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Report prepared for: John Charles Property Investments

For the Site of: 104 Berkeley Avenue - Reading RG1 6HY

Version:	Written by:	Checked by:	Final:
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Cherryfield Ecology has prepared this report for the named clients' use only.

Ecological reports are limited in shelf life, Natural England usually expect reports for licences to be no more than 12 months old and therefore should the project not proceed within 12-18 months of this report an updated survey should be undertaken in order to check for changes that may have occurred on site. Information is believed to be accurate at the time of the survey; recommendations are made without bias based on good practice guidelines within the industry. However, species presence and ecological parameters can change over time.

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Ecological Enhancement Plan

1.0 Introduction

The client, John Charles Property Investments, has asked that an ecological enhancement plan be drawn up for the site of 104 Berkeley Avenue, Reading RG1 6HY.

The resulting enhancements and plans are based on general good practice.

The planning permission detailed the following condition(s):

'Condition 8'.

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 187 of the NPPF (2024), 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.'

2.2 Site Baseline

No ecological work has been conducted on the site prior to the planning being granted, the only requirement was for an enhancement plan to be undertaken as per condition 8.

Based on satellite imagery the site is likely made up of a building, hard standing, vegetated garden, modified grassland to the south and trees. Hedgerows may also be present.



Figure 2: Baseline Site Plan

3.0 Ecological Enhancement

Table 1: Specification for Enhancement (see Figure 14 for Proposed Locations of Enhancements)

Work	Specification	Management
General Information Including: Specification, Location, Timing, Implementation Programme, Maintenance, and Monitoring.	• The owner is responsible for installing and maintaining all boxes and other measures. • Bat tubes and swift clusters will be built into the building (no maintenance will be required) as and when the gables/end walls are built; if this is not possible, bat boxes and swift boxes will be mounted after the construction of the building. • All other boxes and measures based in the surrounding area will be installed when the final landscaping is undertaken or when works are complete on the building. • Boxes will not require monitoring in this case; the woodcrete boxes have been chosen for their longevity.	n/a
Lighting	Lighting will be in line with the new bats and lighting guidelines, thus protecting commuting and foraging routes. Lighting should be in line with the BCT lighting guidelines (Bat Conservation Trust, 2023) https://www.theilp.org.uk/documents/guidance-note-8-bats-and-artificial-lighting/ This lighting should be of low level, be on downward deflectors and, ideally, be on PIR sensors. Using LED directional lighting can also be a way of minimising the light spill affecting the habitat. No up-lighting should be used. This will ensure that any roosting and commuting resources that the bats are likely to be using are maintained.	n/a

Enhancement	Bat Enhancement	Ecologist:
<i>Built-in boxes have been chosen to prevent damage and vandalism.</i>	A minimum of one integrated bat tubes (Figure 3) will be installed into the eaves of the southern elevation of the new dwelling. These will be no less than 3m above ground level and away from any neighbouring ledge to prevent local cats from predating on bats using the boxes. <i>If construction material does not allow for the installation of bat tubes into the building, one bat boxes (Figure 4) will be externally mounted at the gable ends of the new building.</i>  Figure 3: Example of bat tube	Ecologist: If integrated bat boxes are used these require no maintenance. If external boxes are used then biannual checks (via observation from a distance) are required to check the box is still in usable condition. If any damage is observed then an ecologist must be consulted.



Figure 4: Chillon Woodstone Bat Box (British-made)

Enhancements for Breeding Birds

Bird boxes provide excellent, safe opportunities for species which may be present in the area. They are frequently used and therefore provide significant benefits to the bird assemblage.

One open-fronted bird box (Figure 5), and **one** songbird box (Figure 6) will be installed. These should be placed at a **minimum height of 2 meters** and will be placed to face between north and east.

Owner:

Biannual checks of the boxes outside of the breeding bird season to remove debris and check the box is still in usable condition.



Figure 5: Robin box



Figure 6: Songbird box

A cluster of **two** swift nest bricks will be installed in the northern elevation due to the increased lack of nesting opportunities swifts are finding in modern-built homes.

*If construction material does not allow for the installation of swift bricks into the building, **one** swift boxes (Figure 7) will be externally mounted at the gable ends of the new building.*

Information is adapted from the RSPB <https://www.rspb.org.uk/our-work/rspb-news/news/stories/swift-advice-for-ecologists/> and <http://actionforswifts.blogspot.com>

Notes on Swift Bricks:

- Birds such as house sparrows can use swift bricks, but swifts cannot use house sparrow nest bricks.
- Integral swift bricks are the preferred option for new housing developments. These should be fitted in clusters of 2 to 4 on gable ends and near the roofline where swifts would naturally look for a potential nest site.
- Try to ensure swift bricks have a minimum of 5m clearance beneath and in front.
- Always avoid locating them above doors and windows, to help prevent a disturbance issue to both the birds and human owners.



Figure 7: Example of swift bricks, that can be built into a dwelling, Source: <https://www.birdbrickhouses.co.uk/brick-nesting-boxes/>



Figure 8: Swift box, source: <http://actionforswifts.blogspot.com/p/diy-swift-box-designs.html>

Enhancement for Invertebrates

One pre-made insect box or **one self-made** bug hotel will be installed on-site; these can be premade/bought as seen in the examples below (Figure 9 and Figure 10) or can be self-constructed as detailed below.

Avoid areas of high human traffic to avoid conflict.

Planting nectar rich-plants will provide food sources for bees and butterflies (The Wildlife Trusts, 2022).



Figure 9: Bug biome, ideal for ladybirds, lacewings and bees

Owner/ Landscaper:

Biannual checks of the boxes to remove debris and check the box is still in usable condition.



Figure 10: Urban bee nesting box, used for solitary bees and wasps

How to make a bug hotel/mansion (The Wildlife Trusts, 2015).

The following information has been adapted from
<https://www.wildlifetrusts.org/actions/how-build-bug-mansion>

- Choose a level and even surface to place the bug hotel on
- You will need wooden pallets, deadwood, stones and tiles. The basic framework is made predominantly from wooden pallets (ideally, recycled or reclaimed materials should be used where possible).
- Securing the pallets together is not necessary but will increase the stability of the hotel.
- A maximum of five pallets is recommended for the structure. If you place the bottom pallet upside down, this should create larger openings at the ends, which can act as a hedgehog house.
- The following elements in any combination should be incorporated into the design:

	➤ Deadwood - Deadwood is an increasingly rare habitat and is essential for the larvae of wood-boring beetles. It also supports many fungi, which help to break down the woody material. Crevices under the bark hold centipedes and woodlice. ➤ Hollow stems - Hollow stems, such as old bamboo canes, or holes drilled into blocks of wood, make good nesting sites for solitary bees. ➤ Stones and tiles - Amphibians need a frost-free place to spend the winter. Provide stones and tiles in the centre of your habitat to give amphibians the cool, damp conditions they need. ➤ Straw and hay - These provide many opportunities for invertebrates to burrow in and find safe hibernation sites. ➤ Dry Leaves - Dry leaves offer homes for a variety of invertebrates by mimicking the litter on the forest floor. ➤ Loose bark - Beetles, centipedes, spiders and woodlice all lurk beneath decaying wood and bark. ➤ Corrugated cardboard - Roll up a piece of corrugated cardboard and put it in a waterproof cylinder to create a home for lacewings. ➤ Dry sticks - Dry sticks are perfect for ladybirds to hibernate in. • Deadwood, sticks and brash are already existing on-site and are recommended to be used in the construction of the bug hotel where possible when clearing the site.	
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Figure 11: How to Make a Bug Hotel, Source Wildlife Trust -

https://www.wildlifetrusts.org/sites/default/files/styles/scaled_12_col_desk/public/2022-04/BUG-HOTEL-RGB-2018.webp?itok=V7PHY-VT

Enhancements for Hedgehogs

Hedgehog highways will be installed into any hard boundaries e.g. walls or fences in order to allow hedgehogs and other small mammals a continuous corridor across the site and to other gardens and green spaces.

A 13cm x 13cm is sufficient for any hedgehog to pass through. This will be too small for nearly all pets (Figure 12). Either:

- Remove a brick from the bottom of the wall, creating a 13cm x 13cm hole.
- Cut a small hole in your fence if there are no gaps.
- Dig a channel underneath your wall, fence, or gate.

Ideally, rather than walls or fences, a hedge will provide foraging, shelter, and a route along as well as through the site.

Owner:

Biannual checks of the holes to ensure they are clear of debris.

	How to make a hedgehog highway  Figure 12: Hedgehog Highway, Source - Wildlife Trust - http://7474fab53f1b6ee92458-8f3ac932bad207a00c83e77eae8d15c.r12.cf1.rackcdn.com/Hedgehog%20Highway.jpg	
	Hedgerow Management for Biodiversity Hedgerows provide excellent corridors for wildlife and are extremely important to many species of wildlife, including hedgehogs, badgers, bats, herpetofauna and birds. A hedgerow is proposed on site, for which a diversity of hedgerow will be planted. Suitable hedgerow species include: • Hawthorn (<i>Crateagus monogyna</i>) • Hazel (<i>Corylus avellana</i>) • Holly (<i>Ilex europaeus</i>) • Wild Privet (<i>Ligustrum vulgare</i>) • Field Maple (<i>Acer campestre</i>) • Blackthorn (<i>Prunus spinosa</i>) • Guelder Rose (<i>Viburnum opulus</i>) • Wayfaring Tree (<i>Viburnum lantana</i>) • Dog Rose (<i>Rosa canina</i>) • Spindle (<i>Euonymus europaea</i>)	Owner/ Landscaper: Initial planting to take place in autumn. Maintenance on a rotational 2-3 year basis, avoiding the breeding bird season. Replace failures as necessary.

The hedgerow should include 5 or more woody species within a 30m length in order to be classified as **species-rich**.

Where possible, no cutting will take place during peak bird nesting season, which runs from March to September. Where possible, shrubs and hedgerows will not be cut back annually, as flower buds often form on second-year growth. Trimming hedges on a two-year or three-year rotation, targeting different sections each year, will make sure there are always flowers for pollinators in spring and berries for birds in autumn. Hedges cut every three years can produce two and a half times as many blossoms as those cut annually. Rotational cutting can also save time and money that would be invested in annual cutting.

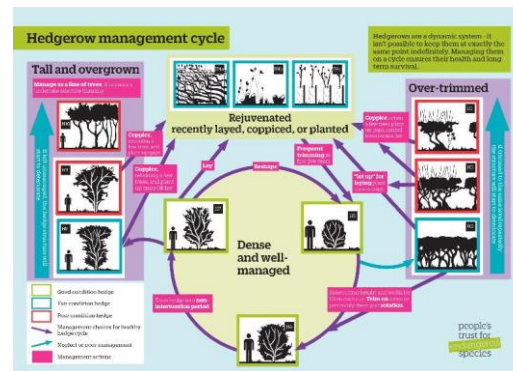


Figure 13: Hedgerow management cycle (<https://hedgerowsurvey.ptes.org/>)

Vegetation in the Proposed Amenity Areas

All vegetated habitats will fall within a private garden, however, border plants that will attract insects, including butterflies and bumblebees should be incorporated into any planted areas. These include a mix of native and garden plants that are known to provide insects with a food source, thus providing a food web for larger animals:

Owner/ Landscaper:

Ongoing maintenance as required.

	The following is a list taken from the planting schedules: Flowers for Borders - *Aubretia (spring to early summer) <i>Aubretia sp.</i> *Candytuft (summer to autumn) <i>Iberis sp.</i> *Cherry pie (summer to autumn) <i>Heliotropium arborescens</i> Corncockle <i>Agrostemma githago</i> Cornflower <i>Centaurea cyanus</i> Corn marigold <i>Glebionis segetum</i> Corn poppy <i>Papaver rhoeas</i> *Echinacea <i>Echinacea sp.</i> English Bluebell (spring) <i>Hyacinthoides non-scripta</i> *Evening primrose (summer to autumn) <i>Oenothera biennis</i> *Honesty (spring) <i>Lunaria annua</i> *Ice plant 'Pink lady' (early autumn) <i>Delosperma sutherlandii</i> Knapweed (summer to autumn) <i>Centaurea sp.</i> Mallow (summer to autumn) <i>Malva sp.</i> *Mexican aster (summer to autumn) <i>Cosmos bipinnatus</i> *Michaelmas daisy (summer to autumn) <i>Aster amellus</i> *Night-scented stock (summer) <i>Matthiola longipetala</i> Ox-eye daisy (summer) <i>Leucanthemum vulgare</i> *Phacelia (summer to autumn) <i>Phacelia tanacetifolia</i>	
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	*Poached egg plant (summer) <i>Limnanthes douglasii</i> Primrose (spring) <i>Primula vulgaris</i> Red campion (spring) <i>Silene dioica</i> *Red valerian (summer to autumn) <i>Centranthus ruber</i> Scabious (summer) <i>Scabiosa sp.</i> St John's wort (spring) <i>Hypericum perforatum</i> *Sweet William (summer) <i>Dianthus barbatus</i> *Tobacco plant <i>Nicotiana sp.</i> *Verbena (summer to autumn) <i>Verbena officinalis</i> *Wallflowers (spring to early summer) <i>Erysimum sp.</i> Wood forget-me-not (spring) <i>Myosotis sylvatica</i> Yarrow (early summer) <i>Achillea millefolium</i> Plants marked * are hybrids or exotics that may be useful in the garden Herbs - Hyssop (summer to early autumn) <i>Hyssopus officinalis</i> Lavender <i>Lavandula sp.</i> Lemon balm <i>Melissa officinalis</i> Marjoram (summer) <i>Origanum majorana</i> Rosemary (spring) <i>Salvia rosmarinus</i> Sweet Cicely (spring to early summer) <i>Myrrhis odorata</i>	
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Thyme (summer) <i>Thymus sp.</i> Angelica (summer to early autumn) <i>Angelica sp.</i> Bergamot (summer to early autumn) <i>Citrus bergamia</i> Borage (spring to early autumn) <i>Borago officinalis</i> Coriander (summer) <i>Coriandrum sativum</i> English marigolds (summer to early autumn) <i>Calendula officinalis</i> Fennel <i>Foeniculum vulgare</i> Feverfew (summer to autumn) <i>Tanacetum parthenium</i> Trees, shrubs & climbers - Bramble (climber) <i>Rubus fruticosus agg.</i> *Buddleia (shrub) <i>Buddleja davidii</i> Common alder (suitable for coppicing) <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> Dog rose (climber) <i>Rosa canina</i> Elder (small) <i>Sambuca nigra</i> English oak (large gardens only) <i>Quercus robur</i> Gorse (shrub) <i>Ulex europeus</i> Guelder rose (shrub) <i>Viburnum opulus</i> Hawthorn (suitable for coppicing) <i>Crataegus monogyna</i> Hazel (suitable for coppicing) <i>Corylus avellana</i> Honeysuckle (native honeysuckle) <i>Lonicera periclymenum</i> Hornbeam <i>Carpinus betulus</i>	
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	Ivy (climber) <i>Hedera helix</i> *Jasmine (night-scented) <i>Jasminum sp.</i> Pussy willow (suitable for coppicing) <i>Salix sp.</i> Rowan <i>Sorbus fruticosa</i> Silver birch <i>Betula pendula</i> All plants that are native or wildlife-friendly above should be sourced from a stockist of native and local origin plants. Wild Seed (2020) can provide details of local, native-sourced plants and seeds. As well as being useful for insects, the oak and beech will provide fruits for smaller mammals to utilize in the autumn months. These native trees are known to be useful on clay soils, they will help reduce moisture and improve soil conditions on site (Gardeners World, 2020). Further advice, if required, should be sought from a landscape architect regarding planting location and implementation. <i>*Plants marked * are native or wildlife-friendly</i>	
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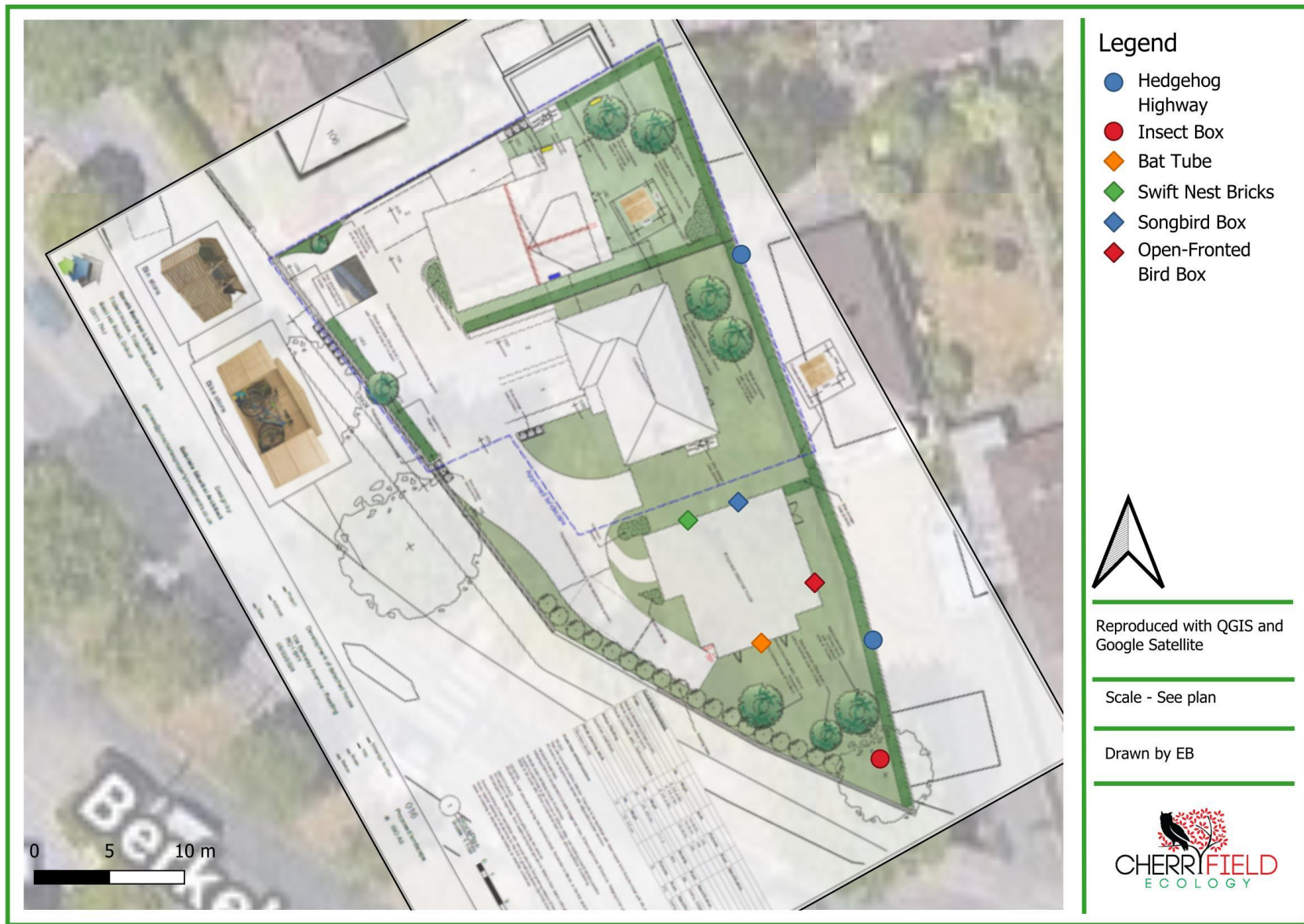


Figure 14: Proposed Locations of Enhancements

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