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**Victoria Nurseries  
Wargrave**

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

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## 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 BEP has been produced using the Nature Conservancy Council document<sup>1</sup> 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 9 attached to planning (Wokingham Borough Council application ref: 243229) which states:

*Prior to the commencement of development, details of biodiversity enhancements, to include a scheme of integrated bird and bat tile/bricks/boxes built into each of the new buildings and native and wildlife friendly landscaping (including gaps at the bases of fences to allow hedgehogs to traverse through the gardens), shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the council. The biodiversity enhancements shall thereafter be installed as approved and prior to occupation of the development a letter report from a suitably qualified ecologist with photos of the nest bricks in situ shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the council.*

*Reason: To ensure that wildlife is not adversely affected by the proposed development in line with Policy CP7 of the core strategy and wildlife legislation.*

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 Victoria Road in Wargrave, Reading, centred at National Grid Reference: SU 792 787 and covers approximately 0.27 hectares. The site comprised the existing nursery including various buildings with associated hardstanding, growing and bedding out areas. The site is bordered by Victoria Road to the south and residential dwellings to all other sides.

The consented scheme is for the construction of eight residential dwellings with associated hard and soft landscaping, requiring the demolition of the existing buildings and clearance of some vegetation.

## EVALUATION AND OBJECTIVES

The key enhancement measure will be the installation of a series of integrated wildlife boxes on the new builds in order to enhance roosting/nesting/sheltering opportunities for wildlife. Additional measures will be the introduction of new native and wildlife friendly planting on the site, which will provide a range of habitats for local wildlife and gaps within new boundary treatment to allow free access for hedgehogs and other wildlife.

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

## PRESCRIPTIONS

### Overview

The key enhancement measure will be to install a series of integrated bat and bird boxes within the new builds to enhance roosting, nesting and sheltering opportunities, as well as providing gaps within boundary treatment to allow free movement of hedgehogs and other wildlife. In addition, new wildlife-friendly planting will be carried out within the site to supplement the existing vegetation to be retained. 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.

### Bat Boxes

In order to provide roosting opportunities for bats, eight integrated bat tubes (x8 Ibstock Enclosed Bat Box B, or equivalent) will be installed onto the new builds. The tubes will be positioned in accordance with best practice, 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, eight bird boxes/bricks (x4 Schwegler Sparrow Terraces and x4 Schwegler Swift Bricks, or equivalent) will be installed onto the new builds. The boxes will be positioned in accordance with best practice, indicative locations are shown on Figure 1, and a guidance document is attached at Appendix A. The nest boxes should be cleaned out once a year during the winter months, and, in the event that any become damaged, replaced as necessary.

### Hedgehog Gaps

In order to allow free movement of hedgehogs and other wildlife throughout the site and to maintain connectivity within adjacent habitats, ten hedgehog gaps will be installed within the new boundary fences. The hedgehog gaps will be regularly checked and kept free from obstructions. Indicative locations are shown on Figure 1.

### New Planting

As part of the overall landscape treatment of the site, new planting will be carried out. Further details are shown on the Soft Landscaping Plan (Drawing No. TTL-SM-VN271124; Rev E), produced by TreeTop Landscapes Limited and held under separate cover. 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 hedgerows 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.

### RESPONSIBILITIES

The developer (Palatine Homes Limited) will be responsible for the initial implementation of the measures as set out in this BEP. After the plots are sold then any ongoing management/maintenance checks will be the responsibility of the new homeowners.

A compliance visit will be completed by a suitably qualified ecologist to confirm that the measures as detailed within this BEP have been implemented and a series of site photographs taken as a record. A brief summary report will be issued to the Council in order to fully comply with the condition.

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## BIODIVERSITY ENHANCEMENT PLAN

**Figure 1**  
Annotated Site Plan



KEY	
	Site Boundary *
	New Hedging *
	New Tree *
	Bat Boxes *
	Bird Boxes *
	Hedgehog Access Point *
* Indicative location	

Full details of the landscape proposals are noted on Drawing No. TTL-SM-VN271124 - Rev. E, produced by Treetop Landscapes Ltd. and dated November 2025.

#### Notes

Bat Boxes/Tubes  
x8 Ibstock Enclosed Bat Box 'B' (or equivalent)

Bird Boxes  
x4 Schwegler Sparrow Terraces (or equivalent)  
x4 Schwegler Swift Brick( or equivalent)

Hedgehog Gaps  
x10 Hedgehog Access Point

Hedgehog gaps will be installed between gardens and adjacent habitat to permit the free movement of hedgehogs/other wildlife.

Rev.	Details	Drawn	Date
Project			
243241			
Victoria Nurseries			
Wargrave			
Title			
Annotated Site Plan			
 <b>AAe</b> Environmental Consultants			
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Scale	Date 08.12.25	Drg. No.	Rev.
As shown	Drawn NAB	Chkd. ARB	Figure 1



AAe

## BIODIVERSITY ENHANCEMENT PLAN

### 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 material<sup>1</sup> (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](http://www.jacobijayne.co.uk)

Wildcare [www.wildcare.co.uk](http://www.wildcare.co.uk)

NHBS [www.nhbs.com](http://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 trees<sup>2</sup>.
- 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.

<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> 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.