

Silverhill Farm and Plot W of Kingsway Business Park, Broad Lane, Rochdale OL16 4NZ

BIODIVERSITY ENHANCEMENT MEASURES PROPOSALS PLAN

July 2024

ERAP (Consultant Ecologists) Ltd reference: 2019-300k

Rochdale Council Planning Permission Reference: 22/00998/FUL

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Document Control

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 ERAP (Consultant Ecologists) Ltd was commissioned by Barratt & David Wilson Homes North West to provide information to facilitate the discharge of a planning condition relating to the development at Silverhill Farm and Plot W of Kingsway Business Park, Broad Lane, Rochdale OL16 4NZ. The Ordnance Survey (OS) grid reference at the centre of the site is SD 91205 11236.

1.2 The approved development is for the following:

'Residential development of up to 57 dwellings, including part demolition and refurbishment of Grade II Listed Building Silver Hill Farmhouse and associated buildings, together with new vehicular access points, car parking, boundaries, landscaping, creation of open space, and other associated works.'

1.3 A planning condition relating to the proposed development has been requested and is as follows:

'Biodiversity Enhancements

Prior to first occupation of each parcel or phase of the development hereby approved, details of the installation of bat and bird boxes within that parcel or phase shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the local planning authority. These details shall include the number and type of boxes and a plan showing the location of the boxes.

Reason: In the interests of enhancing biodiversity and habitat provision within the site in accordance with Policy G7 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework'.

1.4 It is proposed to install bat and bird boxes in accordance with the recommendations made in 2019-300g Kingsway Parcel W, Broad Lane, Rochdale OL16 4NZ: Ecological Survey and Assessment (ERAP (Consultant Ecologists) Ltd, 2022), hereafter the '2022 ecology report'.

1.5 The specifications presented in this letter is in accordance with *Silverhill Farm, Kingsway Rochdale: Planning Layout H7491-203001 P03* (Barratt / David Wilson Homes, 2024), hereafter the 'proposals plan'.

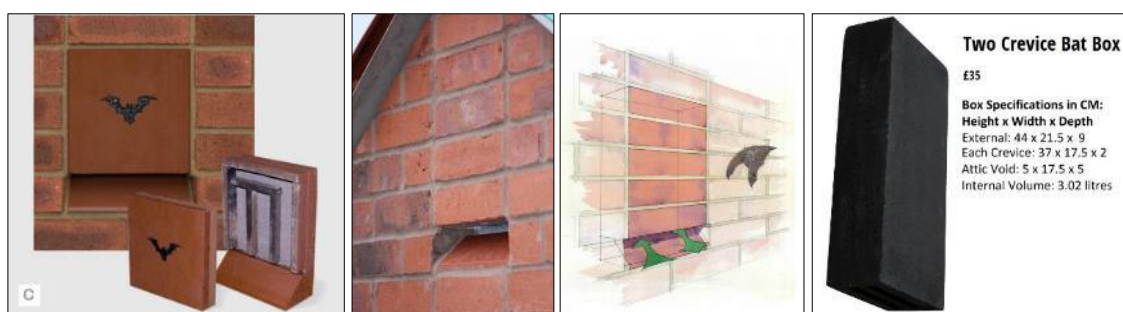
2.0 INFORMATION TO FACILITATE THE DISCHARGE OF CONDITION

2.1 General Notes

- 2.1.1 Note that if the boxes listed below are not available the ecologist should be consulted to determine a suitable, long-lasting alternative.
- 2.1.2 Suitable locations for each box are presented on the appended **Figure 1**. The specified boxes are in accordance with the 2022 ecology report recommendations.

2.2 Enhancing Habitats for Roosting Bats

- 2.2.1 The development will incorporate the installation of 6 bat access panels at the new buildings.
- 2.2.2 The bat access panels will be sited at least 4 metres above ground level, ideally facing or close to areas of landscape planting or existing linear features. The access panels will not be positioned over windows or doorways where bat droppings may become a nuisance. Suitable bat access panels are available from NHBS Ecology (www.nhbs.com), Wild Care (www.wildcare.co.uk) or Greenwoods Ecohabitats (<https://www.greenwoodsecohabitats.co.uk/>) and are presented at **Insert 1**.



Insert 1: Examples of integrated bat access panels and an externally mounted box¹

- 2.2.3 Five bat boxes will be installed on suitable retained trees within the site. An ecologist will advise on the siting of the bat boxes whilst on site.
- 2.2.4 Suitable bat boxes are the Schwegler 1FF, Greenwood Ecohabitat's single or double cavity boxes and Schwegler 1FD, see Error! Reference source not found..

¹ Left to right: IBstock Enclosed Bat Box 'c' (left); Habibat Bat Access Panels (centre left and centre right) and Greenwood's Ecohabitat's two crevice bat box (right). Products with a brick face are illustrated, however the Habibat bat access panels can be supplied unfaced to enable the addition of matching material.



Insert 2: Schwegler 1FF, Greenwood Ecohabitat's single cavity and Schwegler 1FD bat boxes

2.2.5 Bat boxes should be installed to the following guidelines (Bat Conservation Trust, 2016):

- a. At least 4 metres above the ground (where safe installation is possible);
- b. Sheltered from strong winds and exposed to the sun for part of the day (usually south or south-west). Ideally several bat boxes will be installed to provide a variety of different thermal options for bats. Grouping a number of boxes each with a different aspect can achieve this; while a number of boxes is preferable to one, a single box is still viable and may be used by roosting bats;
- c. Located close to unlit linear features, such as lines of trees or hedgerows; and
- d. Installed where the bat box entrance is not cluttered or impeded by branches, or accessible to predators (such as cats) by large branches underneath them.

2.3 House Sparrow

2.3.1 Four house sparrow terrace nest boxes will be installed at the new housing. The boxes will not be positioned over windows or doorways where droppings may become a nuisance. RSPB advice states that boxes should ideally be sited facing north to east, to avoid exposure to direct sunlight, which may cause overheating of chicks in the nest. An example of a suitable house sparrow bird box is given below at **Insert 3**.



Insert 3: Schwegler 1SP House Sparrow Nesting Terrace

2.3.2 Such bird boxes are available from the NHBS (www.nhbs.com) or Wild Care (www.wildcare.co.uk).

2.4 Swift

2.4.1 The swift (*Apus apus*) has been added to The Birds of Conservation Concern Red list (Stanbury, et al., 2021) owing to the recorded recent declines and its identified status as a high conservation priority.

- 2.4.2 Five swift boxes will be installed within the residential dwellings at the site. Suitable swift nest boxes are illustrated at **Insert 4**.



Insert 4: Examples of swift nest boxes²

2.5 Other Birds

- 2.5.1 Five bird boxes associated with a variety of bird species are to be installed at the retained trees of a suitable stem diameter. RSPB advice states that boxes should ideally be sited facing north to east, to avoid exposure to direct sunlight, which may cause overheating of chicks in the nest. The boxes should be at least 4 metres from ground level.
- 2.5.2 A selection of each of the boxes presented at **Insert 5** will be used (or other suitably long-lasting boxes of similar design and quality).



Insert 5: Vivara Pro 28mm Seville and 32mm Seville Woodstone boxes, suitable for a variety of garden birds.

2.6 Aftercare and Maintenance

Tree-mounted Bird and Bat Boxes

- 2.6.1 To ensure all tree mounted bird and bat boxes remain in a suitable condition for use the following checks will be undertaken:
- Bird nest boxes are to be checked annually in September / October. Old nest material and other debris will be removed and any damaged or fallen boxes to be repaired / reinstated.

² From left to right No. 17A Schwegler Swift Nest Box (Triple Cavity) as installation (left), Manthorpe Swift Nesting Box (centre) and Ibstock Eco-habitat for Swift (right), all available from www.NHBS.com

- b. Bat boxes are to be checked to ensure they remain present annually in September / October. No maintenance required at the bat boxes as the specified boxes are designed to ensure all droppings fall from the bottom.

2.6.2 Any repairs identified by the monitoring will be carried out at the earliest opportunity to ensure a high level of maintenance.

Boxes and Access Panels on Properties in Private Ownership

2.6.3 Boxes and access panels that lie within private land will be the responsibility of the property owners. The features within private ownership must be retained and maintained appropriately in accordance with the timing restrictions in relation to nesting birds.

2.6.4 The bat access panels to be fitted integrally to the elevation walls of the properties (i.e. in private ownership) do not require any management. It is recommended that the accesses to the panels are kept clear of obstructions such as climbing plants.

2.6.5 New residents should be provided with guidance in relation to the maintenance of the boxes to comprise:

- a. Replacement / repair of damaged or fallen boxes;
- b. Annual cleaning the boxes and removal of old nest material in October; and
- c. Avoidance of obstruction of box accesses by garden equipment and climbing plants.

3.0 APPENDIX: FIGURE

Figure 1: Plan to Show Recommended Locations for Bat and Bird Boxes

