Ecological Mitigation and Enhancement Strategy

for

Werg Gardens
Mildenhall
Marlborough
SN8 2LY

on behalf of

M Lawson

September 2023

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N**on- TECHNICAL SUMMARY**

Site:	Werg Gardens Mildenhall Marlborough SN8 2LY
Ordnance Survey National Grid Reference: SU21526962	
Report Prepared by:	M Lawson
Date of report:	October 2023

Considerations	Description	Potential impacts
Production of an ecological mitigation and enhancement strategy	Mitigation measures include timing of vegetation clearance to avoid the nesting bird season and a sensitive lighting scheme for bats. Enhancement measures include creation of new native hedgerows, , native tree and shrub planting, pond enhancement, provision of bat and bird boxes, provision of hibernacula and hedgehog gaps in fences.	Safeguarding of any protected species using the site during construction. Improvement of conditions on site for bats, birds, small mammals and invertebrates.

1. INTRODUCTION

Background

1.1 This report is to provide an ecological mitigation and enhancement strategy for the proposed development site at land known as Werg Gardens, on Weg Lane, Mildenhall, Marlborough SN8 2LY. National Grid Reference SU21526962, taken from the centre of the site).

1.2 The site planning permission (planning application ref: PL/2022/09014) for the development of a new residential buildings with associated car parking and landscaping.

1.3 Various ecological surveys have been carried out on site, including.

- Arbtech Preliminary Ecology Survey 2022
- Davidson-Watts Ecology Survey 2018

1.4 This report covers the application site (red-line boundary) and the requirement to provide further details regarding ecological mitigation measures during construction and details the measures proposed for enhancements. See Site Plan Appendix 3.

Site Description

1.5 The site is located at National Grid Reference SU21526962 and has an area of approximately 0.1ha comprising disused modified grassland with derelict buildings and segments of hedge line. It is surrounded by Agriculture fields, with tree lined hedges to the west east and south, the river Kennet running east to north within 100m north of the site. There are further housing development properties adjacent to the north. A small road runs along the east and south boundary of the site. The village of Mildenhall is to the northwest of the site. A site location plan is provided in Appendix 2.

1.6 The site itself is primarily un-used habitat dominated in ruderal species and lacked grass cover while the other parts included grass species The grass types consisted dominantly of rye grasses and the occasional tussock of cock's foot; grass species composition was poor. Species-poor hedgerows are present at the eastern, southern and western boundary.

See - Arbtech 2022 Preliminary Ecological Report, Werg Garden, Mildenhall.

Aims and objectives

1.7 The aim of this report is to provide an ecological mitigation and enhancement plan for the site to be used in support of the development to enable the discharge of conditions on the grant of planning permission ref: PL/2022/09014.

Wildlife Legislation and Planning Policy

1.8 The relevant wildlife legislations and planning policies are listed below:

- Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 (as amended) (WCA). [Amended by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act (2000)].
- The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act, 2006 (NERC).
- The Wild Mammals (Protection) Act, 1996.
- The Hedgerows Regulation, 2007.

2. ECOLOGICAL MITIGATION AND ENHANCEMENT STRATEGY

Purposes and conservation objectives for the proposed works

2.1 The purpose of the proposed works outlined within this document is to safeguard any protected species that may be using the site during construction and to enhance the site for wildlife following construction.

2.2 The conservation objectives for the proposed works are to retain, replace and enhance existing boundary vegetation where possible, to provide an element of native plant species and habitats within the landscape design for open spaces including to provide hedgehog 'links' and to provide bat and bird boxes and boundary trees and shrubs where appropriate. These measures will contribute to the biodiversity interest of the area in the long term.

Species present on site requiring mitigation.

2.3 Birds' nests were seen on site belonging to that of a wren, found inside the derelict building. Birds such as robins, wrens and sparrows would utilise the site for nesting and feeding. Nesting would occur in the hedges, as well as the derelict building. The site would also provide foraging opportunities.

2.4 There is little to no evidence of amphibian or reptiles present on the site at present. There is no evidence of badgers.

2.5 The derelict building to be demolished offer negligible value to roosting bats due to a lack of potential roost features.

Mitigation measures before and during construction

2.6 An outline timetable for the implementation of ecological mitigation and enhancement works has been drawn up (see Appendix A).

2.7 To summarise, before construction:

- Protective Heras fencing will be placed around the site to protect existing hedgerows from damage during construction.
- Any areas of habitat which may be used by nesting birds which are required to be cleared should be done outside the nesting season (i.e., outside the period March to August inclusive). If these timings are not possible then a nesting bird check should be carried out by the ECoW no more than 48 hours prior to

clearance. If birds are building a nest or sitting on eggs or chicks, then any clearance work should be stopped until all chicks have fledged.

2.8 During construction:

- All trenches left open overnight to be covered or an escape ramp provided to enable hedgehogs, other small mammals etc. to climb out.
- Bat and bird boxes to erected on boundary trees and integrated into new buildings. Boxes should not be lit by security lighting.

2.9 Following construction:

- Construction of a reptile hibernacula and hedgehog houses.
- Final landscape planting to take place.
- Management and maintenance of ecological features to be undertaken.

Detailed design to achieve the stated objectives

2.10 The detailed soft landscape design for the development will be drawn up by Michael Lawson (see Appendix B for the landscape masterplan).

2.11 There is scope for ecological enhancements to be incorporated within the proposed. Garden areas. The enhancements are based on the recommendations detailed within the Preliminary Ecological Survey reports. The enhancements proposed were as follows:

- Retention and enhancement of existing hedgerow H2a-75-47

Hedgerow (priority) at site boundaries, including planting in gaps with species rich hedging.

- Planting of native or wildlife-attracting tree, shrub and fruit bearing trees.
- Provision of a minimum of two standard bird and two bat boxes on retained boundary walls & trees.
- Provision of house sparrow terraces on proposed buildings, where possible.
- Provision of gaps for hedgehogs bordering the gardens to allow their movement through the site, where possible. Provision of brash pile and planting of fruit bearing trees
  - siting of two hedgehog houses.

2.12 Trees are proposed to be planted across the site number no less than 6 in total. Native species to include, for example, field maple (*Acer campestre*), beech (*Fagus sylvatica*), pedunculate oak (*Quercus robur),* silver birch (*Betula pendula),* hornbeam (*Carpinus betulus)* and alder (*Alnus glutinosa)*, varieties of native species will be planted as well as non-native trees which will have some ecological value.

2.13 Native hedgerows are proposed to be planted in and around the site. To the boundaries of East, South and West. The native hedgerow-mix will consist of, dog rose *(Rosa canina),* hawthorn *(Crataegus monogyna),* hazel *(Corylus avellane),* spindle *(Euonymus europaeus),* wayfaring tree *(Viburnum lantana),* guelder rose (*Viburnum opulus)* Beech (Fagus sylvatica and Fagus sylvatica Purpurea).

2.14 Within the garden area fruit bearing trees will be planted. apple trees (*Malus domestica*), Plums (prunus Johnson & Prunus Methley), Pear (Pyrus Ure).

2.15 The Ash trees on the Southwest corner of the site will be removed, as outlined in the attached Tree Survey as submitted with this application. This will be replanted with 10-year-old saplings of Beech (Fagus sylvatica Purpurea) on the southwest corner of the boundary.

2.16 The Southwestern corner of the site will be planted with ornamental grasses, to encourage foraging of reptiles, amphibians and hedgehogs.

2.17 Existing vegetation at boundaries will be retained managed and enhanced on the Eastern, Southern areas. Vegetation will be gapped up with native hedgerow mix to as detailed in 2.13.

2.18 The plant species diversity of formal landscaped areas will be increased by the planting of bulbs, grasses, hedges, and shrubs although the majority of these may be non-native.

2.19 Non-Priority Hedge (H2b078 Other hedgerow Abandoned) as detailed in the Arbtec Preliminary Ecology report, Will be retained for approximately 10 Meters and carefully trimmed and shaped. New hedging of species rich varieties will be planted in front of this line of hedgerow to enhance the existing hedge line.

2.20 Schwegler 1SP sparrow terraces (or similar) will be integrated onto new buildings.

2.21 Reptile hibernacula will be incorporated at southwestern area location.
The hibernacula will be constructed by digging a hole and filling it with logs, bricks and stones. Cut vegetation will be placed on top, followed by a layer of soil or upturned turves. For more information, see Wildlife Trust's "How to build a hibernaculum for amphibians and reptiles" Here. https://www.wiltshirewildlife.org/hibernaculum

2.22 Hedgehog friendly hedging will be achieved by leaving gaps in hedges. (About 13cm x 13cm) to allow the free movement of hedgehogs across the site.

Extent and location of works on scale plans.

2.23 The suggested locations of selected biodiversity enhancements *Are shown on the attached plan see Appendix 3 Site Plan*

Type and source of material to be used where appropriate, e.g. native species of local provenance

2.24 The following bird and bat boxes are suggested.

- 2 no. Schwegler 1B bird boxes of various entrance hole sizes; bird boxes should be erected on retained mature trees or suitable proposed trees, northwest to northeast facing and at least 3m high.
- 1 no. 1SP Schwegler Sparrow terraces; terraces should be erected on new buildings, northwest to northeast facing and at least 3m high.

2.25 Please note that these can be replaced with similar products if not available at time of construction.

2.26 Planting should include trees and shrubs of local provenance where possible.

Timetable to implementation demonstrating that works are aligned with the proposed phasing of development.

2.27 An outline timetable for the implementation of ecological works has been drawn up (see Appendix A and paragraphs 2.28 – 2.29).

Persons responsible for implementing the works.

2.28 Michael Lawson will manage and oversee implementation of all works and act as ECoW.

Details of initial after care and long-term maintenance

2.29 Ecologically sensitive management measures should include the following:

- Hedgerow trimming will only be carried out when birds, reptile and amphibians are more dormant (during the months of November to February).
- Any trees and shrubs planted in accordance with this scheme will be monitored during the first five years from planting and replacements made of any species which fails to take hold.

- Annual inspection and cleaning of bat and bird boxes by a suitably licensed ecologist.

3. Conclusions

3.1 An Ecological Mitigation and Enhancement Strategy has been drawn up which will safeguard nesting birds and other species which may be using the site during construction.

3.2 The development will increase the potential of the proposed development site to support wildlife by the addition of new hedgerow, grassland wildflower habitats and the provision of reptile hibernaculum and bat and bird boxes. Suggestions for the management of habitats are included.

3.3 The Ecological Mitigation and Enhancement Strategy was required by the grant of planning permission; this report should enable the condition to be discharged.

References

Arbtech 2022 Preliminary Ecological Report Werg Garden Mildenhall.
Davidson-Watts Ecology Survey 2018

Duckworths BS:5837 Arboricultural Repost November 2023

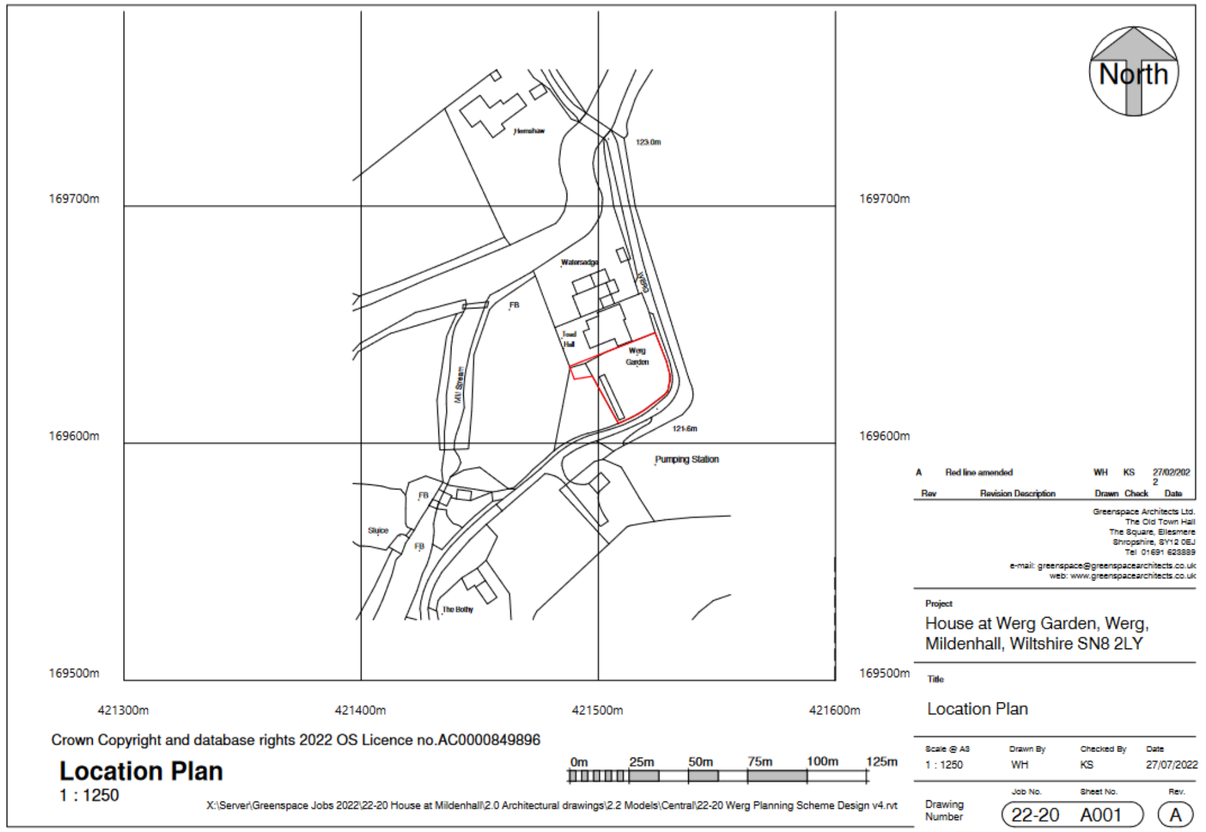
Web references:

Wildlife trust:
https://www.wiltshirewildlife.org/hibernaculum

A**ppendix A.** Suggested outline timetable for implementation of ecological works.

Timings	**Feature/species of interest**	**Action**	**Person responsible**
Prior to any works and when any new contractors are commissioned	All ecological features	Toolbox talk to include all the ecological measures relevant to construction.	ECoW
Prior to construction starting on site	Retained habitats, trees etc.	Erect protective fencing around features to be retained.	Site manager with advice from ECoW
Prior to construction starting on site	Vegetation to be lost to development.	Clearance of vegetation outside bird nesting season or with a clear nesting bird check	Site manager with advice from ECoW
During construction	Small mammals etc.	Trenches to be covered overnight or escape ramp left to enable animals to find their way out.	Site manager
During construction	Bats and birds	Bird and bat boxes to be erected on retained trees.	Site manager and ECoW
During construction	Hedgehogs	Hedgehog gaps to be created in fences with connectivity to suitable habitat.	Site manager with advice from ECoW
As required.	Reptiles/GCN	Creation of reptile hibernaculum	Site manager with advice from ECoW
Autumn/winter	Retained tree and hedgerow habitat and new hedgerow creation.	Coppicing, thinning, shrub planting etc. as required.	Site manager with advice from ECoW and arboriculturalist
Spring/summer/autumn	Observe and protection of nesting birds.	Check redundant building 48 hours before demolition takes place.	Site manager under ECoW supervision
Annually			Site manager under ECoW supervision
	All ecological features	Implement changes to management if monitoring indicates concerns.	ECoW
Ongoing after construction finished	All ecological features	Ongoing management and reporting	ECoW

Appendix B. Site Location plan



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Location Plan
1 : 1250

0m 25m 50m 75m 100m 125m

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Rev	Revision Description	Drawn	Check	Date
A	Red line amended	WH	KS	27/02/2022

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Project
House at Werg Garden, Werg, Mildenhall, Wiltshire SN8 2LY

Title
Location Plan

Scale @ A3	Drawn By	Checked By	Date
1 : 1250	WH	KS	27/07/2022

Drawing Number	Job No.	Sheet No.	Rev.
	22-20	A001	A

Appendix C Site Plan

