

Discharge condition 10 attached to planning consent 21/01553/FUL

Residential Development at Glenavon Drive, Rochdale OL12 6DT

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1 Summary

It is proposed to provide:

- Two runs of three Bat bricks per house (24 in total) Either Ibstock type B or C, or a directly comparable product should these be unavailable.
- Three nesting boxes for each house (12 in total) with openings of 25 and 28mm.
- Retention of the line of Cypress trees (for bird nesting).
- Around 100m of native hedge planting inside the eastern and southwestern boundaries.
- Advice for the new owners on how to encourage wildlife.

All these to be provided before first occupation.

2 Introduction

This report has been prepared by Peter Black¹ to provide evidence to **discharge condition 10** attached to planning consent [21/01553/FUL](#) for four dwellings (2 pairs of semi-detached houses) at Glenavon Drive, Rochdale, OL12 6DT granted on 17 June 2022.

10 No above ground works shall take place until a scheme for habitat enhancements for the site has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved scheme shall be implemented in full accordance with the duly approved details and timetable contained therein and shall include:

- *bat bricks and/or tubes*
- *bat boxes*
- *bird boxes*
- *native tree and shrub planting*

Reason: In order to achieve appropriate biodiversity enhancements as part of the development in accordance with the requirements of Core Strategy policies G6 and G7 and the National Planning Policy Framework.

It is noted that this is not a formal pre-commencement condition, and that development in the form of earthworks and site clearance can start subject to discharge of conditions 3 and 4

It is also noted that condition 9 requires that: *No clearance of trees and shrubs in preparation for (or during the course of) development shall take place during the bird nesting season (March - August inclusive). unless an ecological survey has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority to establish whether the site is utilised for bird nesting.*

There is also an ecological 'Informative' attached to the consent (not a legal requirement).

INFORMATIVE: In addition to requirements under this planning permission GMEU recommended as good practice the development should include: •All excavations on site should be covered at night or a ramp should be provided to allow amphibians/mammals to exit excavations. •All excavations should be checked for amphibians/mammals each morning prior to the re-commencement of any works. •All stored building materials that might be used as temporary resting places by

¹ The author is a Chartered Town Planner (MRTPI), environmental manager and member of the Arboricultural Association with experience of over 25 years in ecology, town planning, and habitat creation.

amphibians/mammals should be stored off the ground on pallets or similar. • If any amphibians/mammals are found then they should be carefully moved to a safe area.

3 Current biodiversity

The site (SD 88528 15417) is small and sloping, with a marshy area at the southern end. There are no structures within the site, which is partly open to the road and partly surrounded by domestic fences and a low stone wall. There is some fly tipping. Vegetation is dominated by self-set, scrubby woodland. A habitat survey in 2018 identified the following habitats: Woodland; Scattered scrub; Tall ruderal vegetation; Introduced shrub; Swamp; Fence. No evidence of protected habitats or species was found. None of the trees affected by the development are suitable as bat roosts and there is no evidence of badger activity. None of the trees contained features such as woodpecker holes, or exfoliating bark which might provide potential for bat roosting or hibernation. The site itself had moderate value to foraging bats. The swamp offered poor quality habitat for breeding amphibians and poor habitat for reptiles due to a lack of basking opportunities. The plot also has poor connectivity to semi natural habitats in the wider landscape.

Invasive non-native such as Yellow Archangel (the variegated garden form) currently cover a significant ground area. While no control measures are needed, these non-native species do lower the current biodiversity.

Both the 2018 report and a follow-up report in January 2022 concluded that development will have minimal impact on biodiversity, although the trees and scrub had potential to support nesting and foraging birds.

4 Potential biodiversity

Trees will be retained along the E and SW boundaries and a linear group of Cypress to the north boundary (Soft Landscape Outline Plan R0688-07 Rev A). Some ornamental planting is proposed to the front of the property.

Residential gardens can be surprisingly bio-diverse and house substantial populations of birds, bats, amphibians, and small reptiles. Populations of birds and bats in particular are often limited by nesting and roosting opportunities rather than food. Given the small site size, it is recommended that the optimum approach to maximise biodiversity is to:

- Provide bat bricks within the fabric of the houses as they are built.
- Attach wooden bird boxes to the homes once constructed.
- Ensure the line of Cypress trees are retained.
- Provide native hedge planting inside the eastern and southwestern boundaries.
- Provide advice for the new owners on how to encourage wildlife.

Bat bricks

Two runs of three Bat bricks per house (24 in total) will be built in. [Ibstock Bat Brick B or C](#) would be appropriate, although other makes have comparable performance. These will be positioned on the south and side walls at least 3m from the ground. Bats often roost in different places at different times of year so they can maintain a constant temperature. The back walls are south facing, so will be warmed by the sun and the side elevations are east and west facing, so will provide roosts when the south facing boxes are too warm. Both rear and side elevations have a clear flightpath to and from the box. These positions will also be away from streetlights which might disturb the bats.

Bird boxes

Three nesting boxes will be provided for each house (12 in total). The entrance hole size will be a mix of 25 mm (blue, coal and marsh tits), and 28 mm (great tits, tree sparrows and pied flycatchers). These will be fixed on the side wall of each house, between two to four metres up.

Normally boxes should face between north and east, thus avoiding strong sunlight and the wettest winds. In this case, the orientation of the houses and the need to make sure that the birds have a clear flight path to the nest without any clutter directly in front of the entrance means that the side walls of each house are optimum.

Retain Cypress trees

The Cypress trees (Leylandii) are non-native and of little value as a food source for wildlife. However, they do provide good, dense nesting cover for many bird species and their retention will provide additional nesting opportunities.

Native hedge planting

It is proposed that native whips (mix of hawthorn, blackthorn, hazel, wild rose, guelder rose) are planted to form a hedge inside the rear boundaries to the E and SW, between the retained trees. This will provide around 100m of new hedgerow which will provide nesting cover and feeding opportunities in time.

It cannot be guaranteed that future householders will retain the new planting, but there is a good chance that they will appreciate the colour, berries and the birds that are attracted, and keep the new hedge.

Wildlife advice for the new owners

Information will be provided to the new owners on environmentally friendly gardening techniques, and simple measures they can use to enhance biodiversity. This will also alert them to the wildlife value of the new hedge, bat bricks, bird boxes, and opportunities to see wildlife in the area, including Healy Dell nature reserve (about a 15-minute walk away).

5 Birds – condition 9

Condition 9 requires that: *No clearance of trees and shrubs in preparation for (or during the course of) development shall take place during the bird nesting season (March - August inclusive)*

All wild bird species, their eggs and nests are already protected by law. If any clearance between March and August is planned, then a nesting bird survey in line with the condition will be submitted.

End of report appendix follows.

Appendix one – habitat survey



Figure 1 Habitat survey (2018 Indigo Report)