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Ecological Design Strategy

Yew Tree Road, Birchencliffe

North Park Homes Ltd.

Report Reference: ER-5871-01A

24/04/2023

Report Reference:	Ecological Design Strategy Yew Tree Lane, Birchencliffe
Report Reference:	ER-5871-01A
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Approved for issue:	Rob Weston BSc MSc MCIEEM Technical Director
Date:	15/11/2023 24/04/2023– Amended in line with Reserved Matters application 2021/94363

The information which we have prepared and provided is true and has been prepared and provided in accordance with the CIEEM's Code of Professional Conduct. We confirm that the opinions expressed are our true and professional bona fide opinions. This report does not constitute legal advice.

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Introduction

The following Ecological Design Strategy ('the Plan') has been produced for North Park Homes Ltd. to aid in the discharge of Conditions 25 of the granted Outline Planning Permission (2018/60/90151/W) which has since been carried forward into the Reserved Matters Application (2021/94363) at Land at Yew Tree Road, Birchencliffe, Huddersfield, HD2 2EQ.

The exact wording of this condition (as detailed in the Reserved Matters application) is repeated opposite.

The Plan is produced in accordance with Chapter 11 of British Standard 42020.

Background Information

A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Report was produced by Brooks Ecological in February 2017 and updated in March 2023 (see report ER-5871-02, Brooks Ecological).

The Site was cleared in 2019 and as of March 2023, the Site was occupied dominantly by vacant ground with Himalayan balsam prevalent. A small area of remnant young woodland is present to the west, although again supports Himalayan balsam. These habitats are of low diversity and ecological importance.

The Site had previously supported species-poor marshy grassland which despite being fragmented and of limited size, was of some, albeit limited, ecological interest. Following the 2017 survey, the subsequent planning condition carried through the early stage recommendations of creating marshy grassland habitat or permeant waterbodies, however these are now irrelevant and are not compatible with the layout.

As such, point a) of Condition 25 is not being targeted. An approach is taken to provide ecological enhancements that will work with the Site Layout shown opposite.

Delivering the Plan

The Developer is responsible for the creation and establishment works for a five-year period.

After year five, this plan will be the responsibility of a Site Management Company whence it will be implemented in perpetuity.

Assessment

An Ecological Design Strategy (EDS) has been submitted with the reserved matters application, pursuant to outline permission 2018/90151 for the erection of 17 dwellings. The EDS relates to condition 25 of the outline approval, which is worded as follows:

Details of 'layout' and 'landscaping' submitted pursuant to condition 2 shall include an ecological design strategy (EDS) addressing compensation for the loss of the marshy grassland/rush pasture habitats as identified in the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, as well as general ecological enhancement. The EDS shall include the following:

a) Purpose and conservation objectives for the proposed works, including but not limited to the creation of a permanent water body or marshy grassland habitat within open space.
b) Review of site potential and constraints informed by up-to-date (within 12 months of the date of submission) ecological survey and assessment.
c) Detailed design(s) and/or working method(s) to achieve stated objectives.
d) Extent and location/area of proposed works on appropriate scale maps and plans.
e) Type and source of materials to be used where appropriate, e.g. native species of local provenance.
f) Timetable for implementation demonstrating that works are aligned with the proposed phasing of development.
g) Persons responsible for implementing the works.
h) Details of initial aftercare and long-term maintenance.
i) Details for monitoring and remedial measures.

The EDS shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details and all features shall be retained as such thereafter.

Reason: To provide ecological mitigation and enhancement in accordance with Policy PLP 30 of the emerging Local Plan and guidance in the National Planning Policy Framework.

The document in its current form fails to address point 'b' of condition 25 of the original permission. As it is unclear from the submitted information when the most recent survey and assessment has been undertaken and as stated by the condition 'within 12 months of the date of submission'. As such, I am unable to support the discharge of this condition.

Suggested Actions:

- The submitted information should be updated to ensure that every point of the condition is addressed.

Scope of Plan

This plan relates only to land within the Site's Red Line Boundary (RLB).

Opportunities and Themes

Diverse Hedgerows

Creating diverse, species-rich hedgerows provides a source of food and shelter for a wide range of faunal groups, including birds and invertebrates.

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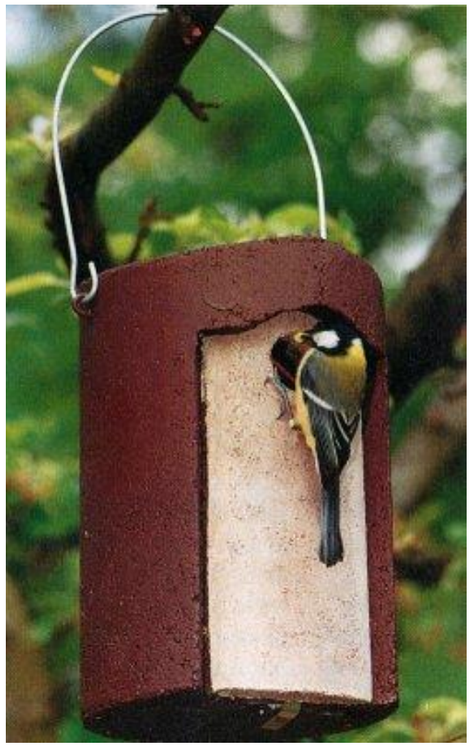
Homes for declining birds & bats

New builds often fail to provide opportunities for nesting birds and roosting bats, with the eaves and verges being well sealed.

A wide range of designs are now available on the market which can either be fixed to the masonry, or built discretely into the fabric of new walls.



Food and cover for wintering birds

Birds on passage are often attracted to dense cover where they can recuperate away from predators. Landscaping can include areas which will allow for the creation and long term maintenance of thickets which will also provide winter food sources (berries).

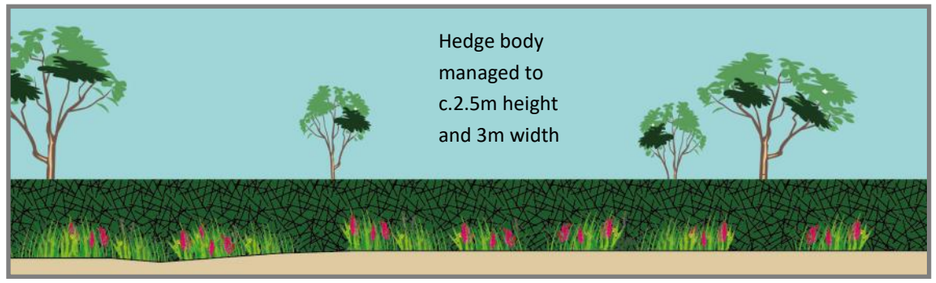
Maintaining connectivity for Hedgehog

Hedgehog have seen significant declines over the last few decades, with one of the major factors being habitat loss and fragmentation. Gardens provide excellent hedgehog habitat and by simply providing a means of access into these, new gardens can very quickly once again become home to this enigmatic species.

Native Species Rich hedgerow (planting)

Rationale

Planting a native and structurally diverse hedgerow will provide benefits to a wide range of garden species.



Specification

Soil where possible, soils will be protected in situ.

Weeds: Maintain a weed free strip under establishing hedge through hand pulling / strimming. No herbicide treatment will be permitted.

Seeding: Emorsgate seeds Hedgerow mix EH1

Planting: from schedule NH1: Plant hedge as staggered double row. Plant at rate of 5 per linear metre. Plant in staked tree tubes.

Management

Year 1 keep a 1m strip centered on the hedge free of weed growth through hand pulling. Two visits in the growing season.

Year 2. No further weed treatment. Under sow with Emorsgate seeds Hedgerow mix EH1 at 4g per m square. Lightly rake.

Year 3 Cut 50% of hedge in late winter. Identify any trees that can be left to grow into hedgerow standards. Mark with a flag to prevent cutting. Look to achieve a random scattering of standards averaging at 1 per 40m.

Year 4-10 Cut the remaining uncut 50% of each identifiable hedge in late winter. Keep flags to prevent cutting until a very obvious standard has developed. Repeat cutting treatment alternating areas cut between years.

Monitoring

Ecological Clerk of Works Years 2, 5 and 10 monitoring visit to check trajectory to moderate condition assessment.

Output ECoW report year 2, 5 & 10.

NH1

Scientific	English	Stock	Groupings	Centres and style
Ilex aquifolium	Holly	1ltr Pot	Scattered individuals	Double staggered row
Crataegus monogyna	Hawthorn	1+1 BR	groups 3-8	Double staggered row
Rosa canina	Dog rose	1+1 BR	groups 3-8	Double staggered row
Cornus sanguinea	Dogwood	1+1 BR	groups 3-8	Double staggered row
Acer campestre	Field Maple	1+1 BR	groups 3-8	Double staggered row
Corylus avellana	Common hazel	1+1 BR	groups 3-8	Double staggered row
Viburnum opulus	Guelder rose	1+1 BR	groups 3-8	Double staggered row

Shrub planting
(planting)

Rationale

Ornamental planting beds, along the frontages of houses can be both attractive backdrops to development, and of value to wildlife.

Specification

Soil N/A.

Weeds: No herbicide to be used. Strim and rake out planting stations in areas to be gapped up immediately prior to planting.

Seeding: *N/A*

Planting: Ornamental shrub and herbaceous planting; as detailed in the Landscaping and Ecological Proposals Plan.

A preference will be made for species with a recognizable value to wildlife, i.e. nectar/ pollen rich, long flowering period, bearing seeds, nuts, berries or fruit. Examples for differing soil conditions are provided below.

Management

Standard Landscape establishment and management works.

Monitoring

Not required. Much of this habitat will be within private ownership.

Bird boxes

Rationale

Ready made nesting boxes can be incorporated into developments to provide shelter and breeding sites of declining garden birds.

Specification

Box Type	**No.**	**Plan ref.**
House sparrow terraces	8 (4 groups of 2)	Purple dots

Location Notes

Sited as high as possible on new build, ideally directly below the eaves or verges.

Boxes will not be positioned directly above windows, to prevent potential conflict with new homeowners.

Installed

During construction.

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Bat boxes

Rationale

Ready made roosting boxes can be incorporated into developments to provide shelter and breeding sites of crevice dwelling bats, such as pipistrelles.

Specification

Box Type	No.	Plan ref.
Integrated Eco Bat Box	5	Blue dots

Location Notes

Sited as high as possible on new build, ideally directly below the eaves or verges.

Boxes will not be positioned directly above windows, to prevent potential conflict with new homeowners.

A range of elevations have been selected, so as to provide a variety of potential roost environments.

Where possible, boxes have been positioned so as to face onto retained boundary hedgerows or new rear gardens. This fronts them onto favourable habitat and enables boxes to be discrete. Front elevations, or elevations fronting onto new roads have been avoided, to avoid illumination from street lights.

Installed

During construction.

Hedgehog Provision

Rationale

Hedgehog have seen significant declines over the last few decades, with one of the major factors being loss of habitat. This species is listed under Section 41 of the NERC Act (2006) as a 'Species of Principle Importance'. New gardens provide excellent hedgehog habitat and whereas previously, these gardens were accessible to this species by virtue of hedgerow planting, a shift in industry practice to hard borders (fences and walls) has inadvertently excluded hedgehog from this extensive foraging resource. Simply providing a means of access into and between these new gardens can very easily and cheaply increase the amount of habitat available to hedgehog.

Hedgehog access holes

At least one hedgehog access hole (measuring at least **13cm x 13cm**) will be installed in each new fence line along the line of the blue arrow shown in the figure opposite.

This will be done by contractors during the fence's installation. These will be either purpose made panels such as those supplied by Jackson Fencing or be cut into standard fences, by contractors, during installation. Where concrete gravel boards are used, either purpose built ramps to access holes in the fence panels or underpasses beneath the boards will be made.

All holes will be simply labelled 'Hedgehog Highway' (see photos below) so home owners know why there are there. This will reduce the risk of holes being sealed.