

BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN ADDENDUM

Proposed New Detached Dwelling Land at Oxford Road, Tilehurst, Reading, RG31 6TH

The proposal has been developed with careful consideration of the existing woodland character of the site and seeks to minimise impacts on the established habitat through a compact building footprint, limited access width and the retention of most trees across the site.

Following consultation with the Biodiversity Net Gain consultant, the extent of driveway has been further reduced to demonstrate a positive approach to minimising impacts on the woodland habitat, resulting in the overall developed footprint reducing from approximately 34% of the site (as noted in the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal document) to approximately 25%.

The layout has been designed to retain the woodland setting and minimise tree loss as far as reasonably possible. Additional on-site biodiversity enhancements are proposed, including:

- Enhancement of retained woodland areas
- Native replacement and supplementary tree planting
- Deadwood habitat/log piles for invertebrates and stag beetles
- Bat boxes and bird boxes
- Sensitive external lighting design to minimise impacts on bats and nocturnal species
- Permeable surfacing

The proposals have been developed with careful consideration of the existing woodland character of the site, and a robust planting strategy has been included. Notwithstanding this, the applicant would welcome the opportunity to work closely with the Council's Tree Officer to refine and, where appropriate, increase the level of replacement and additional tree planting. The intention is to ensure that the development not only mitigates any loss but contributes positively to the long-term enhancement and management of the woodland setting.

Whilst the scheme delivers a significant on-site biodiversity benefit through retained woodland enhancement and additional planting, there is likely to remain a residual shortfall of approximately 0.14 habitat units.

Should this be the case, the applicant is willing to secure the remaining biodiversity units through an off-site habitat bank, or equivalent biodiversity offsetting arrangement within the local area. Quotes are currently being obtained from habitat-bank providers to establish the likely cost and availability of suitable off-site units.

The applicant is committed to achieving the mandatory 10% Biodiversity Net Gain requirement and is willing to enter into an appropriate legal agreement, if required, to secure any off-site provision for a minimum period of 30 years.

Overall, it is considered that the proposal represents a sensitive form of development that responds positively to the woodland character of the site and provides a clear pathway to achieving policy-compliant Biodiversity Net Gain.