

Document:	Habitat Enhancement Scheme
Site:	1, The Triangle, Tilehurst, Reading
Client:	Architecture Design Limited
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GLOSSARY

CEcol	Chartered Ecologist
CIEEM	Chartered Institute of Ecology & Environmental Management
CRoW Act	Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000
MCIEEM	Member of Chartered Institute of Ecology & Environmental Management
NERC Act	Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006
SPI	Species of Principal Importance
W&CA	Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)

INTRODUCTION

Background

The site is located at 1, The Triangle on School Road, RG30 4RW to the west of Reading town centre and is centred at Ordnance Survey National Grid Reference SU 66780 73667.

Full planning consent was granted by Reading Borough Council on 9th June 2021 for the ‘*various external alterations including replacement shop front*’ (Application No: 210681).

Tetra Tech was commissioned by Architecture Design Limited on 7th July 2021 to produce a Habitat Enhancement Scheme in order to facilitate the discharge of Planning Condition 6 which states:

‘No development shall commence on site (including demolition or preparatory works) until details of a habitat enhancement scheme are submitted and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme is to include a programme of implementation and ongoing maintenance. The habitat enhancement scheme shall thereafter be implemented and adhered to in accordance with the agreed programme’.

This document has been prepared by Tetra Tech Assistant Ecologist Hannah Coutts BSc and the conditions pertinent to it are provided in Appendix A.

Purpose of the Document

The objectives of this document are to:

- Outline the ecological / habitat enhancement features to be implemented;
- Outline the relevant legislation;
- Provide ongoing maintenance information and a programme including timescales for management activities; and,
- Outline the responsibilities for the management and maintenance of the ecological enhancements.

Limitations

The information provided herein does not comprise detailed designs or specifications e.g. (architectural drawings). It is assumed that subsequent detailed designs and specifications will be produced by the relevant consultant and provided to contractors with associated information.

However, the location and type of the features proposed are specific. Should any changes be made to the development layout or design, then this document should be reviewed and where necessary, updated.

Note that scientific names are provided at the first mention of each species and common names (where appropriate) are then used throughout the rest of the report for ease of reading.

RELEVANT LEGISLATION

BREEDING BIRDS

Under the W&CA and the CRoW Act all wild birds, their eggs and active nests are protected by law and it is an offence (with certain exceptions) to:

- Kill, injure or take any species of wild bird;
- Take, damage or destroy a nest while that nest is in use or being built; and/or
- Take or destroy their eggs.

Some bird species (such as barn owl *Tyto alba*) receive further protection under Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 (as amended). In addition to the standard protection afforded to all wild birds, it is an offence to disturb Schedule 1 birds and their young whilst at, on or near their nest.

There are 59 bird species listed as SPI for the Conservation of Biodiversity in England and are listed under Section 41 of the NERC Act. Methodology

ECOLOGICAL FEATURES TO BE CREATED

The following ecological features will be created on site. The proposed locations are shown on Figure 1.

BIRD BOXES

Bird boxes are an established technique for increasing the value of landscapes for nesting bird species. To enhance the site's value for nesting birds, two bird boxes targeting house sparrows *Passer domesticus* will be placed onto the side elevation of the building, which faces north-east.

Bird boxes will be placed under the eaves / roof (between 3m – 5m above the ground if possible), to reduce predation risks. The recommended bird box types are listed in Table 1.

Table 1: Bird Boxes

Species	Number of Boxes	Box Types	Example Photos
House Sparrow	Two boxes	1SP Schwegler Sparrow Terrace or House Sparrow Terrace FSC Nest Box, these should be placed near each other to create a colony. Should the recommended box type not be available, an ecologist will advise on a suitable alternative.	House sparrow: 1SP Schwegler Sparrow Terrace (https://www.nhbs.com/)  House Sparrow Terrace FSC Nest Box (https://www.nhbs.com/) 

Boxes will be fixed to the buildings using screws into brick.

All boxes are available from <http://www.nhbs.com/> (other suppliers are available).

CLIMBING PLANTS

Climbing plants will be planted into the ground / or withing raised planters with trellis' against the walls of the building. Species which will be used include dog rose *Rosa canina*, honeysuckle *Lonicera periclymenum* and clematis *Clematis*. Table 2 shows a summary of the three recommended climbing species.

Table 2: Information on Climbing Plant Species (RSPB, 2021)

Species	Benefits	Height	Conditions
Dog Rose	Attract insects including aphids which is an important component in the diet of many birds and insects. Forms a thick, impenetrable refuge for birds.	Approximately 3m x 3m (10ft x 10ft)	Requires full sun and moderately fertile soils.

Honeysuckle	Thick, well-established climbers make ideal nest sites for thrushes. Excellent food source for insects and birds. The flowers attract butterflies, bumblebees, and moths. Bullfinches, warblers, and thrushes eat the berries.	2 to 7m (6 to 22ft) x 2 to 3m (6 to 10ft)	Grows in full or partial sun. Generally, a hardy plant and can grow in most moist soils.
Ornamental clematis species	Once established, all clematis provide nesting shelter for a variety of bird species. These plants also provide nectar and pollen for bees. Additionally, if the seed heads are left, the bird will take the material to use in their nests in spring.	Can grow up to 40 feet.	Grows well in shaded locations. Will grow well in drained, moist soil.

MANAGEMENT AND TIMESCALES

Details of the management required as well as timings for management activities are provided below for each ecological feature.

BIRD BOXES

Although not essential, it would be beneficial to clean out the bird boxes annually during the winter months (October to February, inclusive), as it clears the space for future broods and can remove any parasites present in the boxes. Boiling water can be used to clean the interior of the box, which should be allowed to dry before the front panel is re-installed (RSPB, 2021). A maintenance check should be done every year from the ground to check they are still securely in place to the wall and remain free from damage. Any damaged or missing boxes should be replaced as soon as possible.

Table 3: Timescales and Management for Bird Boxes

Item	Timing
Installation of bird boxes	Any time of the year after shop front replacement
Maintenance check	Every year during the winter months – November to February, inclusive

CLIMBING PLANTS

The recommended climbing plant species will be planted in a flowerpot trellis and will be tied to it for support using twine. Once planted, the plants will need to be watered twice a week. When planting, the plants will require feeding with a generic fertilizer. Once plants are established, they will be fertilised once per month. Table 4 below summarises the management activities required for each species.

Table 4: Maintenance and Timings for Climbing Plant Species (Gardeners' World, 2021)

Species	Item	Timing
Dog rose	Planting the climber between 30cm – 45cm away from the base of the trellis	Spring or autumn
Honeysuckle		
Clematis		
Dog rose	Take cuttings to root	Autumn
	General pruning and tidying	After late winter when the fruits have been eaten
Honeysuckle	Pruning	Late winter or early spring
Clematis	Pruning	Early spring

RESPONSIBILITIES

The installation of the bird boxes will be undertaken by the principal contractor during the shop front replacement, and then will be managed and maintained by Costa Coffee post-construction.

Post construction, if any further advice is required regarding the enhancement features, an ecologist from Tetra Tech should be contacted, details below.

1.1 CONTACTS

The table below details the relevant contacts for the project, should any technical support or further advice be required.

Table 5: Project Contacts

Role	Contact
Tetra Tech Associate Ecologist	Vivienne Greenough vivienne.greenough@tetrattech.com
General Ecology Contact	Tetra Tech Ecology Ecology.UK@tetrattech.com

PROGRAMME OF IMPLEMENTATION AND ONGOING MAINTENANCE

Table 6: Summary schedule of all management actions.

Item	Timing
Installation of bird boxes	After shop front replacement
Bird box maintenance check and clean	Post construction once a year during the winter months – October to February
Climbing plant planting	Spring or autumn
Watering of climbing plants	Twice weekly
Feeding using fertiliser	Once when being planted. Once established, feed once per month.
Pruning and cutting of climbing plants	Early spring, annually

REFERENCES

- Gardeners' World, 2021. *How to Plant Climbers*. Available at: [How To Plant Climbers - BBC Gardeners' World Magazine \(gardenersworld.com\)](https://www.gardenersworld.com/how-to/How-to-Plant-Climbers/). Accessed July 2021.
- RSPB, 2021. *Best Climbing Plants & Roses for Gardens*. Available at: [Best Climbing Plants & Roses for Gardens - The RSPB](https://www.rspb.org.uk/gardening/articles-features/best-climbing-plants-roses-for-gardens/). Accessed July 2021.
- RSPB, 2021. *Cleaning Nest Boxes*. Available at: [How To Clean a Bird Nesting Box - The RSPB](https://www.rspb.org.uk/gardening/articles-features/how-to-clean-a-bird-nesting-box/). Accessed July 2021.

Document Control			
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Prepared by: Hannah Coutts Assistant Ecologist 	Checked by Kirstin Aldous MCIEEM Principal Ecologist 	Approved By: Vivienne Greenough CEcol MCIEEM Associate Ecologist 	

FIGURES

Figure 1 – Ecological Enhancements Plan

Front elevation facing north west



FRONT ELEVATION

Side elevation facing north east



SIDE ELEVATION



Legend

- Birdboxes
- Climbing plants

Notes:

Drawn by: SB
Checked by: HC
Office: Southampton

Figure No. 1
Revision No. A

29 July 2021

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