

MIDDLETON CARE HOME, ROCHDALE**BIRD AND BAT ENHACEMENT STRATEGY**

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1 INTRODUCTION

Weddles have been instructed to discharge a Pre-Commencement Condition in support of a full planning application for erection of a residential development comprising of 20 dwellings (Use Class C3) and a 80 bed care home development (Use Class C2) including car parking, landscaping, open space and other associated works following demolition of Parkfield House.

Specifically, this enhancement strategy relates to Condition 19, which states:

“No phase of the development hereby permitted shall be occupied until a scheme of biodiversity enhancements pursuant to that phase of development has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Such measure shall include, but not limited to, the provision of bird boxes, bird bricks, bat boxes and bat bricks to be integrated to the fabric of the buildings hereby approved, bug hotels, hibernaculum, wildflower seeding and hedgehog habitat (including provision of ‘Hedgehog Highways’) The duly approved scheme shall be implemented in full prior to final occupation of the phase of development to which the measures relate and retained thereafter.

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.”

The mitigation strategy below has been prepared in line with the best available Bat Conservation Trust (BCT) and Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) guidance and informed by ongoing discussions with the relevant design and architectural teams.

This Ecological Enhancement Strategy has been prepared in accordance with the recommendations of the Updated Ecological Survey and Assessment conducted by ERAP Ltd in March 2023.

2 ENHANCEMENT STRATEGY

2.1 Bird Enhancement

The site supports suitable nesting habitat for common passerines and has potential to support Priority Species associated with suburban environments, including house sparrow and swift (both Birds of Conservation Concern Red List species¹).

Enhancement measures will provide a range of integrated and tree-mounted nesting opportunities designed to increase nesting capacity onsite and provide opportunities for birds of greater conservation concern.

Details pertaining to the ecological enhancements that will be implemented as part of the development are tabulated below:

Specification of enhancement	Relevant species	Recommendation details
4 x Schwegler 1SP House Sparrow Terrace Boxes - Woodcrete construction (minimum 25-year lifespan) - Entrance hole: 32mm diameter - Integrated or securely fixed surface-mounted type	House Sparrow (<i>Passer domesticus</i>)	Installed at minimum 4m above ground level. Located on residential elevations in clusters (minimum 2 terraces together). Oriented north-east to south-east where feasible. Not above windows or doors. Installed prior to first occupation.
6 x integrated swift nest bricks/boxes, such as: - Manthorpe Swift Brick - Ibstock Eco-habitat Swift Brick - Schwegler 17A (triple cavity where integrated units not feasible) Technical Requirements: - Entrance slot: approx. 65mm x 30mm - Internal cavity minimum 150mm depth - Integrated flush with brickwork where possible	Swift (<i>Apus apus</i>)	Installed at minimum 5m above ground level under eaves or high gable elevations. Located in groups of at least 3. Clear flight path of minimum 5m. North, east or north-east facing where possible. Installed prior to first occupation.
6 x Tree-Mounted Bird Boxes, comprising: - 2 x Schwegler 1N (32mm hole) - 2 x Schwegler 2M (26mm hole) - 1 x Schwegler 2H Open-fronted - 1 x Schwegler 3S	Blue tit (<i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>), Great tit (<i>Parus major</i>), Robin (<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>), Wren (<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>), other common passerines	Installed on retained mature trees at 3–4m height. Facing north-east to south-east. Mounted using adjustable, non-damaging straps. Minimum 20m spacing between similar box types. Installed prior to first occupation.

Table 1: Bird enhancement strategy

A plan detailing the locations of the Bird enhancements can be found in **Appendix A** of this report

¹ Birds of Conservation Concern 5

Accessed at: <https://www.bto.org/sites/default/files/publications/bocc-5-a5-4pp-single-pages.pdf>

2.2 Bat Enhancement

The site provides suitable commuting and foraging habitat for low numbers of common bat species. Enhancement measures are designed to increase roosting opportunities and maintain commuting corridors in accordance with best practice guidance.

Details pertaining to the bat enhancements that will be implemented as part of the development are tabulated below:

Specification of Enhancement	Relevant Species	Recommendation Details
6 x Integrated Bat Roost Units, such as: - Habitat Bat Access Panel - Ibstock Enclosed Bat Box C - Greenwood Ecohabitat Integrated Crevice Box Crevice-style, maintenance-free, woodcrete or insulated cavity type	Common pipistrelle (<i>Pipistrellus pipistrellus</i>) and other crevice-dwelling bats	Installed at minimum 4m above ground level. Distributed across at least two elevations. Positioned close to retained tree lines or landscape corridors. Not above windows or doors. Mixed orientations to provide thermal variation. Installed prior to first occupation.
6 x Tree-Mounted Bat Boxes, comprising: - 3 x Schwegler 1FF - 2 x Schwegler 1FD - 1 x Greenwood Ecohabitat Double Chamber Box	Common pipistrelle and other small crevice-dwelling species	Installed on retained mature trees at minimum 4m height. Located along retained tree lines forming commuting routes. Installed with varying aspects (south-east and south-west preferred). Grouped to provide a range of thermal conditions.

Table 2: Bat Enhancement Strategy

A plan detailing the locations of the Bat enhancements can be found in **Appendix A** of this report

2.3 Retained Habitat Enhancement

Details pertaining to the enhancement of retained habitats are tabulated below:

Specification of Enhancement	Relevant Species	Recommendation Details
Wildlife Connectivity Gaps: ("Hedgehog Highways") - Minimum opening size: 130mm x 130mm - Installed at ground level within close-boarded or panel fencing - Installed at 15-20m intervals along garden boundaries - Clearly marked with hedgehog signage where feasible	Hedgehog (<i>Erinaceus europaeus</i>), Amphibians, small terrestrial Mammals	Gaps to be installed in all new impermeable garden boundary fencing to maintain permeability across the site. Openings must remain unobstructed and be retained for the lifetime of the development. Where fencing backs onto retained habitat, at least one gap per garden must be installed.
Purpose-Built Hedgehog Refuge Features: - Minimum 3 dedicated hedgehog hibernacula within retained habitat areas - Constructed from stacked logs, brash, leaf litter and soil	Hedgehog and other small terrestrial Mammals	Hibernacula to be located within retained tree belts or landscape margins. Constructed with internal cavities to provide frost-free overwintering conditions. Positioned away from areas of high human or pet disturbance. Retained and allowed to naturalise over time.

- Base footprint approx. 1m x 1m, height approx. 0.5m - Located in shaded, undisturbed positions		
Deadwood Habitat Piles (Log Piles): - Minimum 5 log piles distributed across retained tree belt - Constructed using untreated timber from site or locally sourced hardwood - Each pile minimum 1m length x 0.5m height x 0.5m width - Incorporate varied log diameters (50–300mm) - Partially embedded into ground where feasible	Invertebrates (including saproxylic species), Amphibians, Hedgehog, small Mammals, foraging Birds	Log piles to be located in shaded or semi-shaded areas along retained boundaries. A proportion should be placed in contact with soil to promote fungal colonisation. Piles to be left undisturbed to decay naturally. No removal unless posing a safety risk.
Brash Habitat Stacks: - Arisings from future tree management to be retained onsite where safe - Loosely stacked in discrete habitat zones	Invertebrates, Wren, Robin, Hedgehogs	Brash piles to supplement formal log piles and provide additional refuge and nesting opportunities. To be located within retained habitat areas and allowed to decompose naturally.
Native Understorey Reinforcement Planting (Retained Tree Belts): - Supplemental planting of native shrubs where canopy gaps exist - Species such as Hawthorn, Hazel, Dog Rose, Guelder Rose, Elder	Nesting Birds, Hedgehogs, Invertebrates	Planting to increase structural diversity and provide ground-level cover for commuting hedgehogs. Planted in groups to create dense refuge zones rather than formal rows.

Table 3: Retained Habitat Enhancement Strategy

2.4 Timing and Other Considerations

All bat and bird boxes will be erected by, or under the direct supervision of a suitably qualified and (where required) bat licensed ecologist at the earliest possible point in the construction phase. Each enhancement feature will have its entrance hole temporarily blocked using a brightly coloured, breathable material to discourage uptake during construction and thereby prevent disturbance. Prior to first occupation of the development, the blocking material will be removed by the licensed ecologist, at which time each feature will be inspected to ensure it is clean, undamaged, secure and fully functional. Any necessary repairs or adjustments will be undertaken at that time.

In relation to retained habitat enhancements, all hedgehog gaps within boundary fencing will be installed during the construction of garden boundaries and checked prior to first occupation to ensure they are unobstructed and compliant with the minimum 130mm x 130mm specification. Log piles and hedgehog hibernacula will be created within the retained tree belt and landscape buffer areas once heavy construction activity has ceased in those areas, to avoid compaction or accidental disturbance. These features will be constructed using untreated timber and natural brash, positioned in shaded or semi-shaded locations, and partially integrated with the ground where feasible to maximise ecological function.

Prior to first occupation, a final inspection of retained habitat enhancements will be undertaken by the project ecologist to confirm that:

- A minimum of five log piles have been installed in suitable locations;
- A minimum of three hedgehog hibernacula have been constructed to the specified dimensions;

- Hedgehog access gaps are present at the required intervals and remain unobstructed; and
- Habitat features are stable, appropriately sited and capable of functioning as intended.

All retained habitat enhancement features will thereafter be maintained for the lifetime of the development and allowed to naturalise, with log and brash piles left to decay naturally unless removal is required for overriding health and safety reasons.

APPENDIX A – BIRD AND BAT ENHANCEMENT PLAN



- Key**
- Red Line Boundary
 - Integrated Bat Roost Unit
 - Tree Mounted Bat Box
 - Tree Mounted Bird Box
 - Swift Brick
 - House Sparrow Terrace Box
- Google Satellite Hybrid

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LANDSCAPE
ARBORICULTURE
GARDEN DESIGN
ECOLOGY

Job:
MIDDLETON CARE HOME, ROCHDALE

Title:
BIRD/BAT BOX PLAN

Scale@A3: 500:1	Drawn: BS	Date: 12/02/26	Drawing no. n/a
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