



Ecological Enhancement Plan

For

Cory O'Connor

Land to the East of Maydencroft Gardens

Gosmore

Hertfordshire

SG4 7EJ

Reference: Q13994

Prepared by
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Date: March 2025

Quality Assurance

Remarks	Version 2
Date	2 nd April 2025
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Qualifications	QCIEEM, MSci (Hons)

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1. Introduction/Background

1.1. Purpose and Brief

ProHort Limited was commissioned by Cory O'Connor to produce an Ecological Enhancement Strategy for Land to the East of Maydencroft Gardens, Gosmore, Hertfordshire, SG4 7EJ. There are plans on the Site to construct two semi-detached residential dwellings including gardens, landscaping and vehicle parking. The planning application has been approved, with the following condition set out by the North Hertfordshire District Council:

“No development shall take place until an Ecological Enhancement Plan (EES) for the creation of new wildlife features such as hibernacula, the inclusion of integrated bird/bat and bee boxes in buildings/structures, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.”

1.2. The Proposed Works

The planning proposal involves the construction of two semi-detached dwellings, surrounded by permeable paving. The proposals include planting of hedgerows, trees and gardens.

1.3. Previous Reports

A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) was completed in February 2023 by Arbtech. This report identified that the Site and surrounding area provided suitable foraging and commuting habitat for bat species, as well as nesting habitat for bird species. Therefore, measures will be outlined in this report to ensure that the development provides a positive impact on potential bat and bird populations in the area.

Measures will also be proposed to provide habitat for invertebrates, reptile, amphibian and small mammal species.

2. Ecological Enhancements

2.1 Bat Boxes

It is recommended that 1 bat box is installed on the Site. This can be installed on any building external wall or mature tree.

It is recommended that the bat box is installed on the southeast wall of the proposed dwellings, as shown on Figure 1, on the rear external wall facing towards the vegetated gardens. This is the most appropriate location for a bat box due to the fact that this direction faces the most suitable foraging and commuting habitat for bats, with a line of trees and woodland areas to the south of the Site. Bat boxes should face south in order to be exposed to sunlight for part of the day.



Figure 1 – A diagram showing the proposed location of a bat box (indicated by red square). Building elevations taken from document “W724 Elevations.pdf” provided by the client.

It is recommended that a Schwegler 1FW Bat Hibernation Box is used. This is because it is suitable for both hibernation roosts in the winter and large summer roosts. The box should be installed at least 4 m off the ground.



Figure 2 – A 1FW Schwegler Bat Hibernation Box, available at nhbs.com

2.2 Bird Boxes

Due to the suitable habitat in the surrounding area, it is recommended that 2 bird boxes are installed on the Site. This can be installed on any building external wall or mature tree.

It is proposed that the bird boxes are installed on the northeast and southwest elevations of the building, as shown in Figure 3. Type 24 Schwegler Brick Nest Boxes have been recommended, as they can be incorporated into the brick walls of the building. The box can be installed flush with the outside wall and rendered or covered so that only the entrance hole is visible.

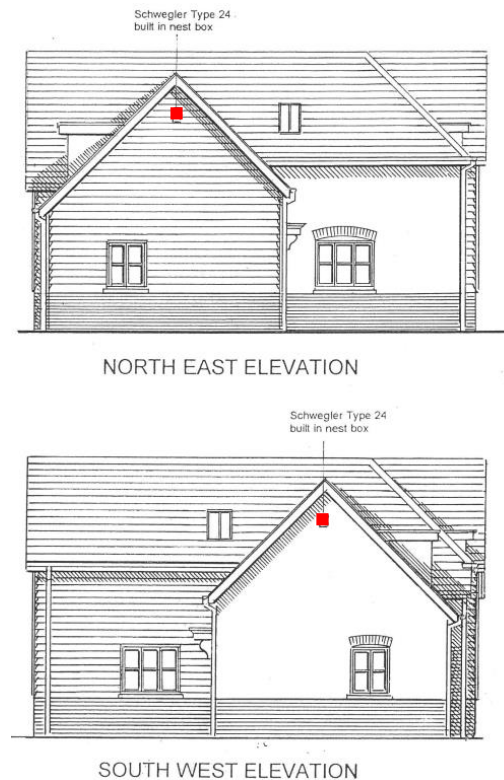


Figure 3 – A diagram showing the proposed locations of the bird boxes (indicated by red boxes). Building elevations taken from document “W724 Elevations.pdf” provided by the client.

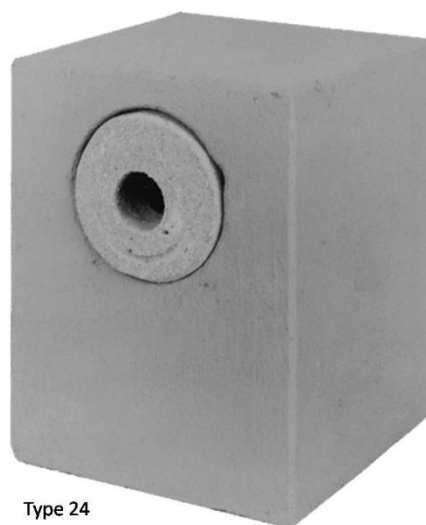


Figure 4 – A Type 24 Schwegler Brick Nest Box, available at nhbs.com

2.3 Hedgehog Highways

The surrounding area provides suitable commuting and foraging habitat. Therefore, we recommend that measures are taken to ensure that the proposed development does not interfere with existing habitats or routes used by surrounding hedgehog populations. It is recommended that 'hedgehog highways' are included in the fences on the boundaries of the Site.

Fences can be installed with suitable gaps for hedgehogs included. It is recommended that any new fencing required already has hedgehog highways installed. Alternatively, gaps can be cut into any existing fence panels, such as the fencing due to be retained on the Site. A 13cm x 13cm square is sufficient to allow hedgehogs to pass through, while still being small enough to keep most pets contained within the garden area. Signs can then be placed above these gaps to prevent the gap being closed accidentally, as shown in Figure 5.

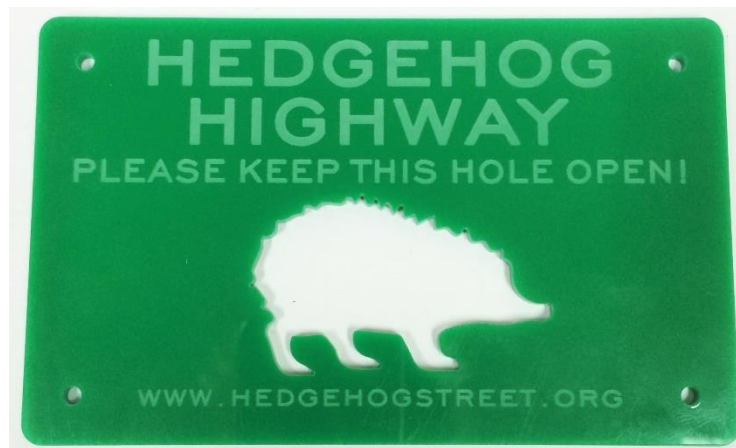


Figure 5 – A Hedgehog Highway sign, available at shop.ptes.org

2.4 Bee Bricks

In order to provide suitable habitat for insect species, it is recommended that Bee Bricks are installed within the brick walls of the new building. These are able to be substituted for normal bricks within the building, containing moulded cavities for insect species, particularly bees, to nest. An example of a bee brick is shown in Figure 6.



Figure 6 – A photograph of a bee brick, available at www.greenandblue.co.uk

The bricks should be installed on the southwest elevation, at least 1 m above the ground. It is also advisable to install the bricks at least 1 m away from any doors or windows. Possible areas to install bee bricks are shown in Figure 7.



Figure 7 – Diagram of the southwest elevation of the proposed building, with the proposed area to install bee bricks indicated by the red areas. Building elevations taken from document "W724 Elevations.pdf" provided by the client.

3. References

- NHBS, 1FW Schwegler Bat Hibernation Box: <https://www.nhbs.com/1fw-bat-hibernation-box>
- NHBS, Type 24 Schwegler Brick Nest Box: <https://www.nhbs.com/schwegler-brick-nest-boxes>
- People's Trust for Endangered Species, Hedgehog highway sign: <https://shop.ptes.org/product/wildlife-friendly-gardens/hedgehog-highway-signs-pack-of-two/>
- Green and Blue, Bee bricks: <https://www.greenandblue.co.uk/products/bee-brick>
- BioScapes, BioCube: <https://bioscapes.co.uk/product/biocube/>