

Appeal Ref: APP/E0345/W/21/3276463 55 Vastern Road, Reading, RG1 8BU

Reference O448-ECO12-SW-XX-SPC-O-135-001 Ver: P03

On-site Biodiversity Enhancement Scheme

55 Vastern Road, Reading, RG1 8BU

March 2025

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1 Introduction 1

2 Habitat enhancements 2

3 Integral bird and bat boxes 4

Appendix A: Classification of proposed on-site habitats 12

Appendix B: Plan showing locations of green roofs 13

1 Introduction

1.1 Condition 43 of Appeal Ref: APP/E0345/W/21/3276463 55 Vastern Road, Reading, RG1 8BU states:

'No development (barring demolition) shall commence on site until full details (including maintenance details and schedules) of an on-site biodiversity enhancement scheme, to include a suite of integral bird and bat boxes, tiles and bricks on the new buildings, is submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme is to include a programme for implementation and ongoing maintenance. The biodiversity enhancement scheme shall thereafter be implemented and adhered to in accordance with agreed programme.'

1.2 Condition 30 states: *'Prior to the commencement of the development (barring demolition) a landscape management plan, including long term design objectives, management responsibilities, timescales and maintenance schedules for all landscape areas, other than privately owned domestic gardens, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The landscape management plan shall thereafter be carried out in accordance with the approved details and for the period specified'*

1.3 The maintenance details and schedules for all habitat areas will be provided in the Landscape Management Plan.

2 Habitat enhancements

2.1 The Landscape General Arrangement Plan and Landscape Planting Framework Plan detail habitat enhancements on the site.

2.2 On-site biodiversity enhancements are detailed below.

Nesting birds

2.3 With regards to works to the hedges, shrubs, scrub and trees, no cutting or other work will be carried out that could disturb nesting birds. Birds generally nest between March and August. If there is any doubt as to whether birds are nesting or whether work could affect them, a suitably qualified ecologist will be employed to provide advice.

Flower-rich grassland

2.4 Within 10m of the river, 'Other neutral grassland' will be established using Emmorsgate EM5 Meadow Mixture for Loamy Soils. Emmorsgate EL1 flowering lawn mix will be sown in other parts of the site which need to be mown more regularly.

2.5 Soils used will be loamy, neutral in pH and of low fertility (N.B. high fertility soils such as typical topsoil will result in the species in the wildflower seed mix being replaced by more competitive undesirable species).

2.6 The seed will be sown into a clean seedbed that is free from weeds and other vegetation, and has been cultivated to produce a medium tilth followed by rolling to provide a firm surface to provide optimum conditions for germination.

2.7 The seed will be sown at optimum times - ideally August-September or alternatively March-April.

2.8 The seed will be sown at 2-4g/m². Weekly watering will be carried out if there is no rainfall for 7 days.

First year and subsequent management of EM5 Meadow Mixture

2.9 As recommended by Emmorsgate: in the first year, cut (removing cuttings) to ensure good grassland establishment from mid to late summer and/or early August and through to the end of March the following year (depending on growth). Perennial weeds such as docks will be dug out and removed.

2.10 Once established, management will be comprised of cutting the grassland in late July/August (removing cuttings from this area) and cutting the regrowth in autumn (again removing cuttings from this area) and again at the end of March if necessary.

First year and subsequent management of EL1 Meadow Mixture

- 2.11 As recommended by Emmorsgate, the newly sown flowering lawns will be mown regularly (every 7 -10 days during the growing season) throughout the first year of establishment. They will be cut to a height of 40-60mm (removing cuttings if dense). Cuttings should be collected and removed from site. This management will result in the gradual development of a good sward structure, help maintain balance between faster growing grasses and slower developing wild flowers and control annual weeds. Perennial weeds such as docks will be dug out and removed.
- 2.12 Once established, the flowering lawns will be mown regularly but not too short (25-40mm). To permit flowering, mowing can be relaxed from late June and cut again when the sward gets untidy (after 4-8 weeks). Mowing may be suspended earlier in the year to allow cowslips to flower. Cuttings should be collected and removed from site.

Other green roof

- 2.13 The green roof will be designed by a professional living roof company. The location of the green roof is shown in Appendix B.
- 2.14 The substrate will be porous, freely drained and at least 75mm deep (reused aggregates can be used).
- 2.15 The roof will not be planted with Sedum as this has limited biodiversity benefits.
- 2.16 A native wildflower meadow vegetated blanket will be used that is suited to dry conditions.
- 2.17 Some irrigation may be required initially. Otherwise, management is minimal. It is normal for plants to dry up in summer and then re-establish from seed. The roof will be allowed to colonise with mosses and other species that are also able to survive on dry, low nutrient shallow substrates. Occasional cuts may be carried out for aesthetic reasons. Weeding of undesirable species will be carried out as necessary.

Intensive green roof

- 2.18 The locations of intensive roofs are shown in Appendix B. It will be maintained in accordance with the Landscape Management Plan

3 Integral bird and bat boxes

- 3.1 Integral bird boxes, bat boxes and bat access tiles are built into the walls or roofs and are long-lasting permanent features.
- 3.2 The Reading Biodiversity Action Plan highlights the following features which are relevant to the site (Reading Biodiversity Action Plan March 2021, Appendix 4 – List of species and habitat specific actions).
- 3.3 Please note that blocks B, D and E cannot have boxes as these are BRE High risk Buildings. This limits the number of buildings that can be used. Bird boxes should also be placed in complete shade or shade for at least the hottest parts of the day to avoid overheating. The number of boxes is considered to be appropriate for the buildings that can support them.

Swift bricks

- 3.4 These need to be placed on shaded more north-facing walls of buildings to ensure nests do not overheat, away from windows and with at least 5 metres clear space below and not obstructed by trees etc. The Vivaro Pro Woodstone Build-in Swift Nest Box Deep will be used – see image to right.



Black redstart nesting sites

- 3.5 A Vivara Pro build-in Woodstone Half Open Nest Box which is suitable for black redstart will be used on the plant room at the top of Block A. The box should be in complete shade or shade for at least the hottest parts of the day to avoid overheating.



House sparrows

- 3.6 In accordance with 'Guidance for including bird boxes in residential development' (Action for Swifts, January 2019), swift boxes will be used as they are readily used by house sparrows. The same design will be used as shown for swift above.
- 3.7 These should be placed in complete shade for all or at least the hottest parts of the day to avoid overheating. They will be placed under the eaves and should be at least 4m high.

Bat access tiles

- 3.8 Bat access tiles such as the one manufactured by Habibat shown here will be placed on pitched roofs. Traditional bitumastic felt will be placed between the battens below the tiles where the bat access tile is placed at least 2m either side to prevent any contact by bats with breathable membranes. Bats can get entangled in breathable membranes and die. Bats can also damage breathable membranes.



Figure 1: Locations of bird boxes, bat boxes and bat access tiles



Figure 2: Block A



Figure 3: Block C

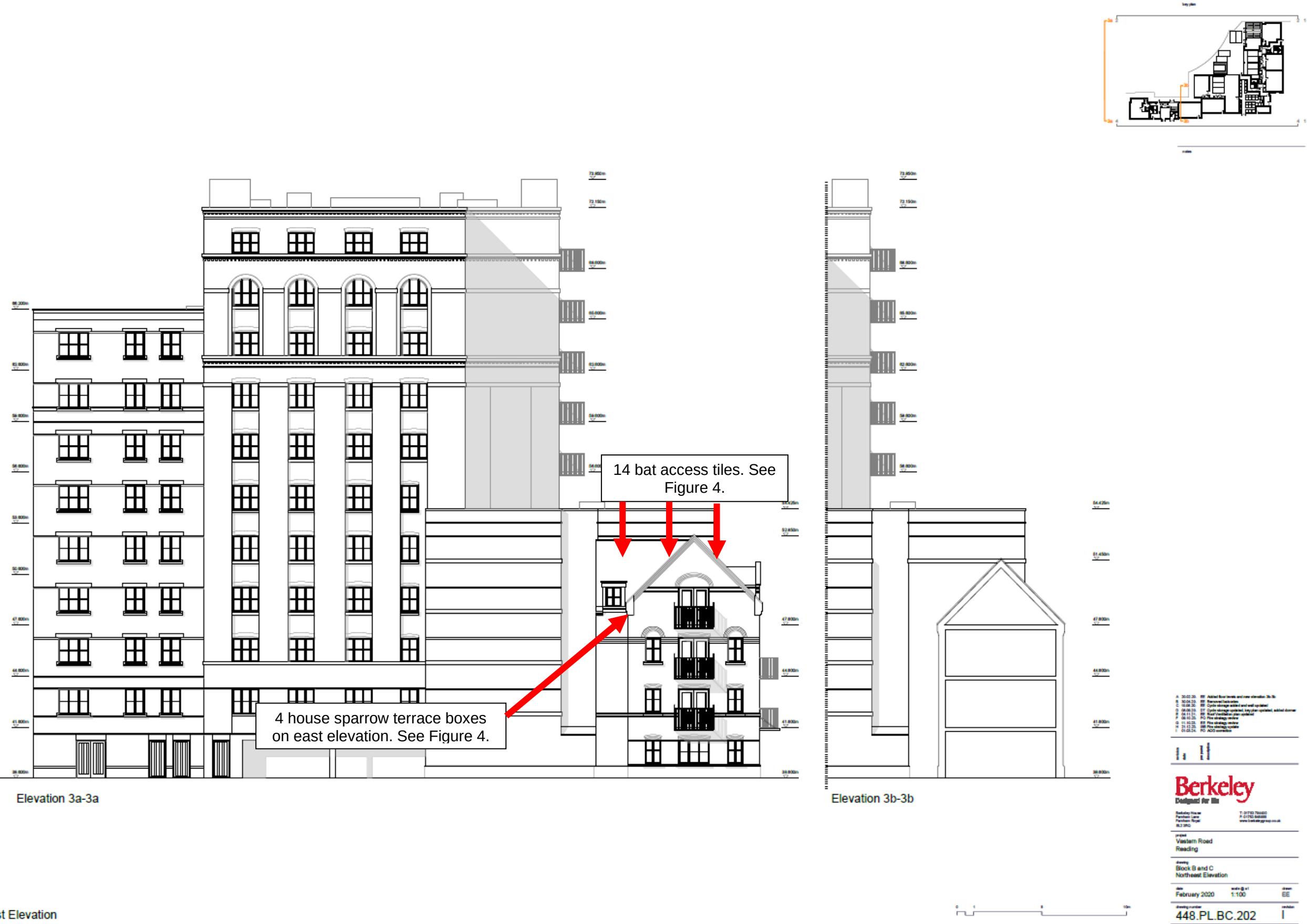


Figure 4: Block C plan

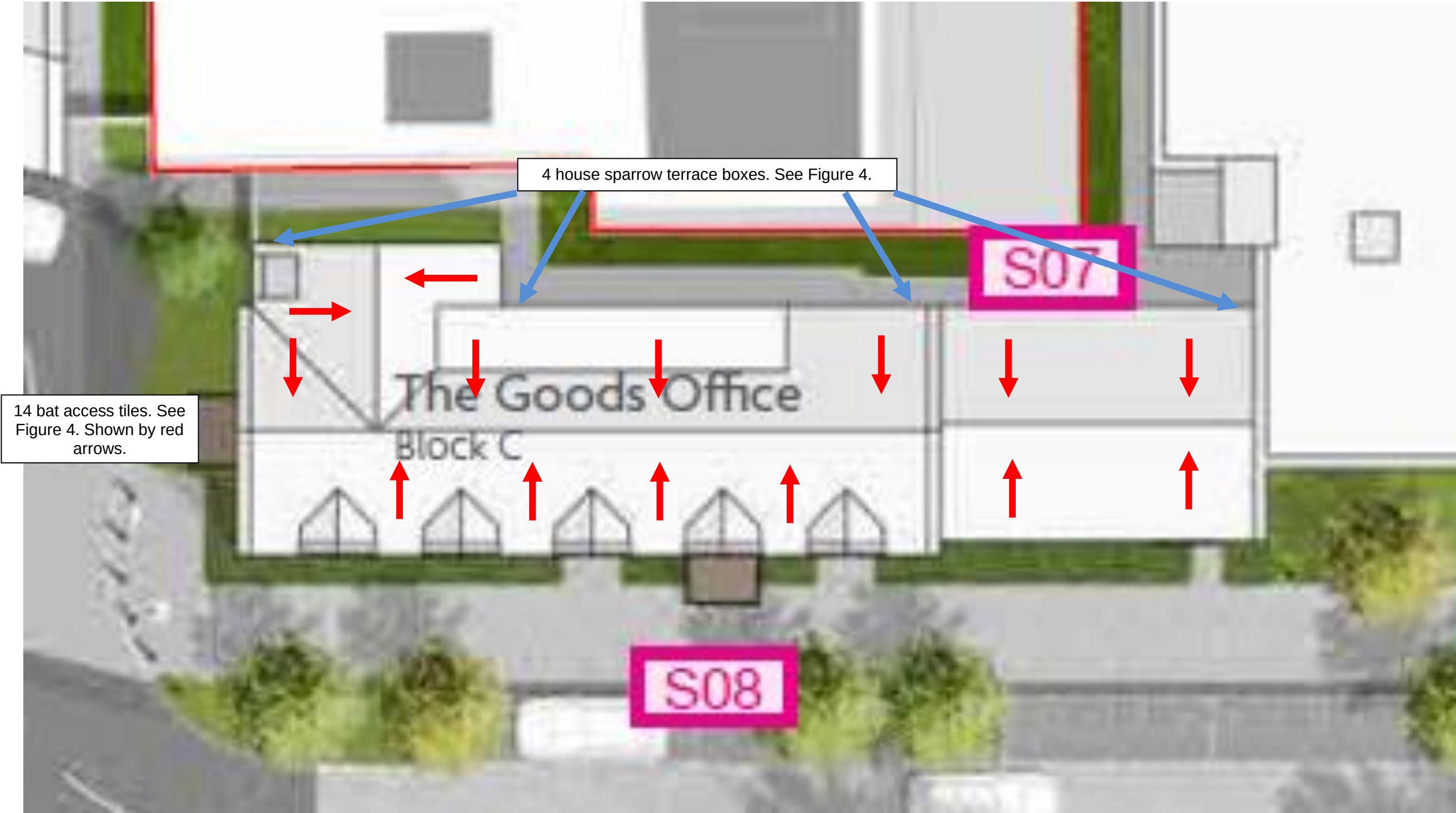
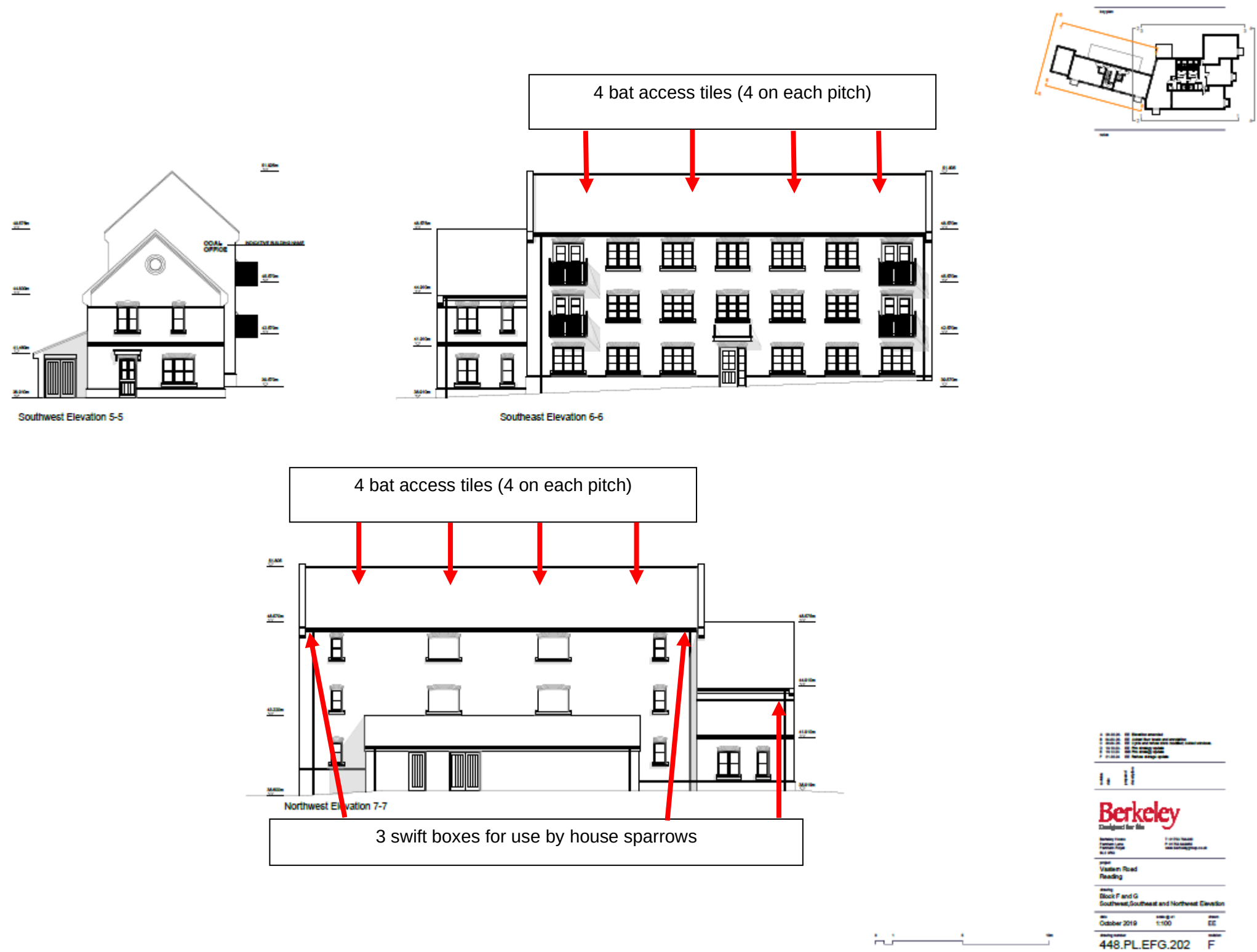


Figure 5: Block F



Block FG

Appendix A: Classification of proposed on-site habitats

Proposed on site habitats are listed below with their classification. Their locations are shown on the On-site post intervention map that is included in the Metric.

Proposed habitat type	UKHab classification	Metric classification	Notes
Grassland on-site within 10m of the river	g3c Other neutral grassland	Other neutral grassland	Grassland sown with a wildflower/grass seed mix and cutting in July/August - see Section 2 for details.
Other more regularly mown grassland / lawns	g3c Other neutral grassland	Other neutral grassland	Grassland sown with a wildflower/grass seed mix with regular cutting - see Section 2 for details.
Mixed shrub planting	h3h Mixed scrub	Mixed scrub	Comprised of mixed native shrubs
Buildings and hard-standing (excluding green roofs)	u1b Developed land; sealed surface	Developed land; sealed surface	Buildings and hard-standing (except green roofs)
Amenity shrub mix	1160 Introduced shrub	Introduced shrub	Comprised of non-native shrubs
Green roof over cafe	89 Other green roof	Other green roof	Extensive green roof sown with wildflower/grass seed mix or wildflower turf.
Green roofs over generator building under croft parking area	88 Intensive green roof	Intensive green roof	High-maintenance green roof including shrubs, trees, perennials and grasses, with at least 50% native and at least 30% non-native species of pollinator interest (i.e. at least 80% overall), more than 70% is soil and vegetation, and less than 30% hard-standing.
Trees	200 Tree	Urban tree	Trees whether native or non-native.
Ornamental hedgerow comprising mostly non-native species with native species added.	H2b Non-native and ornamental hedgerow	Non-native and ornamental hedgerow	Hedges made up largely of non-native hedges and so this is classified as Non-native and ornamental hedgerow.
Hornbeam hedges	h2a6 Other native hedgerow	Native hedgerow	Hornbeam hedgerow

[illegible]