



ECOLOGICAL DESIGN STRATEGY

Birchwood Lodge, Shaw's Lane, Southwater, Horsham

On behalf of: Ms Polly Tait

Client:	Ms Polly Tait			
Project:	Birchwood Lodge, Shaw's Lane, Southwater, Horsham			
Reference:	LLD3347-ECO-REP-002-00-EDS			
Revision:	Date:	Author	Proof	Approved
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Validity:

This report is valid for 18 months from the date of the site visit. If works have not commenced by this date, an updated site visit should be carried out by a suitably qualified ecologist to assess any changes in the habitats present on site, and to inform a review of the conclusions and recommendations made.



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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Lizard Landscape Design and Ecology has been commissioned by Ms Polly Tait to provide an Ecological Design Strategy (EDS) for Birchwood Lodge, Shaw's Lane, Southwater, Horsham (*Grid Reference: TQ 14840 25533 – hereafter referred to as 'the site'*).

1.2 Horsham District Council (HDC) granted planning permission for proposals on the 8th May 2025 (Ref: DC/25/0070) pursuant to the discharge of planning conditions, including condition no. 08, for which it is the purpose of this report to address. The condition is provided below for reference:

“Pre-Commencement (Slab Level) Condition: *No new-build development above ground floor slab level of any part of the development hereby permitted shall take place until a Biodiversity Enhancement Layout for the biodiversity enhancements listed in the Ecological Impact Assessment (Lizard Landscape Design and Ecology, October 2024) have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The content of the Biodiversity Enhancement Layout shall include the following:*

- *Detailed designs or product descriptions for biodiversity enhancements; and*
- *Locations, orientations and heights for biodiversity enhancements on appropriate drawings.*

The enhancement measures shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details prior to the first occupation of the dwellinghouse and all features shall be retained in that manner thereafter.

Reason: To enhance protected and Priority species & habitats and allow the LPA to discharge its duties under paragraph 187d of the NPPF 2024 and s40 of the NERC Act 2006 (as amended) and in accordance with Policy 31 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).”

- 1.3 This report has been produced based on the following data and surveys:
- Ecological Impact Assessment (LLD3347, 2025)
 - Biodiversity Net Gain Exemption Statement (BNG Exemption letter LLDE, 2024)
- 1.4 This report has been based on data from these previous surveys and reports and should be read in conjunction with the above.
- 1.5 Maintenance prescriptions have been formulated to maximise the biodiversity value of the site and ensure that ecological enhancement measures are managed and maintained in line with guidance and recommendations detailed herein.
- 1.6 It is anticipated that the initial landscape contractor as appointed by the main contractor will be responsible for any defects identified within 12 months of implementation. After this 12-month period all management as detailed within this report will be undertaken by a suitable management company as appointed by the contractor.

2.0 SITE CONTEXT

Site Description

- 2.1 As per the initial Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA), Kingsmead covers c.0.3 hectares (ha) to the south of Shaw's Lane. The survey area is bound by neighbouring properties to the north and west, farm buildings to the east and woodland to the south.

- 2.1.1 10no. ponds are located within 500m of the site, 2no. of which are located within 250m of the site. A further 2no. small ornamental fishponds are located on site.

Surrounding Landscape

- 2.2 The site is set within a rural location, approximately 0.5km south-west of the village of Southwater. Large areas of woodland are present to the south, east and west of the site. To the north, the land is dominated by pastoral grazing land with large parcels of woodland and mature tree lines.

Development Proposals

- 2.3 It is understood that the proposals include the demolition of the existing property, followed by construction of a new dwelling on a footprint similar to the existing.

3.0 BASELINE ECOLOGICAL CONDITIONS

3.1 Habitats detailed within the Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA) on, and adjacent to, the site include:

- Developed Land; Sealed Surface
- Modified Grassland with Individual Trees
- Introduced Shrub
- Ground-level Planters
- Pond
- Non-native Ornamental Hedgerow
- Line of Trees
- Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland

3.2 The site is dominated by modified grassland, hard standing, ornamental ponds and introduced shrub. Areas of mature trees and woodland exist within and adjacent to the site; these habitats are to be retained and protected within the proposals. Further details for each identified habitat can be found within the Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA) report (LLDE3347, 2025).

3.3 The existing dwelling is a single-storey bungalow, of brick construction with interlocking roof tiles and triple glazed windows. All roof tiles and brickwork were in good condition, and windows, soffits and fascia's were tightly fitting. The dwelling was assessed as offering 'negligible' bat roost suitability.

3.4 The site and / or adjacent habitat was found to be suitable for breeding birds, amphibians, invertebrates, foraging bats and mammals. While also being one of 'negligible' value for hazel dormice, or any other protected species. Avoidance, mitigation and compensation measures with regard to these suitable species have been built into the scheme in accordance with the mitigation hierarchy and BS42020: 2013.

3.5 The proposals should have no impact upon any surrounding statutory or non-statutory designed site as a result of this development.

4.0 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

4.1 Aims

- 4.1.1 The aim of the Biodiversity Mitigation Enhancement Plan has been to outline how potential impacts to protected species shall be avoided and mitigated, and to maximise the biodiversity value of the scheme by providing a range of opportunities for a range of wildlife, specifically invertebrates, reptiles, bats and birds. As well as ensure the sensitive management of new and existing features and provide a long-term management plan of the site.

4.2 Objectives of the Proposals

- 4.2.1 The following objectives have been identified which, when implemented shall ensure that the aims of the Ecological Design Strategy (EDS) are achieved:
- Outline the avoidance and mitigation measures which shall be followed to safeguard protected / notable species and comply with wildlife legislation.
 - Provide detailed specifications of the habitats and enhancements to be incorporated and how these will be created / installed.
 - Illustrate and provide detailed instructions for the location and installation of said enhancements.
 - Provide detailed specifications of the ongoing management of the habitats and enhancements.
 - Outline who will be responsible for creating / installing and managing the habitats and enhancements.

4.3 Responsibilities

- 4.3.1 A suitably qualified and experienced landscaping contractor will be responsible for ensuring the initial delivery of the proposed habitats and soft landscaping in line with the specifications detailed herein. Any defects identified within 12 months of implementation of the soft landscaping will be the responsibility of the appointed landscape contractor to rectify.
- 4.3.2 A suitably qualified ecologist will be responsible for overseeing the installation of ecological features, such as log piles and bat boxes; to maximise their potential for biodiversity.

- 4.3.3 Ongoing maintenance and the long-term management and monitoring of the soft landscape scheme outlined herein will be the responsibility of Ms P Tait which must appoint suitably qualified and experienced ecological consultants and landscaping contractors for the duration, as required.
- 4.3.4 If there is any uncertainty over how the plan should be implemented, the landscape contractor should contact a suitably qualified ecologist to agree on an approach going forward, and likewise, Ms P Tait is responsible for contacting a suitably qualified ecologist or suitably qualified landscape contractor should there be any uncertainty around site maintenance, management, or monitoring.

5.0 COMPENSATION AND ENHANCEMENT MEASURES

Overview

- 5.1 The following features are proposed as compensation and enhancement measures. The location of enhancement measures will be on-site, (see Figure No. 01 – Ecological Enhancement Plan).

Bat Box Enhancements

- 5.2 Installation of 1no. crevice bat box (1FF Schwegler Bat Box) and 1no. cavity bat box (Isabella Bat Box) as supplied by nhbs.com or, of similar specification / design. Both bat boxes shall be located on a south facing mature tree specimen (non-veteran specimen); ideally positioned at a height of 3 - 6m. The boxes should be away from artificial lighting and obstructions to allow access and away from access predators, such as cats.

Bird Box Enhancements

- 5.3 Installation of 2no. general purpose bird boxes (1B Schwegler Nest Box with Oval hole), as supplied by nhbs.com or, of similar specification / design. Both bird boxes shall be located on a northern aspect of surrounding mature and semi-mature trees (non-veteran specimen) and positioned between 1.5 – 3m high. The bird box must be away from artificial lighting and obstructions to allow access and sheltered from wind and rain.

Log Pile Enhancements

- 5.4 Installation of 1no. log pile of a minimum 1m³ is to be created within the tussocky grassland, which shall act as on-site reptile and amphibian refugia along the woodland edge. The log pile shall comprise cut or fallen deadwood in an arranged pile. The wood should be from native species and can comprise a mix of logs, branches and / or tree roots. Where possible these should be provided from existing deadwood on-site or of local provenance. The objective is to acquire a diversity of shapes and sizes of the materials that will create different shaped crevices and create a less uniformed pile. The pile should be a minimum of 1m³ in size and should be secured with wire to prevent removal.

6.0 MAINTENANCE & MANAGEMENT PRESCRIPTIONS

- 6.1 In order to ensure the long-term viability and maximum ecological value of the scheme, detailed prescriptions for initial establishment and long-term management are provided within this section.

6.2 Bat Boxes

Maintenance

- 6.2.1 The bat boxes specified above do not require any cleaning. A visual inspection should be carried out annually to ensure the boxes remain in good condition and securely affixed to the trees.

6.3 Bird and Invertebrate Boxes

Maintenance

- 6.3.1 Proposed bird boxes require no maintenance or cleaning; however this may facilitate them to be used again in future years and it reduces parasites. Cleaning should not take place until October and only when not occupied by any birds. Any persistent deposits can be scraped out. Cleaning with hot water rather than chemicals is recommended. No maintenance necessary for the invertebrate boxes. A visual inspection should be carried out annually to ensure the boxes remain in good condition and securely affixed to the trees.

6.4 Log Piles

Maintenance

- 6.4.1 Log piles are to be checked annually and topped up as necessary. Wire securing piles should be checked for safety and remedial measures taken as and when required.

7.0 LONG-TERM MANAGEMENT AND MONITORING

7.1 Log Piles, Bird, and Bat Boxes

Inspection and Replacement

- 7.1.1 Log Piles - areas of dead wood should be created as the logs breakdown and are replenished. The condition of log piles should be checked on an annual basis and replenished where necessary.
- 7.1.2 Bird and Bat Boxes - the bat boxes specified above do not require any cleaning. A visual inspection should be carried out annually to ensure the boxes remain in good condition. If the boxes have broken down or disintegrated, they should be replaced. A visual inspection should be carried out annually to ensure the boxes remain in good condition. Bird boxes which have shown no signs of use after 3 years should be moved to a more appropriate location if considered necessary during the monitoring visits.

7.2 Monitoring and Reporting

- 7.2.1 Monitoring of ecological compensation and enhancement measures shall take place each year for the first 3 years after completion, as well as years 5, 7, 10 and each 5 years after, for a period of at least 30 years.
- 7.2.2 Any remedial measures which are identified as required shall be undertaken at the earliest opportunity following any inspection.

8.0 IMPLIMENTATION SCHEDULE

- 8.1 The following tables act as a guideline for optimum annual maintenance and should be adhered to, where possible.

Table No. 01 – Annual Maintenance Summary

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
BIRD AND BAT BOXES												
Cleaning (bird boxes)										X		
Check condition											X	
LOG PILES												
Check Integrity			X							X		
Re-stock if needed			X							X		

Table No. 02 – Long-Term Monitoring and Management Plan

	Y 1	Y 2	Y3	Y 5	Y7	Y10	Y15	Y20	Y25	Y30
BIRD AND BAT BOXES										
Check Condition / Replace	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
LOG PILES										
Re-stock If Needed	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

9.0 REFERENCES

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FIGURE NO. 01 – BIODIVERSITY ENHANCEMENT PLAN

