clearance of some vegetation. It is anticipated that the majority of the boundary vegetation will be retained, protected and enhanced as part of the works.

¹ Nature Conservancy Council 1988 (reprinted 1991). Site management plans for nature conservation, a working guide.

EVALUATION AND OBJECTIVES

The key enhancement measure will be the introduction of new wildlife friendly planting, which will provide a range of habitats for local wildlife. Additional measures will be to install a series of wildlife boxes at suitable locations on the site in order to enhance roosting/nesting/sheltering opportunities.

PRESCRIPTIONS

Overview

The key enhancement measure will be to introduce new wildlife-friendly planting within the site. Once established this will provide a range of habitats for local species and act as wildlife corridors, increasing connectivity between the site and neighbouring habitats. Additional measures will be to install a series of wildlife boxes, hibernacula and log piles at suitable locations on the site in order to enhance roosting, nesting and sheltering opportunities for a range of species.

Bat Boxes

In order to provide roosting opportunities for bats, three bat boxes (x3 Eco Kent Bat Boxes, or equivalent) will be installed on suitable trees on site. In addition, five bat tubes (Ibstock Enclosed Bat Box B, or equivalent) will be installed onto the new builds. The boxes will be positioned in accordance with best practice and installed prior to occupation. Indicative locations are shown on Figure 1 and a guidance document is attached at Appendix A. Although, bat boxes do not require regular cleaning periodic maintenance checks should be carried out with any damaged boxes replaced as necessary (**Note: any works/checks to bat boxes might require a licensed bat worker**).

Bird Boxes

In order to enhance nesting opportunities for birds, five bird boxes (x5 Vivaro Pro Seville Bird Boxes, or equivalent) will be installed on suitable trees on site. The nest boxes on trees should be cleaned out once a year during the winter months, and, in the event that any become damaged, replaced as necessary. In addition, five bird boxes (x5 Habibat Swift Box, or equivalent) will be installed onto the new builds. Integrated bird boxes do not require cleaning. All boxes will be positioned in accordance with best practice and installed prior to occupation. Indicative locations are shown on Figure 1 and a guidance document is attached at Appendix A.

Hedgehog Gaps

In order to allow free movement of hedgehogs and other wildlife, enhancing connectivity with adjacent habitats, five hedgehog gaps will be installed at the boundaries of the new private gardens and boundary fences of the site. The hedgehog gaps will be regularly checked and kept free from obstructions. Indicative locations are shown on Figure 1.

Hibernacula

In order to enhance the sheltering opportunities for reptiles on the site two hibernacula will be created within the on-site wildlife area and wildlife corridor (a copy of generic reptile hibernacula specification has been attached at Appendix B for reference). The hibernacula created will also be monitored, with any remedial works carried out as necessary, such as addition of material, indicative locations are shown on Figure 1.

Log Piles

Log piles will be created to provide enhanced shelter and overwintering for invertebrates and other species. Any larger material arising from on-site management operations will be added to the log piles so that the log piles are maintained and contain wood in a varying state of decay, indicative locations are shown on Figure 1.

New Planting

As part of the overall landscape treatment of the site, planting will be carried out. Such planting will include a variety of native and ornamental species of value to wildlife. In particular, flowering plants will be of benefit to invertebrate species and shrubs and trees may provide nesting opportunities for birds once they become established.

A check of the new planting will be conducted, with replacement planting carried out where necessary. The planting will require minimal maintenance, with occasional weeding and pruning of plants where necessary. Shrub areas, planted for the benefit of invertebrates, should be covered with a mulch for water retention, which will aid flower/nectar production. Regular dead-heading of flowers will encourage further flowering, improving the supply of nectar for butterflies and other insects. At the end of the season, plants should not be pruned or dead-headed until later in the winter, allowing birds to feed on any seeds.

Wildlife Area and Wildlife Corridor

Wildflowers will be sown within the 'Wildlife Area' and 'Wildlife Corridor' areas in the north, east and west of the site. Further details are shown on the Soft Landscaping Plan (Figure 2). This type of habitat will provide opportunities for a range of wildlife, including invertebrates.

Management - first-year cutting may not be necessary but will be dependent upon site conditions and sward height. Initially aiming to keep the sward height shorter than 100 mm to encourage tillering and reduce competition from rank species (species such as yellow rattle could be sown to assist with reducing the dominance of grasses). After mowing, cuttings should be removed from the area. The grassland should be cut on an annual basis in year 2 and 3 in late summer/autumn, which will allow flowers to set seed and certain invertebrates to complete their life cycle, with all arisings left on site for a few days to allow the seed bank to disperse, before being collected and disposed of either in designated composting areas or disposed off-site. It is important to remove arisings from the area to maintain low nutrient status, favourable to wildflowers. Periodic clearance of weeds and any scrub encroachment will be required to maintain the open nature of the grassland, with all arisings retained removed from site or used as chippings to act as a mulch in suitable locations on the site. Spot control of invasive/over dominate species (e.g. common nettles, ragwort and spear thistle) may need to be carried out.

Hedge Planting

As part of the landscaping, new native hedgerows will be planted, with species including hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), hazel (*Corylus avellana*), field maple (*Acer campestre*), wild privet (*Ligustrum vulgare*), blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*) and hornbeam (*Carpinus betulus*). Further details are shown on the Soft Landscaping Plan (Figure 2). The hedgerows will be of benefit to wildlife, providing a nectar source for insects when in flower, as well as enhancing habitat connectivity.

Management – annual checks of the new planting will be completed, with replacement planting carried out where necessary. Cutting of hedgerows will be carried out on a rotational basis with only a third cut in any one year, where practicable to do so. Any cutting/pruning will be timed during the late winter months. Late January/early February is ideal as the majority of the berries have been eaten but before the onset of the main bird nesting season. All arisings will be retained on site either as low brash or as chippings to act as a mulch, where practicable to do so.

Trees

A number of new trees will be planted on the site to complement the established trees to be retained, with species including field maple, silver birch (*Betula pendula*), hornbeam, cherry apple (*Malus domestica*), whitebeam (*Sorbus aria*), rowan (*Sorbus aucuparia*), wild service tree (*Sorbus torminalis*), large-leaved lime (*Tilia platyphyllos*), oak (*Quercus robur*) and other tree species. Further details are shown on the Soft Landscaping Plan (Figure 2). Once established, the new trees will provide a food source for a variety of wildlife, including insects and birds, and bird nesting opportunities.

Management – annual check of new planting will be carried out, with replacement planting carried out where necessary. Once established, the trees may need periodic pruning, with any arisings retained on site either as low brush or as chippings to act as a mulch, where practicable to do so. Weeding will be carried out where necessary to ensure new planting establishes. The timing of any management should be carried out during the late winter months. January is ideal as the majority of the berries have been eaten, but before the onset of the main bird nesting season.

Boundary Treatment

Where possible, existing boundary vegetation will be retained and protected, with any new boundary treatment designed to promote permeability of the site to minimise fragmentation, allowing free movement of wildlife throughout the site. These measures will aim to strengthen habitat connectivity and provide additional foraging habitat, cover and nesting opportunities for local wildlife. As previously detailed, strategically placed gaps will be provided within the close-boarded fences, to permit the free movement of hedgehogs.

Reptile Mitigation & Enhancement Strategy

As the site supports a population of slow worms and grass snake in restricted areas of the site, works will be carried out in accordance with the Reptile Mitigation and Enhancement Strategy and supervised by an Ecological Clerk of Works (ECoW), a copy of which has been attached at Appendix C for reference.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The developer (Palatine Homes Limited) will be responsible for the initial implementation of the measures as set out in this BEP, although contractors may be appointed for certain tasks as necessary. When the plots are sold then any ongoing management/maintenance checks will be the responsibility of Palatine Johnson Drive Limited².

Author:

Alan Beaumont
BSc (Hons) MSc MCIEEM
Director of Ecology
E alan.beaumont@aae-ltd.co.uk

Office:

AA Environmental Ltd
Units 4-8
Cholswell Court
Shippon
Abingdon
Oxon OX13 6HX

Company No. 8474322

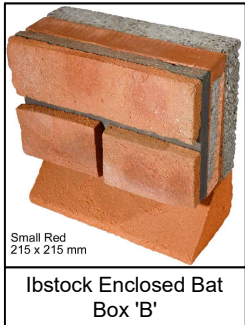
E info@aae-ltd.co.uk
T 01235 536042
F 01235 523849

² Company No. 16116254 appointed by Palatine Homes Limited and the residents.

Figure 1
Annotated Site Plan



Eco Kent Bat Box



Ibstock Enclosed Bat Box 'B'



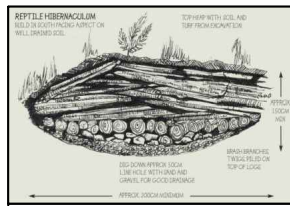
Vivaro Pro Seville Bird Box



Habibat Swift Box



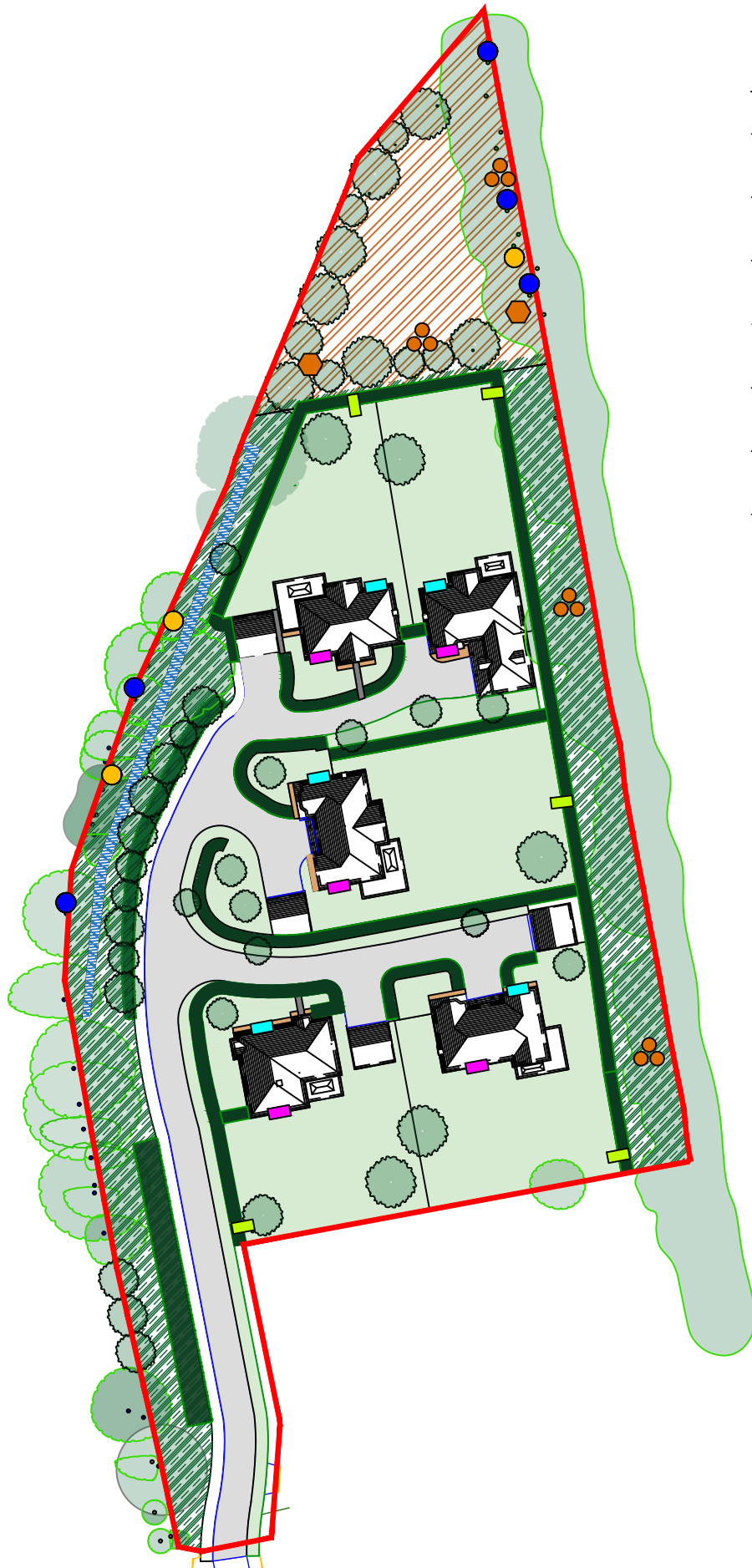
Hedgehog Gap



Hibernacula



Log Pile



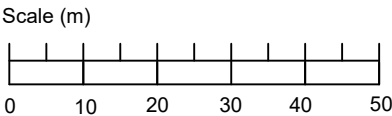
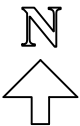
Notes

- Bat Boxes**
x3 Eco Kent Bat Boxes (or equivalent)
- Bat Tubes**
x5 Ibstock's Enclosed Bat Box B (or equivalent)
- Bird Boxes**
x5 Vivaro Pro Seville Bird Boxes (or equivalent)
- Swift Boxes**
x5 Habibat Swift Boxes (or equivalent)
- Hedgehog Gaps**
x5 Hedgehog Gaps
- Hibernacula**
x2 Hibernacula
- Log Piles**
x4 Log Piles

A sensitive lighting scheme will be adopted for the proposals and no lighting will be directed onto any bat boxes installed.

KEY

- Site Boundary *
 - Individual Tree (Topographed)
 - Bat Box *
 - Bat Tube *
 - Bird Box *
 - Swift Box *
 - Hedgehog Gap *
 - Hibernacula *
 - Log Pile *
- * Indicative Location



Rev. B	Relocation of the hibernacula to be at least 15m away from any badger setts.	EC ARB	24.03.25
Rev. A	This revision has been completed to address the comments raised by the council ecologist.	NAB ARB	10.03.25

Project
233292
Land at Johnson Drive
Finchampstead

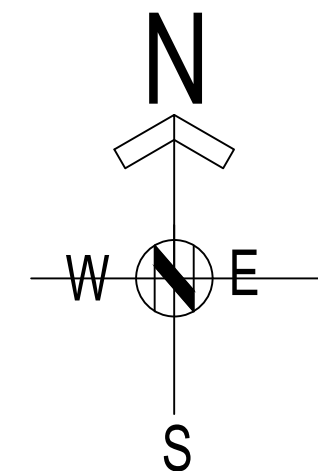
Title
Annotated Site Plan



AA Environmental Ltd
Units 4-8
Cholswell Court
Shippon Abingdon
Oxon OX13 6HX
T: (01235) 536042
F: (01235) 523849
info@aae-ltd.co.uk
www.aae-ltd.co.uk

Scale	Date	28.10.24	Dr. No.	Rev.
As shown	Drawn	NAB	Chkd.	ARB
Figure 1			B	

Figure 2
Soft Landscaping Plan



- Plot 1 Planting
- 2 Taxus baccata Ball 60cm
 - 6 Euonymous Emerald Gaiety 10L
 - 6 x Hebe sutherlandii 5L
 - 2 x Photinia fraseri Red Robin 0.8-1m
 - 6 x Cistus Silver Pink 5L
 - 2 x Pittosporum Silver Ball 10L
 - 3 x Daphne odora Aureomarginata
 - 1 Choisya ternata 10L
 - 2 Lavandula hidcote 5L

- Plot 5 Planting
- 2 x Taxus baccata Cone 80cm
 - 3 x Taxus baccata Ball 30cm
 - 6 x Hebe sutherlandii 5L
 - 3 x Photinia fraseri Red Robin 0.8-1m
 - 6 x Cistus Silver Pink 5L
 - 3 x Lavandula hidcote 5L
 - 2 x Pittosporum Silver Ball 10L
 - 6 x Hebe fran. Blue Gem 5L
 - 3 x Euonymous Silver Queen 5L
 - 6 x Ceanothus Blue Mound 2L

- Plot 2 Planting
- 1 x Taxus baccata Ball 80cm
 - 2 x Taxus baccata Ball 30cm
 - 6 x Hebe sutherlandii 5L
 - 3 x Photinia fraseri Red Robin 0.8-1m
 - 6 x Cistus Silver Pink 5L
 - 3 x Lavandula hidcote 5L

- Plot 3 Planting
- 4 x Taxus baccata Cone 80cm
 - 6 x Pittosporum Golf Ball 10L
 - 4 x Choisya ternata 5L
 - 6 x Hebe sutherlandii 5L
 - 3 x Photinia fraseri Red Robin 5L
 - 6 x Cistus Silver Pink 5L
 - 3 x Lavandula hidcote 5L
 - 6 x Daphne odora Aureomarginata 5L

- Plot 4 Planting
- 4 x Taxus baccata Ball 30cm
 - 6 x Hebe sutherlandii 5L
 - 6 x Viburnum tinus 5L
 - 4 x Photinia fraseri Red Robin 0.8-1m
 - 6 x Cistus Silver Pink 5L
 - 3 x Lavandula hidcote 5L
 - 4 x Abelia grandiflora Confetti 5L
 - 6 x Salvia in variety 5L

All plant material to be compatible with British Standard 3936 part 1. 1992 specifications - 'Nursery Stock'

All soft landscaping work/planting to be compatible with British Standard 4428 specifications 1989 - Landscape Operations

All planting areas to be completely cleared of grass, weeds, debris and stones/concrete etc exceeding 50mm dia.

Soil in all scheduled planting areas outside existing canopy spreads of trees that has compacted/denatured/contaminated during work on the site, to be excavated to a minimum depth of 50mm.

All planting areas to be cultivated to a minimum depth of 500mm and topdressed with an organic slow release fertilizer such as sterilised bonemeal.

No peat products used.

All planting areas around trees and shrubs to receive a 70mm layer (minimum) of seasoned medium grade chipped bark mulch, upon completion of planting.

Tree pits shall be of a diameter 600mm greater than the rootball. The depth of the pit shall be 225mm deeper than the rootball and not less than 600mm deep. The top soil shall be stripped from the area of the pit and stascked for re-use; the sub-soil is to be excavated and removed from the site. the base of the put shall be forked over to a depth of 225mm and left with a slightly higher centre to permit drainage.

All trees to be single staked and tied including the use of 1 spacer block per tree. Trees of 14-16cm girth and above should be double staked, one on either side of the trunk. Stakes not to extend more than 600mm above ground level. Stakes should be positioned on the windward side of the tree.

An area of 1.5m wide (minimum) to be left free of all grass turf, weed growth, scrub vegetation, etc. around the bases of all newly planted trees situated within grassed areas and mulched as specified above.

All non-specified areas to be turfed with good quality seed grown turf.

Wildlife Corridor

Bare root plants to be planted 45-60cm tall in 5m centres and grown on as shrubs to provide shelter, habitat and food for a wide range of wildlife

- 10% Corylus avellana
- 10% Sambucus nigra
- 5% Salix caprea
- 10% Crataegus monogyna
- 2.5% Rosa canina
- 2.5% Ilex aquifolium
- 10% Viburnum opulus
- 10% Viburnum lantana
- 10% Ligustrum vulgare
- 10% Prunus spinosa
- 10% Cornus sanguinea
- 10% Euonymous europaeus

Plant Schedule

New Trees to be planted

All size 12-14cmg, container grown or RB depending on availability

Qty	Plant Name	KEY
3	Acer campestre	Ac
4	Acer campestre Elsrijk	AcE
5	Betula pendula	Bp
4	Carpinus betulus	Cb
11	Malus domestica	Md
2	Quercus robur	Qr
2	Sorbus aria	Sa
2	Sorbus aucuparia	Sau
5	Sorbus torminalis	St
6	Tilia platyphyllos	Tp

Planting to front of houses

- 3 Abelia grandiflora Confetti 10L
- 9 Choisya ternata 5L
- 3 Cistus Silver Pink 5L
- 6 Daphne odora Aureomarginata 5L
- 6 Euonymous Emerald Gaiety 10L
- 3 Euonymous fortuneii Silver Queen 5L
- 3 Hebe fran. Blue Gem 5L
- 9 Hebe sutherlandii 5L
- 9 Lavandula Hidcote 5L
- 1 Pittosporum Silver Ball 10L
- 12 Taxus baccata 40cm Ball
- 3 Viburnum tinus 10L

Native hedge mix - approx 390m

- 50% Crataegus monogyna
- 10% Corylus avellana
- 10% Acer campestre
- 10% Ligustrum vulgare
- 10% Prunus spinosa
- 10% Carpinus betulus

Wildlife Area - approx 2100sqm - to be seeded with EW1F Wild Flowers for Woodland - Supplied by Emorsgate

Wildlife Corridor - approx 3200sqm - to be seeded with EH1 Hedgrow Mixture (contains grasses and wildflowers) - Supplied by Emorsgate

Mown Lawn Areas

Existing Trees

Dry Ditch



1 Northbury Cottages, Castle End Road,
Ruscombe, Berkshire, RG10 9XJ
(0118)9344132
nick@treetoplandscapes.co.uk
fiona@treetoplandscapes.co.uk

Palatine Homes - Land at Johnsons Drive, Finchamstead (5)

Date: 25/03/2025

Scale: 1:500 @ A1

Drawing No: TTL-SM-PHJD181024

Rev: B

Appendix A
Bird and Bat Box Guidance Document

BIRD AND BAT BOX/TUBE GUIDANCE DOCUMENT

Overview

The boxes/tubes used should be made of woodcrete material¹ (or equivalent) wherever possible and be positioned in accordance with good practice. All of the boxes can be obtained from the following suppliers:

Jacobi Jayne www.jacobijayne.co.uk

Wildcare www.wildcare.co.uk

NHBS www.nhbs.com

Bird Box Installation Guidance

The requirements for nest boxes vary between species. However there are some general rules to follow:

- Boxes should be located in a sheltered position out of strong sunlight, wind and rain. Generally this means that the box should be positioned somewhere between the north east and south east side of a structure.
- For extra shelter, smaller boxes should be positioned at a slight forward angle.
- Large open boxes should be angled upwards when mounted to allow the nest to rest naturally at the back of the box.
- Boxes should be positioned out of the reach of predators where possible (e.g. cats).
- A density of around 10 bird boxes per hectare is acceptable.
- Position boxes away from bird tables and other feeding areas where possible.

Bat Box/tube Installation Guidance

- Boxes should be located in a sheltered position, out of strong wind, but exposed to sunlight for part of the day to provide solar warming.
- When installed on trees, where possible boxes should be put up in groups of two or three, facing in different directions to allow bats access to a range of temperature conditions. Furthermore, it is recommended that, to avoid competition for bat boxes, bird boxes should also be installed on the same trees².
- It should be ensured that the entrance hole to the box is kept clear, so that bats can access it freely.
- Ideally bat boxes should be positioned near linear vegetation (e.g. a hedgerow).
- When installing boxes on trees, the ideal position is at around 5 metres or more.
- On buildings, boxes should be positioned high up by the eaves to avoid bats being predated by cats and other predators.
- Boxes should be installed out of the direct line of artificial lighting, both current and to be installed.

References

1. Du Feu, C. (1993). *Nestboxes BTO Guide No. 23*. BTO, Thetford.
2. The Bat Conservation Trust (2003). *Bat Boxes - Your Questions Answered*.
3. Meddings, A., Taylor, S., Batty, L., Green, R., Knowles, M., Latham, D. (2011). Managing competition between birds and bats for roost boxes in small woodlands, north-east England. *Conservation Evidence*, 8, pg. 74-80.

¹ Woodcrete is a blend of cement and sawdust. This material is found to be as successful as wooden bat boxes/tubes with greater durability and longevity. Schwegler bat boxes/tubes are constructed from this material.

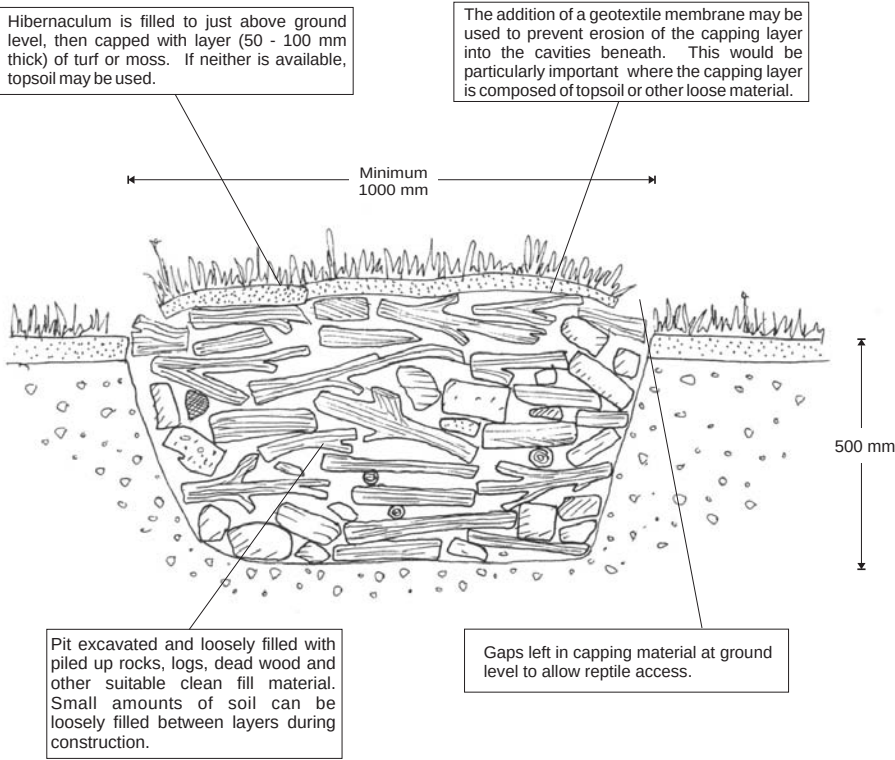
² Research carried out by Meddings *et al.* (2011) suggests that installing bird and bat boxes on the same tree will reduce the likelihood of birds nesting in bat boxes and thus preventing a reduction in roosting opportunities for bats.

Appendix B

Hibernacula Design

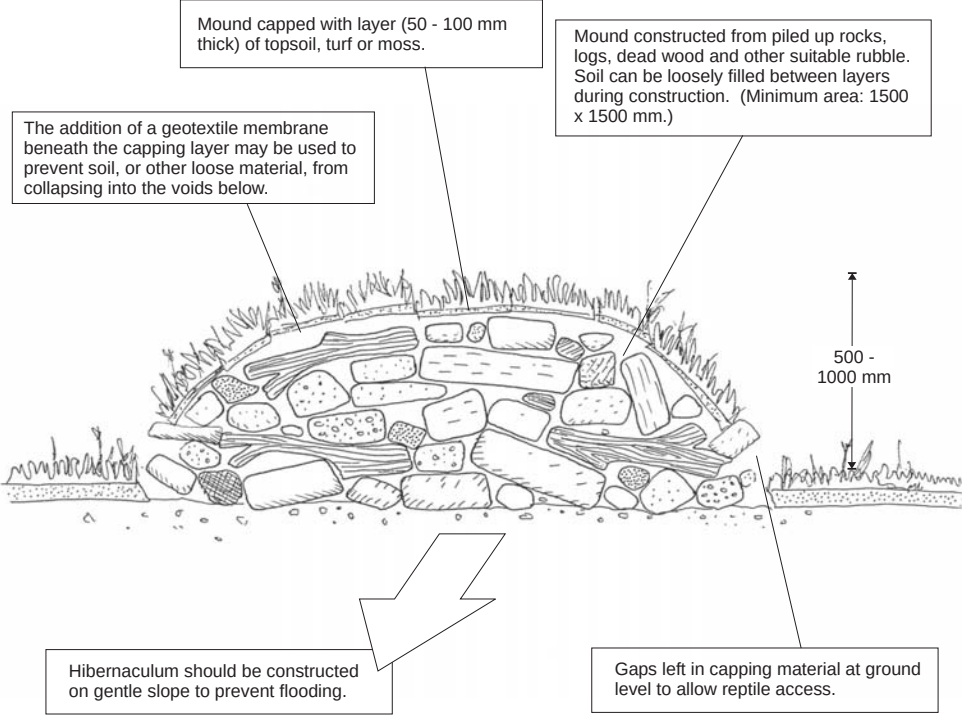
Hibernaculum on free-draining ground

Where ground conditions allow, the hibernaculum should be incorporated into a shallow pit. This design is more likely to remain frost-free, and will be less obtrusive and thus unlikely to be subject to interference.



Hibernaculum on impermeable ground

Where ground conditions are impermeable, then an 'above-ground' or mounded design should be utilised in order to prevent the hibernaculum from flooding. This design should also be used if it is not possible to excavate a pit for any other reason.



Appendix C

Reptile Mitigation and Enhancement Strategy

**Land at Johnson Drive
Finchampstead**

Report for:
Palatine Homes Limited
Ospreys
Scotswood Close
Beaconsfield
Buckinghamshire
HP9 2LJ

1.0 INTRODUCTION

As the site supports a population of slow worms and grass snake in restricted areas of the site, in accordance with best practice, all works will be carried out carefully and follow the controls set out in this mitigation strategy. A copy will be circulated to key site staff and other site operatives so that they are fully aware of the sensitivity of the works and of the possibility of encountering reptiles, with a copy kept on site.

2.0 LEGISLATION

All reptile species are protected at some level under Schedule 5 of the *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)* and *The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended)*. The more common species of reptiles, which include slow-worm (*Anguis fragilis*), common or viviparous lizard (*Zootoca vivipara*), adder (*Vipera berus*) and grass snake (*Natrix helvetica*) are protected by the *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)* by part of Section 9(1) and all of Section 9(5). This means that they are protected against intentional or reckless killing and injuring (but not 'taking') and against sale and transporting for sale.

3.0 SITE CONTROLS TO BE APPLIED

Overview

A 'traffic light' system has been adopted for the site. These areas will then be demarcated on the ground with suitable fencing (Heras or equivalent) to delineate the area to be sensitively cleared.

To prevent any animals re-colonising the construction site temporary reptile-proof fencing will be erected surrounding the construction zone, as shown on Figure 2. The temporary reptile-proof fencing will be maintained in good condition, with any damage immediately repaired and periodic strimming to prevent overgrowing vegetation carried out as necessary. Although the erection of the reptile-proof fencing will be located within the 'red zone' as the works will be restricted, the fencing works can be completed at any time of year, with the excavation of the trench supervised by the Ecological Clerk of Works (ECoW). In the unlikely event that any species of herpetofauna are found during the exercise, these will be caught and placed in a container and released in suitable retained habitat.

Table 1: Site Sensitivity Zones (to be read in conjunction with Figure 1)

	Low Risk – No supervision required during vegetation management or subsequent site clearance activities.
	Moderate Risk – Vegetation management works may proceed unsupervised. In the event that breaking ground or soil removal is required, direct supervision by the ECoW.
	High Risk – All works within this area will be completed carefully by the ECoW, with timing restrictions applied.

Green Zone

Within the green zone there are no timing restrictions when works can be completed and no requirement for site supervision by the ECoW.

Amber Zone

Within the amber zone there are no timing restrictions when works can be completed. Supervision is only required during certain works, such as where breaking ground or soil removal is required. This work will be completed under the direct supervision by the ECoW with the following controls applied;

- Prior to the works all site personnel will be given a toolbox talk to inform them about the potential presence of reptiles on site and the legal protection they are afforded (a toolbox talk is attached at Appendix A).
- The 'amber zone' will be clearly demarcated on the ground with suitable fencing.
- A hand search of these areas will be carried out, with any natural or artificial refugia found, such as logs, stones, rocks etc., lifted and checked for sheltering animals before being removed from the area.
- Once the ECoW is satisfied with this initial check, a destructive search would be carried out. This involves the removal of the turf to leave bare earth, which is carried out under the direct supervision of the ECoW.

Any species found during the exercise will be caught and placed in a container and released within habitat around the boundaries to remain unaffected by the works. In the event that high numbers of reptiles are being encountered then the works will cease and the more detailed controls to be applied to the red zone will be implemented.

Red Zone

Timing restrictions will apply. Works within the red zone will only be completed during suitable weather conditions, although temperature dependent, reptiles are usually fully active from April to October inclusive, with all works directly supervision by the ECoW.

All works within the red zone will be carried out sensitively as detailed below:

- Prior to the works all site personnel will be given a toolbox talk to inform them about the potential presence of herpetofauna on site and the legal protection they are afforded (a generic toolbox talk for reptiles is attached at Appendix A).
- If considered practicable, vegetation management within the 'construction zone' could be carried out – the purpose of this is to render the area less attractive to species of reptiles (and amphibians), which will move into the more suitable adjacent habitat outside the area of works, scheduled to be retained. This is carried out carefully and in a phased approach using hand-held trimmers/brush cutters, with the sward height reduced over a number of days. All arisings should be removed using plastic rakes and used to create compost piles outside the construction zone **N.B. if vegetation management is considered necessary, then this would need to be carried out when reptiles are active and before the reptile proof fence has been installed.**
- A clearance exercise, in accordance with the guidelines produced by the Herpetofauna Groups of Britain and Ireland (1998), will then be carried out until the numbers caught indicate the majority of the population has been removed.
- Once the site has been cleared of the majority of the animals, a destructive search would be carried out. This involves the removal of the turf to leave bare earth, which is carried out under the direct supervision of the ECoW. Once this has been completed the construction phase can commence.

Any species found during the exercise will be caught and placed in a container and released within habitat around the boundaries to remain unaffected by the works. All interested parties will be kept informed of the works while they are being carried out and a brief summary report will be issued when the works are complete. The on-site ecologist will keep a daily log of the works along with a series of photographs for reference.

4.0 ENHANCEMENT AND MONITORING

Hibernacula

In order to enhance the sheltering opportunities for reptiles on the site two hibernacula will be created within the on-site wildlife area and wildlife corridor. Wherever possible, the hibernacula will use material already on the site, with the works supervised by the ECoW which will require the careful clearance of vegetation and ground clearance. The hibernacula created will also be monitored, with any remedial works carried out as necessary.

Log Piles

Log piles will be created to provide enhanced shelter and overwintering for invertebrates and other species. Any larger material arising from on-site management operations will be added to the log piles so that the log piles are maintained and contain wood in a varying state of decay.

Monitoring

In accordance with good practice, monitoring of the receptor site will be necessary to establish whether the translocation exercise has been successful. In accordance with Natural England's '*Reptile Mitigation Guidelines*', post-development monitoring of the site will be required in the form of a presence/absence and habitat suitability assessment annually for 2 years post-construction.

Author:
Alan Beaumont
BSc (Hons) MSc MCIEEM
Director of Ecology
E alan.beaumont@aae-ltd.co.uk

Office:
AA Environmental Ltd
Units 4-8
Cholswell Court
Shippon
Abingdon
Oxon OX13 6HX

Company No. 8474322
E info@aae-ltd.co.uk
T 01235 536042
F 01235 523849

Figure 1
Sensitivity Plan



KEY

-  Site Boundary (Indicative)
-  No supervision required
-  Partial Supervision Required*
-  Direct Supervision Required

* Vegetation management works may be carried out unsupervised, following Reasonable Avoidance Measures (RAMs) in accordance with the Method Statement. In the event that breaking ground or soil removal is required, direct supervision by a suitably qualified and experienced ecologist will be necessary.

Notes

Populations of slow worms and grass snake were recorded within the north-west of the site.

-  Individual Trees (Topographed)
-  Vegetation
-  Ditch
-  Reptile Record (Indicative)

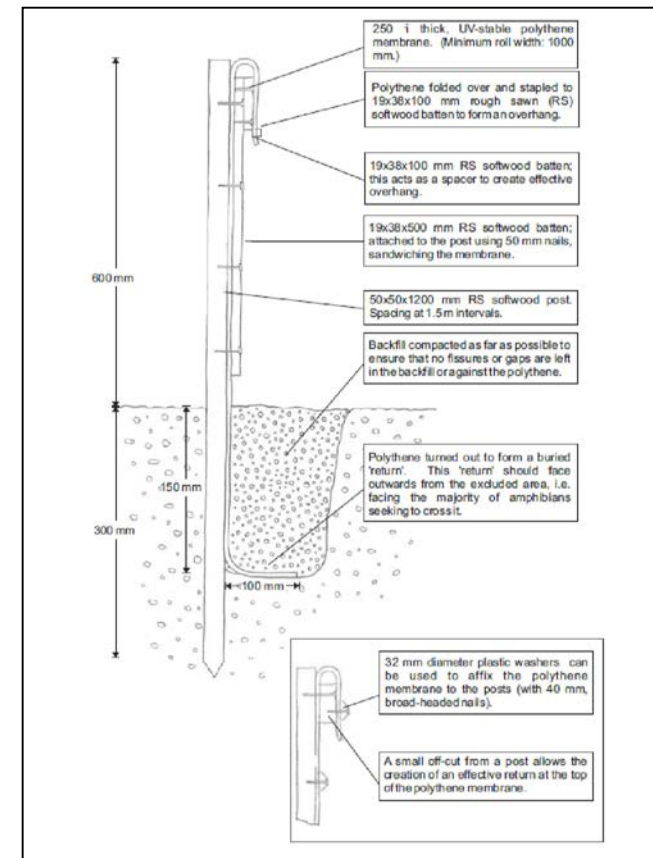
Rev. A	This revision has been completed to address the comments raised by the council ecologist.	NAB ARB	10.03.25
Project 233292 Land at Johnson Drive Finchampstead			
Title Sensitivity Plan			
 AA Environmental Ltd Units 4-8 Cholswell Court Shippon Abingdon Oxon. OX13 6HX T: (01235) 536042 F: (01235) 523849 info@aae-ltd.co.uk www.aae-ltd.co.uk			
Scale As shown	Date 08.11.24	Drawn NAB	Chkd. ARB
Drg. No. Figure 1		Rev. A	

Figure 2
Reptile Proof Fencing Plan

KEY

- Site Boundary (Indicative)
- No supervision required
- Partial Supervision Required*
- Direct Supervision Required

* Vegetation management works may be carried out unsupervised, following Reasonable Avoidance Measures (RAMs) in accordance with the Method Statement. In the event that breaking ground or soil removal is required, direct supervision by a suitably qualified and experienced ecologist will be necessary.



KEY

- Site Boundary*
- Reptile Proof Fencing*
- Tree Protection Fencing (Phase 1)*
- Tree Protection Fencing¹ (Phase 2)*

*Indicative Locations

¹ Only to be implemented when reptile translocation exercise has been completed and the area has been signed off by the ECoW.

Notes

The fence should use heavy-duty builder's plastic (or equivalent) dug into the ground to at least a 100 mm depth and then stapled to 50 x 50 mm stakes at no more than 2 m intervals, to a **minimum** 600 mm above ground height. A 50 x 25 mm baton along the top of the 600 mm high fence is recommended, for the top of the plastic to be stapled to. It is important that no gaps are left between the plastic where sheets join as reptiles could pass through any small gaps.

Rev. A	This revision has been completed to address the comments raised by the council ecologist.	NAB ARB	10.03.25
Project 233292 Land at Johnson Drive Finchampstead			
Title Reptile Proof Fencing Plan			
 AA Environmental Ltd Units 4-8 Cholswell Court Shippon Abingdon Oxon OX13 6HX T: (01235) 536042 F: (01235) 523849 info@aae-ltd.co.uk www.aae-ltd.co.uk			
Scale As shown	Date 18.11.24	Drg. No. Figure 2	Rev. A

Appendix A
Toolbox Talk (Reptiles)

TOOLBOX TALK: REPTILES

Did you know?

- There are six species of reptile native to the UK, three of which are snakes and three are lizards.
- Smooth snakes and Sand lizards are very rare and are presently restricted to a few localised areas.
- Adders, Grass snakes, Common lizards and Slow-worms are widespread and found in a number of different urban and rural habitats across the UK.
- All reptiles are ectothermic. This means they rely upon the sun's heat for warmth. As a result, you may find reptiles basking in sunny places. If it becomes too warm they will seek shade, to avoid overheating.
- Reptiles movement will be slower in cooler conditions.
- Reptiles hibernate during the winter and may not wake up if disturbed. This makes them vulnerable to site works during winter months.
- Reptiles depend upon a varied habitat for survival. They need basking spots, shade, protection from predators, food resources and somewhere to hibernate!

Identification

- Reptiles may be found in a variety of habitats within a site. Most species favour scrubland, heathland or long grassland. Railway embankments are also highly favoured.
- On the right are photos of the reptiles you are most likely to encounter on a site, if any.
- Adders can be distinguished from Grass snakes by the diamond (or jagged) stripe running down the centre of their back.
- Slow-worms look a lot like a snake but are in fact legless lizards! They tend to be light brown/golden in colour, with a smooth appearance.
- Common lizards are fast-moving, but may be sighted from a distance when basking.

Legislation

- All reptile species are protected under UK law.
- This makes it **illegal** to intentionally or recklessly kill or injure and protects them against sale and transporting for sale.

Site Controls

- There is always a **risk** that as reptiles move through the habitat that they could be encountered during site works.
- **If any reptiles are encountered during works the following controls must be applied to avoid breaking the law:**
 1. If reptiles are discovered/suspected works must stop **immediately**, with any reptiles left in-situ and AAe immediately contacted (contact details above).
 2. During works, operatives must wear gloves in case of accidental contact with reptiles.
 3. Site operative must not intentionally handle reptiles.
 4. Care must be taken when moving logs, stones or rubble. These are favoured habitats for reptiles and they may be found sheltering underneath.
 5. Stockpiling of materials is only permitted within designated areas. Any building materials must be stored above ground on pallets and any waste material must be placed into skips, to prevent the risk of reptiles taking refuge within them.
 6. Trenches must be covered overnight to prevent animals falling into them.

These controls have been put in place to protect all site operatives from breaking the law. You are not expected to be able to identify reptiles or their presence so remember, **if in doubt shout and contact the relevant person.**

Key Contact

AA Environmental Ltd, Units 4-8 Cholswell Court, Shippon, Oxfordshire, OX13 6HX

Tel: 01235 536042

