

64 Prospect Street, Caversham

## **Habitat Enhancement Scheme (HES)**

**(to address Condition 4 of full planning consent:  
Application No. 191866)**

March 2020

| Quality Management     |                               |
|------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <b>Client:</b>         | Bartlett Property Development |
| <b>Project:</b>        | 64 Prospect Street, Caversham |
| <b>Report Title:</b>   | Habitat Enhancement Scheme    |
| <b>Project Number:</b> | 1005850                       |
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# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Background, Proposals & Planning Permission

- 1.1.1 Full planning consent was granted by Reading Borough Council in February 2020 for the change of use from dwelling (class C3) to a seven-bed HMO (class *sui generis*) and a single storey rear extension (ref: 191866) at 64 Prospect Street, Caversham, Reading, RG4 8JN. The permission is subject to a number of conditions, of which Condition 4 is relevant to ecology and states:

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

*REASON: Details are required prior to commencement as insufficient information was submitted with the application and in order to avoid harm to habitats and species whilst securing biodiversity enhancement in the long term. This accords with Paragraph 175 of the NPPF (2019), Policy EN12 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019, the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.’*

- 1.1.2 Accordingly, Aspect Ecology has been commissioned by Bartlett Property Development, in March 2020, to prepare a Habitat Enhancement Scheme (HES) in respect of the consented development to assist with satisfying Condition 4.

## 1.2 Site Description

- 1.2.1 The site is located to the north of the River Thames in Caversham within an urban setting. The site is bound to the south-east by Prospect Street, whilst Balmore Allotments bound the site to the north-west. The remaining site boundaries are bordered by adjoining residential properties and gardens.
- 1.2.2 The site itself comprises a mid-terrace dwelling and associated garden. Small areas of hardstanding are present including a patio area.

## 1.3 Purpose of this Report

- 1.3.1 This HES details the ecological components of the consented development that are to be retained, describes the species-specific enhancements and details the management and maintenance regime for these ecological features.

## 2 Aims and Objectives

2.1 The primary aim of the proposed ecological features is for the retained and new habitats / features to ensure they deliver the desired ecological enhancements for the benefit of local biodiversity, while making a positive contribution to national conservation priorities and the local Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP).

2.2 The above aim will be achieved through the following key objectives:

- **Objective 1** – *Creation, retention and management of these habitats (trees and wildlife-friendly planting) to promote vigour and structural integrity, thereby providing places of shelter, and foraging resources for wildlife.*
- **Objective 2** - *Provision and maintenance of new faunal species-specific features (e.g. bat, bird and invertebrate boxes) to provide enduring places of shelter/nesting/roosting for wildlife.*

### 3 Retention and Creation of Ecological Features

#### 3.1 Habitats to be Retained and Managed

3.1.1 The following habitats are to be retained and managed as part of the consented development:

- **Trees** – Retained trees will continue to provide foraging and sheltering opportunities for a range of fauna including invertebrates and birds.

#### 3.2 Habitat Creation

3.2.1 **Wildlife-friendly planting.** Wildlife-friendly shrubs and herbs will be planted along the western boundary of the rear garden and will include a mixture of native and non-native wildlife friendly shrubs and pollinator plants selected from the Royal Horticultural Society Plants for Pollinators list. The shrubs will include Box *Buxus sempervirens*, Dogwood *Cornus sanguinea*, Laurustinus *Viburnum tinus*, Japanese Quince *Chaenomeles* sp., *Hebe* sp., English Lavender *Lavandula angustifolia* and Flowering Currant *Ribes sanguineum*. The herbaceous perennials will include Primrose *Primula vulgaris*, Clustered Bellflower *Campanula glomerata*, Winter-flowering Hellebore *Helleborus* sp., Purple Plume Thistle *Cirsium rivulare* 'Atropurpureum' and Blue Eryngo *Eryngium planum*. This will enhance the rear garden's potential to support a range of pollinators and bird species.

#### 3.3 New Faunal Features

3.3.1 Bat and bird boxes will be installed at the site as part of the development. In addition to this, invertebrate boxes will also be installed within proximity to retained trees. These features are described below and will be subject to ongoing management.

3.3.2 **Bats.** To enhance bat roosting opportunities, a bat box will be erected on a retained tree in the rear garden. This location will decrease flight time to foraging habitat in the adjacent land to the north and is also situated furthest from the main road where lighting is likely to be most intense. A bat box incorporating type 2F Schwegler will be installed (see Appendix 5850/1 for specifications). The bat box will be installed in a sheltered, sunny location, facing a south-easterly or south-westerly direction, at a height of 4-7m (see Plan 5850/HES1 for location). Care will be taken to ensure the box is not obscured by vegetation. In addition, care will be taken in the placement of external lighting to ensure that no external lights are installed that would illuminate the bat box. This type of bat box is suitable for Soprano Pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pygmaeus*, a Priority Species and Reading BAP species.

3.3.3 **Birds.** A Terraced Sparrow Box (see Appendix 5850/2 for specifications) which incorporates three 35mm holes will be installed into the single-storey extension as it is being built. This box will be suitable for up to three pairs of nesting House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*, a Priority Species and Reading BAP species. The bird box will be installed facing a north-westerly or north-easterly direction. The box shall be erected at a minimum height of 1.5m to that they are not subject to predation by opportunistic cats or liable to vandalism.

3.3.4 **Invertebrates.** Two invertebrate boxes will be installed on boundary fences/walls within the rear garden area (see Appendix 5850/3 for specifications). These boxes will be suitable as places of shelter and nesting by a range of invertebrates, including lacewings, ladybirds, solitary bees and solitary wasps. The boxes will be installed at a height of approximately 1 – 2m.

## 4 Programme for Implementation

4.1 The following table sets out the programme for implementation of the relevant ecological features.

| Feature            | Phasing                                                                                    | Comments                                  |
|--------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| Wildlife planting  | To be installed in rear garden prior to completion of the development                      | Refer to Plan 5850/HES1                   |
| Bat box            | To be installed on retained tree prior to completion of the development                    | Refer to Appendix 5850/1 & Plan 5850/HES1 |
| Bird box           | To be incorporated within external wall of new single-storey extension during construction | Refer to Appendix 5850/2 & Plan 5850/HES1 |
| Invertebrate boxes | To be installed on boundary fences/walls prior to completion of the development            | Refer to Appendix 5850/3 & Plan 5850/HES1 |

## 5 Maintenance of Ecological Features

### 5.1 Habitats

- 5.1.1 The retained and created habitats will be managed as set out below.

#### Trees

- 5.1.2 For the retained trees, management will continue to focus on the development of good specimens with no specific management operations required in terms of ecological interest. However, any pruning required shall take place outside of the bird nesting season (i.e. outside 1st March to 31st August inclusive).

#### Wildlife-Friendly planting

- 5.1.3 The wildlife friendly planting will largely be managed as an amenity feature of the garden. However, so as to increase opportunities for wildlife, the traditional autumn tidy up will be delayed until spring each year, as the plants and leaf-litter will provide places for invertebrates to overwinter. In addition, some of the non-diseased shrub prunings shall be left out of sight around the base of the shrubs. If any of the pollinator plants do not survive then they will be replaced the following planting season with equally suitable species to benefit pollinator species.

### 5.2 Fauna

- 5.2.1 In addition to the proposed habitat enhancements, a number of faunal specific features will be created to provide biodiversity enhancements at the site for a range of fauna including bats, birds and invertebrates with relevant management actions described below.

#### Bats

- 5.2.2 The bat boxes are rot proof, extremely long lasting and require no particular maintenance. Nonetheless, an annual inspection of bat boxes will be undertaken to ensure boxes remain secured. These inspections can be conducted at any time of year, however any adjustments to the bat boxes (e.g. repositioning) should be undertaken by a suitably qualified ecologist in spring or autumn months when bats are less likely to be disturbed.

#### Birds

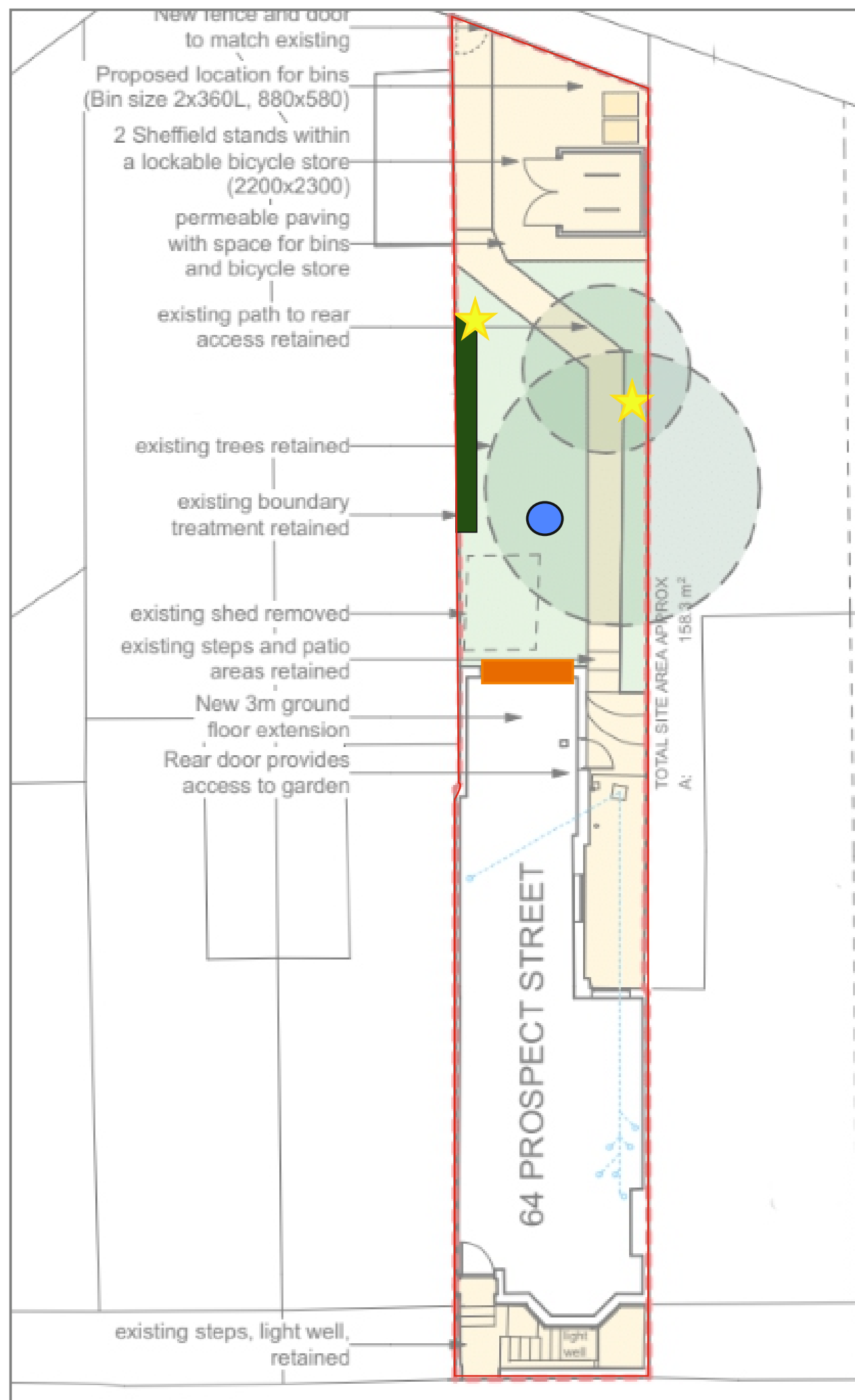
- 5.2.3 The integrated bird box is rot proof, long lasting and requires no maintenance.

#### Invertebrates

- 5.2.4 The invertebrate boxes require no maintenance, nonetheless, should the boxes become damaged they shall be repaired or replaced with equivalent boxes.

## **Plan 5850/HES1:**

Habitat Enhancement Scheme



### Habibat Terraced Sparrow Nest Box



Bird Box

A terraced bird box designed specifically for Sparrows which will be integrated into a building of the ground floor extension.

*Dimensions: 21.5 x 44 x 15 cm*

### Invertebrate Boxes



Invertebrate Box

These will be bug boxes, wooden insect houses or a mix of both, attached to boundary fences/walls. They are suitable for a variety of species that use cavities to nest or shelter in.

*Dimensions: 14 x 20 x 9cm*

*Dimentions: 22 x 13.5 x 13.5 cm*

### 2F Bat Box



Bat Box

A standard bat box, attractive to the smaller British bat species. Simple design with a narrow entrance slit on the front enables it to be easily installed on a retained tree.

*Material: Woodcrete*

*Diameter: 16cm*

Key:



Site Boundary



Suggested Wildlife-Friendly Planting

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64 Prospect Street, Caversham PROJECT

Habitat Enhancement Scheme TITLE

5850/HES1 DRAWING NO.

- REV.

March 2020 DATE



## **Appendix 5850/1:**

### Bat Box Specifications

# Bat Boxes

Schwegler bat boxes are made from 'woodcrete' and have the highest rates of occupation of all types of box.

The 75% wood sawdust, clay and concrete mixture is ideal, being durable whilst allowing natural respiration and temperature stability. These boxes are rot and predator proof and extremely long lasting.

Boxes can be hung from a branch near the tree trunk or fixed using 'tree-friendly' aluminum nails.



## 2F Bat Box

A standard bat box, attractive to the smaller British bat species. Simple design with a narrow entrance slit on the front.

*Material: Woodcrete*

*Diameter: 16cm*

*Height: 33cm*

## **Appendix 5850/2:**

### Bird Box Specifications

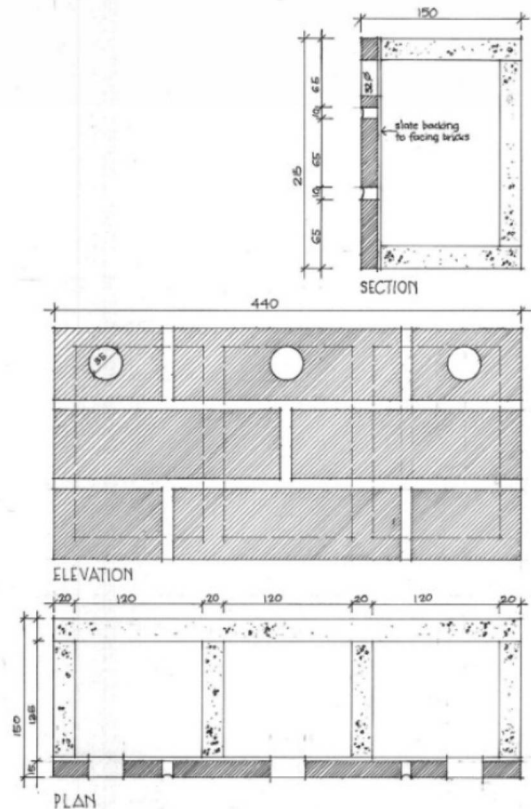
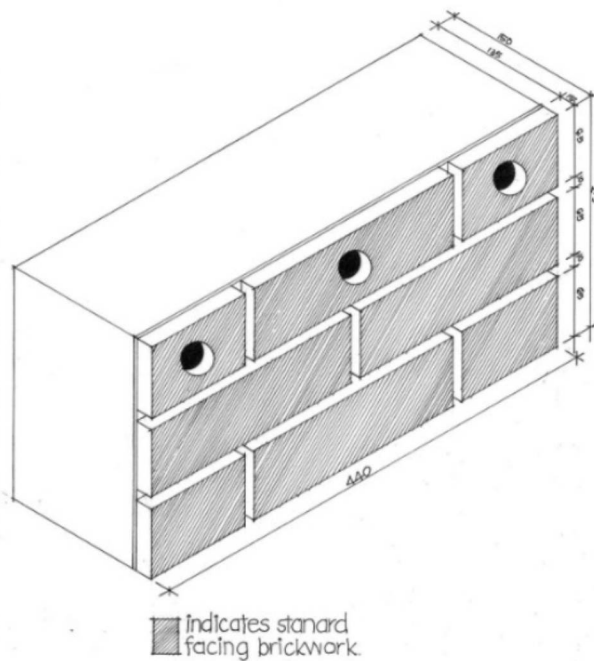
# Bird Boxes

## Habibat Terraced Sparrow Nest Box

A terraced bird box with three chambers designed specifically for Sparrows which can be integrated into a building.

*Dimensions: 215H x 440L x 150D mm.*

*Weight 2.8kg*



## **Appendix 5850/3:**

### Invertebrate Box Specifications

# Insect Boxes

## Bug Box

A dual insect habitat which can be hung from trees or man made structures near ponds or scented plants, to provide an overwintering habitat for ladybirds and a nesting site for solitary bees.

*Dimensions: 14 x 20 x 9cm*



## Wooden Insect House

A good general insect habitat for beneficial insects in summer and, later in the year, overwintering ladybirds and lacewings. Site in a sheltered place near pollen / nectar plants or by pond.

Durable and strong construction in Acacia / Oak / Larch with no maintenance necessary.

*Dimensions: 22 x 13.5 x 13.5cm*

ecology • landscape planning • arboriculture

The logo for Aspect Ecology Ltd features the word "aspect" in a white, lowercase, sans-serif font. A thin, white, diagonal line is positioned above the letter "t", extending from the top of the letter "p" towards the right.

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