

Biodiversity Enhancement and Management Plan

2 War Office Road

Rochdale

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Prepared for: AJ Cocker Associates

Report prepared by: Verity Webster BSc (Hons) MSc CEcol CMIEEM



1. Introduction

1.1 Biodiversity Enhancement and Management Plan

- 1.1.1 This Biodiversity Enhancement and Management Plan (BEMP) sets out the aims, objectives and measures to be implemented to ensure the retention of the ecological functionality, and the enhancement of land at 2 War Office Road, Rochdale.
- 1.1.2 A site-specific approach is provided to ensure that wildlife present, or likely present in the area is supported, with the intention of increasing overall biodiversity on site.
- 1.1.3 The BEMP is a 5-year proposal and should be reviewed and, if appropriate, updated following this period.
- 1.1.4 The overall aim is to conserve and enhance habitats present or create new habitat to improve opportunities for wildlife and to ensure retention of ecological functionality of the site. This will contribute to the establishment and retention long-term of functional wildlife areas that will form part of an ecological network in the wider landscape, supporting targets of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF2, 2018).

1.2 Ecological Baseline – Pre-development

- 1.2.1 The following habitat types are present on site:
 - Buildings
 - Hard Standing
 - Modified grassland
 - Trees and shrubs
- 1.2.2 The modified grassland present on site is composed of species typical of this habitat; perennial rye grass (*Lolium perenne*), Yorkshire fog (*Holcus lanatus*), daisy (*Bellis perennis*) and dandelion (*Taraxacum* agg.).
- 1.2.3 The trees and shrubs to the rear (east) of the site comprise a small stand of rhododendron (*Rhododendron* sp.), cherry (*Prunus* sp.), leylandii (*Cupressus x leylandii*), holly (*Ilex aquifolium*) with bramble (*Rubus fruticosus* agg.). This vegetation has little value with regard to biodiversity in general, but does provide potential nesting habitat for birds in the spring and summer months.
- 1.2.4 The proposals provide the opportunity to enhance the functionality of the site for bats, hedgehogs and nesting birds.



Table 1: Species/Taxa considered

Species	Mitigation required*	Retention of ecological functionality	Compensation and Enhancement
Bats	NA	Creation of roosting opportunities to replace the potential features that may have been present in the existing building.	Installation of bat roost boxes to enhance roosting opportunities.
Birds	Yes – see below	The shrubs and trees on site have potential for nesting birds. This will be retained by creating new nesting opportunities.	Installation of bird boxes to compensate for the loss of shrubs and trees, and creation of hedgerow to retain and improve opportunities for nesting birds.
Hedgehog	NA	NA	Creation of a hedgehog highway

Mitigation considerations

Nesting birds

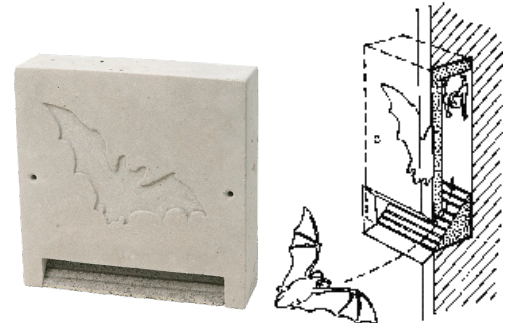
1.2.5 At the time of survey there was no evidence of birds nesting in the shrubs and trees on site. To avoid the risk of negative impact upon breeding birds during the spring and summer months, the following is recommended:

- Vegetation removal works are timed to avoid the bird breeding season (breeding season: March – September).
- If this is not possible, a suitably qualified ecologist should check the vegetation on site to determine the presence / absence of nesting birds prior to the start of any works.
- If birds are found actively nesting on site, the nest and surrounding vegetation (5m) must be left undisturbed until the young have fledged.

2. Biodiversity Compensation and Enhancement

2.1 Provision of Bat Boxes

- 2.1.1 Integration of bat boxes will increase the capacity of the site to support these species groups.
- 2.1.2 A total of three 1FE Schwegler bat access panels are integrated into the walls of the buildings on site. The boxes will be installed on the southeast elevation. Under the eaves would be appropriate. See Figure 1.



1FE Schwegler bat access panel

This box is durable and does not require cleaning.

All bat boxes are available from NHBS Ltd

2.2 Provision of Bird Boxes

- 2.2.1 The installation of bird boxes will increase the capacity of the site to support these species groups.
- 2.2.2 Three WoodStone bird boxes with 32mm entrance holes will be installed on the southeast elevations of the buildings to provide alternative nesting opportunities, avoiding competition for bat boxes. See Figure 1.



WoodStone Bird Nest Box



2.3 Planting of Hedgerow

2.3.1 A native species hedgerow will be planted along the southeast boundary of the site.

2.3.2 The benefits of retaining, enhancing and planting hedgerows across the site include:

- Their function as a barrier.
- Acting as a screen and acting as a filter for noise and air pollution.
- Providing valuable habitat for wildlife and connectivity between different areas.
- Improving wellbeing by providing structural green space.

2.3.3 The new hedgerows will be planted composed of native species that produce berries and provide protective cover and food sources for passerine birds. In particular, the hedgerows will provide habitat for house sparrow, a declining species of Principal Importance (NERC Act, 2006).

2.3.4 Species recommended for hedgerow planting comprise: Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), holly (*Ilex aquifolium*) and beech (*Fagus sylvatica*) with guelder rose (*Viburnum opulus*) and honeysuckle (*Lonicera periclymenum*).

Sourcing plants

2.3.5 The plants should be sourced from local garden centres within 20km of the site.

2.3.6 Shrubs and trees should be bought in 5L pots and will be 60-80cm in height.

2.3.7 Pots are recommended over bare root-produce, as bare roots require planting immediately.

2.4 Provision of the Hedgehog Highway

2.4.1 Fencing around the site will be raised approximately 13cm above the ground in at least 2 locations on each boundary to allow movement of wildlife beneath. Alternatively, holes can be created in the boundaries that are 13cm x 13cm.

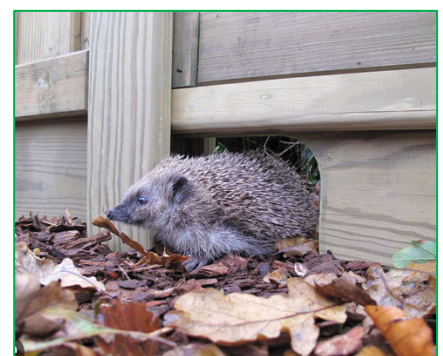


Figure 1 – Indicative location of the proposed enhancement.



Image edited from Site plans Ref. R430-01-C Development at 2 War Office Road. July 2023. Bat and Bird Boxes not to scale. Positioning is approximate.

Key

■ Bat box

■ WoodStone bird nest box

▲ Hedgehog access points



3. Installation and Maintenance of bird and bat boxes

- 3.0.1 Installation of the bird and bat boxes will take place at the completion of the building construction works to minimise the risk of disturbance to nesting birds.
- 3.0.2 Bat boxes do not need to be maintained. The Schwegler bat access panels are durable and self-cleaning.
- 3.0.3 Bird boxes should ideally be cleaned out once per year in the Autumn following bird nesting season (bird nesting season is generally March – August inclusive).

4. Establishment and Management of Hedgerows

Preparation works:

- 4.0.1 Preparation of the ground for new hedgerows, shrubs and trees is important to ensure the health and long-term success of the hedgerow:
 - Remove existing ground vegetation
 - Dig over the soil
 - Ensure newly planted hedgerows are protected from trampling by people and machinery by using fencing
 - Use mulch around and between the base of new plants to prevent growth of competitive grasses.

Planting whips:

- 4.0.2 Hedgerow whips should be planted in a double staggered row 30-40cm apart, with the two rows 50cm apart. There should be approximately 7 plants per meter.
- 4.0.3 Planting season is from mid-November – mid-March.

Hedgerow Aftercare

- 4.0.4 Suppression of weed growth may be required to prevent smothering of the new hedgerow plants.
- 4.0.5 It may be necessary to interplant the hedgerow the following season if some plants have not taken.
- 4.0.6 For the first three years the hedgerow should be trimmed back to encourage low lateral growth of branches.
- 4.0.7 Growth of the hedgerow should be trimmed back by half in the first 3 years.
- 4.0.8 The hedgerow will not be established for 3-5 years.
- 4.0.9 Ideally the new hedgerows will establish to be 2-3m in height with an A-shaped profile. This



allows for maximum sun exposure and can be cut with a flail mower.

4.0.10 After 3-5 years the new hedgerows can be treated as 'established' hedgerows.

Table 1: Management of Hedgerows / Boundary Planting From Year 1-5

Hedgerow Type	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
New Hedgerows: Shrubs only	Plant new plants. Suppress weeds	Replace where necessary. Prune back new growth 50%	*Prune back new growth 50%	Avoid pruning – only if necessary	Prune one side only and follow management for Established Hedgerows
Established Hedgerows	Once established hedgerows should ideally be pruned on each side in alternative years to allow growth and protection for wildlife. The top of the hedgerow can be trimmed annually.				

*Pruning should take place in autumn to avoid bird-nesting season unless it is evident (for example when plants are very young) that no birds are nesting or if a nesting bird check has been undertaken by a suitably qualified individual.

5. Potential Constraints

5.0.1 Potential constraints to enhancement and maintenance of the site include:

- Potential vandalism/damage to vegetation
- Poor weather conditions over winter/spring in year 1 and 2

5.0.2 Monitoring of the site and review of the management plan throughout the 5-year period will be undertaken such that alterations to management regime or maintenance can be undertaken.