Wick Farm Solar Farm
Landscape & Ecological Management Plan

Submitted to discharge planning condition 11 (planning ref 20/06840/FUL)

JBM Solar Projects
October 2023 | P20_0137_EN_20B **Environment**



Revision	Date	Initials	Revision Note
First Issue	04.09.2023	LS	-
A	11.09.2023	IBD	Amended following ecologist review
B	25.10.2023	NM	Archaeologically sensitive area extent revised following discussions with county archaeologist

Pegasus Group
33 Sheep Street
Cirencester
Gloucestershire
GL7 1RQ

www.pegasusgroup.co.uk I T 01285 641717

Job code	P20_0137
Author	LS
Checked by	IBD
Date	25/10/2023

The contents of this document must not be copied or reproduced in whole or in part without the written consent of Pegasus Planning Group Ltd. © Crown copyright. All rights reserved, Licence number 100042093.
Ordnance Survey Copyright Licence number 100042093 I Promap Licence number 100020449.



CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION
2. SITE DESCRIPTION AND PROPOSALS
3. ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS
4. GENERAL MAINTENANCE REQUIREMENTS
5. MAINTENANCE SPECIFICATIONS
6. SCHEDULE OF MANAGEMENT, MAINTENANCE AND MONITORING
7. RESTORATION AND DECOMMISSIONING

NOTE: THIS DOCUMENT IS DESIGNED TO BE VIEWED AS A4 DOUBLE SIDED

1 Introduction

Background

1.1 This Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP) has been prepared by Pegasus Group and Avian Ecology to support the planning application for the development at land north of Melksham Substation, Wiltshire (Wick Farm). This Landscape and Ecological Management Plan has been prepared to discharge condition 11 of planning permission 20/06840/FUL.

"No development shall commence on site until a Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP) has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. The LEMP shall explain how habitats will be managed to achieve the predicted biodiversity net gains as represented on the submitted Biodiversity Management Plan (drawing no. P20-0137_19 Rev C) during the operational phase of development. The content of the LEMP shall include, but not necessarily be limited to, the following information:

a) Description and evaluation of features to be managed during the operational phase of development for its entire temporary lifetime;

b) Landscape and ecological trends and constraints on site that might influence management;

c) Aims and objectives of management;

d) Appropriate management options for achieving aims and objectives;

e) Prescriptions for management actions;

f) Preparation of a work schedule (including an annual work plan capable of being rolled forward over the lifetime of the development including the decommissioning phase);

g) Details of the body or organisation responsible for implementation of the plan;

h) Ongoing monitoring and remedial measures;

i) Details of how the aims and objectives of the LEMP will be communicated to future owners of the development.

j) Details of a mechanism for adaptive management to achieve the long-term objectives of the approved Biodiversity Mitigation and Enhancement Plan as a result of actions arising from the Monitoring Strategy (as required by condition 12).

The LEMP shall also include details of the legal and funding mechanism(s) by which the long-term implementation of the plan will be secured by the developer with the management body/ies responsible for its delivery.

The plan shall also set out (where the results from monitoring show that the conservation aims and objectives of the LEMP are not being met) how contingencies and/or remedial action will be identified, agreed and implemented.

The LEMP shall be implemented in full in accordance with the approved details."

1.2 The following documents have been used to inform the maintenance and management prescriptions set out within the LEMP, and should be read in conjunction with these documents:

- Biodiversity Management Plan, [Avian Ecology, July 2020]
- Tree Survey Report [Barton Hyett Associates, July 2020]
- Detailed Planting Plan [ref: P20-0137_09, Pegasus Group]
- Biodiversity Mitigation and Enhancement Plan [ref: P20-0137_19, Pegasus Group]

1.3 The objective of this Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP) is to set out the management and maintenance procedure for the solar installation at Wick Farm, to ensure successful habitat protection and enhancement measures effectively develop and maintain wildlife habitats. In addition, the LEMP aims to ensure the successful establishment of the landscape proposals as prescribed within the landscape plans and integrate the scheme within the existing landscape framework noting the site's key opportunities and constraints such as the public rights of way, existing vegetation and habitat. The proposals shall contribute to wider ecological connectivity, in line with the biodiversity net-gain targets of *The Environment Act, 2021* (furthering those set out within *National Planning Policy Framework, 2021),* as well as local planning policy and best practice.

1.4 Biodiversity Guidance for Solar Developments, BRE, 2014, states:

> *"with appropriate land management, solar farms have the potential to support wildlife and contribute to national biodiversity targets. Indeed, solar farms may have several additional advantages in that they are secure sites with little disturbance from humans and machinery once construction is complete. Recent research suggests biodiversity gains on solar farms can be significant."*

1.5 This LEMP is designed for the operational phase of the development and will commence from the handover date from the landscape contractor to the management company.

Landscape and Ecological Management Plan

1.6 The purpose of this Landscape and Ecological Management Plan is:

- To ensure that clear objectives for this new solar installation are agreed and laid down;
- To set clear standards for the performance of landscape maintenance work prior to the handover to the landscape maintenance contractor;
- To develop work programmes and schedules for landscape maintenance staff for the first year after completion and thereafter for a period of 40 years;
- To preserve and enhance the site biodiversity to ensure net gain for local biodiversity;
- To help in the allocation of financial resources for landscape maintenance; and
- To help monitor success and progress against management targets.

Management Aims

1.7 The main aims for the site's landscape management and maintenance are:

- To assimilate the solar installation into the local landscape, thereby minimising any effects on local landscape character, landscape elements and visual receptors;
- To manage operational activities to protect existing retained trees, hedgerows to prevent short term damage and longer term adverse impacts;
- To maintain new and existing trees, hedgerows and grassland in order to maximise their landscape and ecological benefits, as well as strengthening wider habitat connectivity;
- To provide additional nesting and refuge /overwintering habitat for wildlife such as reptiles, invertebrate and small mammals, through inclusion and maintenance of habitat piles/hibernacula, bird and bat boxes, insect hotels and hedgehog boxes; and
- To manage existing and proposed trees and vegetation to minimise risks for operational staff.

1.8 These works should be carried out by suitably experienced contractors, under the watch of qualified / licensed ecologists and arboriculturists where appropriate.



Indicative image of wildflower grassland beneath panels

Scope and Review

1.9 This document should be seen as an operational guide for maintaining the landscape and ecological proposals for the lifetime of the solar installation and is subject to change and improvement as the different landscape features mature and develop.

1.10 We recommend that this LEMP is reviewed with the input of an ecologist and/or landscape architect as required, to ensure the management aims are still necessary and relevant for the duration/life span of the solar installation. Section 6.2 for monitoring and review sets out the strategy for the review of the LEMP.

1.11 As such, this LEMP details the management prescriptions for the first five years with the requirements set out for the following period to 40 years.

Ecological trends and constraints

1.12 This LEMP is to be seen as an operational guide subject to review to incorporate landscape and ecological trends that may impact on the landscape management aims, objectives and maintenance regime. The review process would allow for changes in order to meet conservation targets as well as those set out within the biodiversity net gain assessment.

1.13 Changes to management practice for ecological trends for habitat and species which may be updated to local policy and biodiversity targets may need to be incorporated as necessary. This would help to ensure that the LEMP remains fit for purpose in the evolving dynamic of landscape and help to ensure resilience to the effects of climate change and social pressures.

Managing Risk and Competencies

1.14 It is assumed that a competent contractor shall have the necessary PPE, training and skills to undertake the management and maintenance tasks as set out within this LEMP.

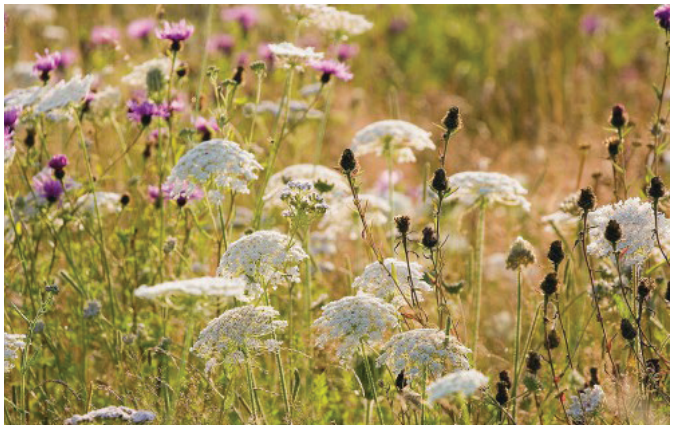
1.15 The landscape management company shall be responsible for undertaking written risk assessments in relation to the landscape, arboricultural and ecological management and maintenance prescriptions detailed within this LEMP (in additional to any other site risks). This shall be provided to the clients prior to the start of works.

Legal and Funding Mechanisms.

1.16 Funding of landscape maintenance will be covered by the site developer, whom will be responsible for appointing a suitable qualified contractor/ management organisation to implement the management and maintenance as set out within this LEMP.

Insolvency/Administration

1.17 Should the landscape maintenance body of one of their subcontractors be made insolvent/ or enter administration, the developer has the ability to re-tender the maintenance contract and engage a suitable alternative contractor to carry out the landscape maintenance works as set out within the LEMP. This will ensure that the maintenance regime is delivered.







2 Site Description and Proposals

Existing Site Conditions

2.1 The application site comprises agricultural land with a combined area of approximately 96.32ha (including land within which the proposed cable route will run, but which does not form part of the solar layout), located west of the village of Lacock, approximately 4km south of Chippenham.

2.2 Habitats within the site and immediate surroundings include arable; dense scrub, short ephemeral/perennial, poor semi-improved grassland, tall ruderals, broadleaved woodland, species-rich and species-poor hedgerows, ponds, ditches and scattered trees within field boundary hedgerows. In the wider context, the site is surrounded by further extensive areas of arable farmland and scattered pockets of deciduous woodland.

2.3 There are several Public Rights of Way (PRoW) footpaths that run through and in close proximity to the site. Footpaths LAC02 and LAC 05 run from Folly Lane West and converge in the north. Footpath LAC02 continues across the site in a southwesterly direction towards The Rookery. Footpath LAC01A travels from Catridge Farm and crosses the centre of the site, joining with footpath MELW99 just beyond the eastern boundary of the site. Footpath MELW85 crosses the very southern extent near Melksham National Grid Substation.

2.4 The site is not located within any statutory and non-statutory designated sites for nature conservation. One statutory designated site: Spye Park Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) is located approximately 3km east of the site. Two non-statutory designated sites are situated immediately adjacent to the site: Daniel's Wood Local Wildlife Site (LWS) and Inwood, Lacock LWS.

2.5 In combination, the existing vegetated field boundaries, small copses and watercourses provide well-connected, high value habitats, likely to be well-utilised by local bird, bat and other species.

Key Design Principles

2.6 Key design principles guiding landscape proposals for the site are:

- Identify important local biodiversity and landscape features within and around the site to inform suitable ecology and landscape elements for integration;
- Identify opportunities and risks to local biodiversity and select mitigation and enhancement measures resilient to change, sustainable and workable in local context;
- Ensure enhancements are in line with mitigation hierarchy, avoid adverse effects on natural environments, and achieve biodiversity net gain targets; and
- Ensure longevity of enhancements through effective long-term management and monitoring programme.

2.7 In line with mitigation hierarchy - to avoid, protect, and enhance natural habitats and the species they support - a series of measures shall be in place to safe-guard biodiversity during site operation, in line with widely adopted good practice measures. These shall protect and minimise adverse impacts on high value habitats and species on site.

2.8 A series of landscape proposals shall also be delivered (and sustained over the lifetime of site operations via the objectives of this LEMP) to enhance habitats and ecological connectivity across the site, and maintain the biodiversity net gain on site.

2.9 These measures, combined with an associated reduction in intensive agricultural management practices (such as chemical spray applications and ploughing) will provide dispersal, breeding, foraging and overwintering habitat for a variety of wildlife including invertebrates, birds, small mammals, amphibians and reptiles, if present. The continuous new grassland habitat under and around the solar panels, and species-rich field margins will provide improved connectivity and opportunities for a range of wildlife to forage, shelter and freely disperse across the site. In addition, the strengthened hedgerow network will also benefit habitat linkages in the local landscape.

Landscape Proposals

2.10 The landscape proposals shown on the adjacent proposals plan comprise the following elements, with each in turn discussed in the following section.

- Grassland creation below and around the arrays;
- Hedgerow creation along with supplementary infill planting within existing hedgerows;
- Tree planting to bolster existing trees within the site; and
- Integration of existing PRoWs with new hedgerow planting alongside to provide a green corridor for users.

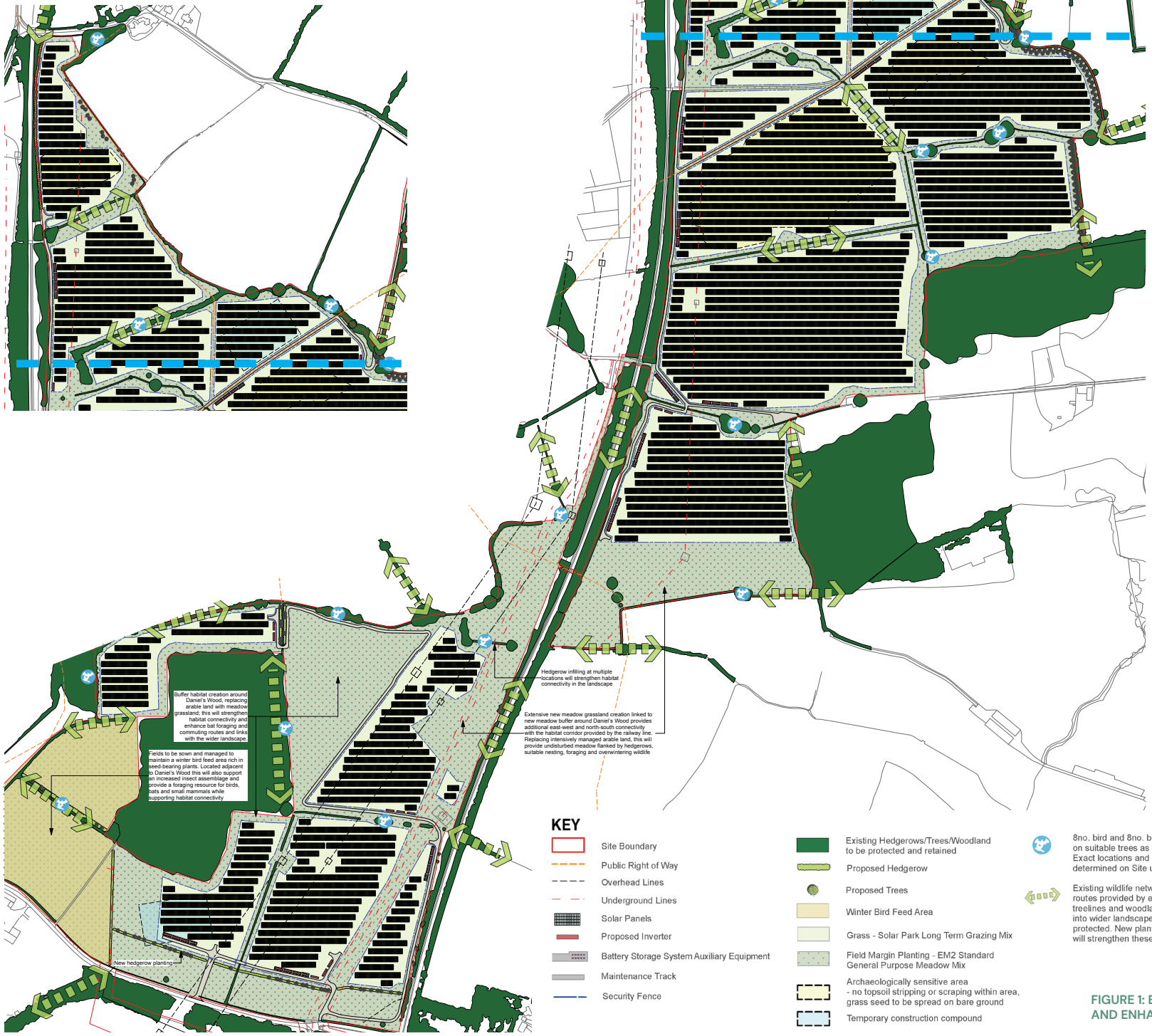


FIGURE 1: BIODIVERSITY MITIGATION AND ENHANCEMENT PLAN

Management Strategy

2.11 The design and long term landscape management strategy seeks to maintain and improve the functionality of existing landscape features and habitats through protection and enhancement of potentially valuable wildlife corridors by strengthening hedgerow networks within and around the site.

2.12 Habitat enhancements include: new lengths of hedgerow planting; enhancement of existing hedgerows where fragmented (through infilling with native species); and creation of species diverse meadow grassland to replace arable land.

2.13 The habitat enhancement measures and ongoing management practices are proposed in line with the guidance produced by BRE guidance Biodiversity Guidance for Solar Developments (BRE, 2014) that aim to enhance and safeguard key habitats for the benefit of wildlife, and ecological value of land currently under agricultural use.

Tree and Hedgerow Planting

2.14 All existing boundary and internal field hedgerows will be retained and reinforced (as necessary) with native hedgerow planting and trees (of local provenance) to: strengthen field patterns and local landscape character; screen views of the development from nearby PRoW and dwellings; and increase valuable habitat provision and connectivity.

2.15 Strengthening the hedgerow network within and around the site (through enhanced and proposed hedgerows) seeks to protect and enhance potentially valuable wildlife corridors.

2.16 Tree and shrub species are consistent with the local landscape, with a variety of species to increase species diversity across the Site and contribute towards a biodiversity net gain.

Grassland Creation

2.17 BRE guidance state that as panels are raised above the ground on posts, over 95% of a site used for solar farm development is still accessible for plant growth and complementary agricultural activities, such as conservation grazing (BRE, 2014). The RSPB briefing note on Solar Energy also states that biodiversity gains are possible where intensively cultivated arable or grassland is converted to extensive grassland and/or wildflower meadows between and/or beneath solar panels and in field margins (RSPB, 2014). A significant benefit to wildlife will therefore be achieved through creation of botanically diverse grassland within the site, favourable to birds, mammals, amphibians, reptiles and invertebrates.

2.18 Inside security fenced solar panel enclosures will be sown with Solar Park Long Term Grazing Mixture (or similar) which is suitable for sheep grazing, and will be managed through low intensity pulse growing using sheep.

2.19 Field margins and meadow areas will be sown with EM2 Standard General Purpose Meadow Mix (or similar), and be subject to very low intensity, intermittent management to encourage a range of invertebrates and other wildlife to benefit from the species variety and structural diversity that will develop in the sward.



Indicative image of wildflower grassland to be created



Indicative image of bird boxes to be erected on site

Birds

2.20 Bird nesting provision will be increased with 8 bird boxes (suitable for a variety of farmland bird species) erected on suitably-sized trees on site peripheries (precise locations subject to confirmation during installation depending on tree condition at that time). Following cessation of construction works, boxes should ideally be installed September-November, at 1-5m height, angled facing away from prevailing wind (or in a semi-sheltered environment), within or close to hedgerows where possible, by the appointed contractor under advice of a suitably competent ecologist.

2.21 Refer to table on page 8 for proposed bird box types.

Bats

2.22 Bat roost provision will be increased with 8 bat roost boxes erected on suitable trees, ideally above 4m high, with clear flight paths along site boundaries/hedgerows (precise locations will be subject to confirmation during the installation depending on tree condition at that time), by the appointed contractor under advice of a suitably competent ecologist.

2.23 Refer to table on page 8 for proposed bat box types.

Amphibians

2.24 The creation of diverse grassland sward and new hedgerow, tree and thicket planting will benefit amphibian species for foraging purposes.

2.25 Habitat piles and hibernacula will also be constructed along boundary features such as hedgerows as well as in the vicinity of ponds, providing additional terrestrial refuge habitat for amphibians.

Other species

2.26 Hedgerow, tree and thicket planting as well as grassland/wildflower meadow creation will benefit a range of species including small mammals such as hedgehog, brown hare and invertebrate species.

2.27 Perimeter fences will incorporate suitably sized (approximately 20cm x 25cm) gaps or gates at its base at suitable locations around the site to allow free movement of wildlife, including badger and small mammals, thereby maintaining and strengthening habitat connectivity and dispersal opportunities across and through the site.

2.28 Vegetation cuttings will be retained in the site and piled at selected locations along field margins to provide additional undisturbed refuge opportunities for wildlife including invertebrates, small mammals, reptiles and amphibians where present.



Indicative image of habitat piles to be created on site

TABLE 1: Ecological Enhancement Features			
No	Box Type	Photo	Description
3	Schwegler 1B Bird Box (32mm entrance)		To be placed at least 2m above the ground in a quiet and sheltered area of site on mature trees. Ensure the boxes are covered from the rain by facing the entrance down slightly in order to prevent rain seeping in and so encourage use and increase the longevity of the box. Ensure there is clear access to the box entrance at all times. Best placed on a north or easterly aspect. NB where this box is not available, a suitable alternative will be installed (as approved by the ecologist).
3	Schwegler 1B Bird Box (26mm entrance)		To be placed at least 2m above the ground in a quiet and sheltered area of site on mature trees. Ensure the boxes are covered from the rain by facing the entrance down slightly in order to prevent rain seeping in and so encourage use and increase the longevity of the box. Ensure there is clear access to the box entrance at all times. Best placed on a north or easterly aspect. NB where this box is not available, a suitable alternative will be installed (as approved by the ecologist).
2	Schwegler 3S Starling Nest Box		To be placed at least 2m above the ground in a quiet and sheltered area of site on mature trees. Ensure the boxes are covered from the rain by facing the entrance down slightly in order to prevent rain seeping in and so encourage use and increase the longevity of the box. Ensure there is clear access to the box entrance at all times. Best placed on a north or easterly aspect. NB where this box is not available, a suitable alternative will be installed (as approved by the ecologist).
4	Schwegler 2F with double front panel		Nail onto the main trunk of mature trees 4 to 5m high, on south, south west or south eastern aspects, ideally in a sunny location. Suitable for smaller species of bats and the internal panels dissuade birds from nesting within this box. NB where this box is not available, a suitable alternative will be installed (as approved by the ecologist).
4	Schwegler 1FS large colony bat box		This box provides bats with a very large internal space allowing high numbers of bats to congregate together, suitable for both summer and winter quarters. Supplied with a galvanised hanger, mounting block and aluminium nail, to be hung as the 2F bat boxes. NB where this box is not available, a suitable alternative will be installed (as approved by the ecologist).

Ecologist to check section (and whole template document) re. Biodiversity wording:

- Details of habitat features to be retained/created/restored and their long-term management (10-40 years)
- Summary of the Biodiversity Net Gain (noting 10% is the current target, but this varies across the country) objectives and a proposed timeline for realisation, showing useful mapping of baseline scores and targets to obtain (with input from the ecologist / ecology documents)
- Details of monitoring the site to assess Biodiversity Net Gain achievement (with input from the ecologist / ecology documents) – additional table to set out monitoring requirement
- Details of maintenance regimes of distinct habitats demonstrating how this would ensure Biodiversity Net Gain achievement (with input from the ecologist / ecology documents)
- An ecological calendar showing maintenance schedule, surveying requirement and any temporary footpath closures to restrict disturbance during the bird breeding season (with input from the ecologist / ecology documents)

3 Environmental Considerations

3.1 This section details environmental factors requiring consideration to enable a thorough landscape management strategy for the site.

Horticultural Peat

3.2 Horticultural peat is not to be used as mulch on any planting areas or as a soil conditioner. Wherever possible plants grown without peat will be preferred to those grown using peat.

Recycled Materials

3.3 Where appropriate, components made of recycled or biodegradable materials should be used, e.g. wood chip mulch, biodegradable spiral shrub/tree guards.

Pesticides/Herbicides

3.4 A minimal intervention and organic approach will be used in terms of weed control. In areas of transplant tree, ornamental shrub and herbaceous planting, this is to be achieved by using mulch mats and hand weeding. Weed killer and other chemicals will be used as little as possible on site. Spot removal of weeds will be carried out by hand removal as necessary.

Water Management

3.5 Where necessary, maintenance staff are to water plants at appropriate times of the day to ensure minimum water evaporation.



Indicative image of native hedgerow and trees to be planted on site

Habitat management

3.6 All arisings should be retained on site where suitable, e.g. for ecological benefit such as creating hibernacula and habitat piles. If unsuitable, remove from site and dispose of at a registered facility. Allow deadwood, jagged stumps, splits, fungal growths/fruiting bodies and holes in tree trunks to remain unless they are creating a safety hazard.

3.7 Where appropriate habitat creation could include working with the Wildlife Trust and local wildlife groups to create log piles and hibernacula.

Utilities

3.8 Suitable planting shall be selected above underground utilities to minimise risk of damage due to roots/soil shrinkage. Slow growing/low species shall be used beneath overhead utilities and maintained at an appropriate height to minimise risk of interference/damage.

Areas of Archaeological Sensitivity

3.9 Development is proposed across the area of transitional Iron Age to Roman settlement in multiple fields. For these areas of archaeological sensitivity (as identified on the detailed planting plans), disturbance of soils is restricted in line with project archaeologist's recommendations (refer to Archaeological Mitigation and Management Plan for further details):

- There will be no topsoil stripping or tilling. Above-ground foundations and cable suspension will be deployed to avoid truncation of buried archaeological deposits in identified areas.
- The chosen above-ground foundation system is 'Monobloc'. This comprises ballast slabs measuring 1m in width x 2.4m in length x 0.18m in depth, which sit on a 100mm thick, porous gravel sub-base overlying a geotextile membrane laid directly onto the current ground surface. Piles supporting the PV panels will be mounted to the ballast slabs. Each slab will carry 15 panels, and a single inverter/combiner box will be mounted to one of the piles.
- Grass seed will be spread either using a lightweight ride-on or hand-pushed spreader.
- Hedgerows will be 'notch planted' and so the ground will only be dug to a spade depth. An L-shaped notch is cut into the ground with the spade and the ground is held open while the shrub is slipped in (unlike a tree pit where a hole is dug and then backfilled with soil).

4 General Maintenance Requirements

General Maintenance

4.1 It is recommended that all new planting on site is subject to on going management to maximise the value of these habitats to wildlife. Minimal use of pesticides and ensuring vegetation pruning works take place outside of the bird nesting season will aid this approach.

4.2 Maintenance operations are to be carried out in accordance with BS 4428: Code of Practice for General Landscape Operations. Maintenance of soft landscaping to be in accordance with BS 7370-4: Grounds Maintenance. Recommendations for Maintenance of Soft Landscape.

4.3 Planting shall not be carried out when ground is water-logged, frost bound or during periods of cold drying winds. All bare-root plant stock shall be kept covered until planted in order to minimise water-loss and prevent roots drying out. Bare root stock shall be planted while dormant (November-April) or alternatively cell/container grown stock to be used.

Litter and Arisings

4.4 Litter and debris shall be cleared by hand and removed from site (disposed of at a registered facility) on a monthly basis, and prior to mowing operations. All arisings should be retained on site where suitable, e.g. for ecological benefit such as creating hibernacula, herpetofauna or loggeries.

Trees and Associated Works

4.5 No pruning works to trees or hedgerows are to be undertaken during the general bird nesting season of 1st March to 31st August inclusive. Works within this time period should be subject to checks by an ecologist to ensure there are no nesting birds present.

4.6 All tree surgery work is to be carried out to BS 3998:2010 Tree Work– Recommendations (or any subsequent updates) and should be undertaken by a suitably qualified operative. Where a tree poses a health and safety hazard, advice will be sought from an arboriculturist.

4.7 Retention (as far as possible) of existing vegetation is considered an important part of the development: such areas will be managed appropriately to maintain and develop their value. Trees should not be felled unless they are classified as dangerous. Where a tree poses as a health and safety hazard ie. along or near public rights of way, advice shall be sought immediately from an arboriculturist. Ivy should only be severed where it is growing into tree canopies and is likely to create a sail hazard.

New Planting

4.8 All seeding shall be carried out in accordance with BS4428:1989 Code of Practice for general landscape operations or the most relevant and current British Standard and in accordance with the seed supplier's technical advice.

4.9 Planting of new trees should have regard to Section 10 of BS 8545:2014 Trees: from nursery to independence in the landscape. All planting stock supplied shall be healthy, viable, and conform to BS 3936, BS 4043 and be in accordance with the National Plant Specification published by the Horticultural Trade Association (HTA), as appropriate.

4.10 All new tree planting shall be checked at each maintenance visit for damage, security, firmness, fixing and support. Any trees that fail to thrive in the first year shall be replaced with the same species and variety at the size specified on the original landscape planting plans.

4.11 Trees should be checked between September and February i.e. outside the bird nesting season, and marked with tags, paint and/or noted on a plan, as necessary. Replacements will be planted during the following planting season. If a particular species fails to establish successfully then an alternative, comparable species should be considered as replacement, in agreement with the landscape consultant (and the LPA advised if necessary). Replacement planting of container plants to be undertaken as required, root-ball/bare root planting to be undertaken November to March.

4.12 Amenity bark mulch shall be topped up as required to a depth of 50mm to ensure maximum coverage as specified and areas of bare soil is prevented. To avoid accidentally damaging plants, herbicides will not be used to control weeds once foliage covers 75% of the ground surface. An 800mm diameter circle of bark mulch to a depth of 50mm will be retained around individual trees in grass in order to suppress grass and weed growth and minimise the risk of mower/strimmer damage.

4.13 Care should be taken not to over-water planting. Until well established all trees are to be watered during the growing season. Following any dry periods of 7-10 days, soil moisture content should be assessed and watering undertaken as necessary. Each tree is to receive 40 litres of water or as required to ensure all tree planted areas are brought up to field capacity at each visit. If trees are showing signs of drought stress the watering regime should be reviewed and increased as required. Care should be taken to ensure applied water is absorbed into the root-zone and does not run off the surface.