

Faunal Enhancement Plan

**Land North of Camp
Road, Upper Heyford**

For

David Wilson Homes Ltd

Report Ref.: DWH001-029-003/002/002

April 2024

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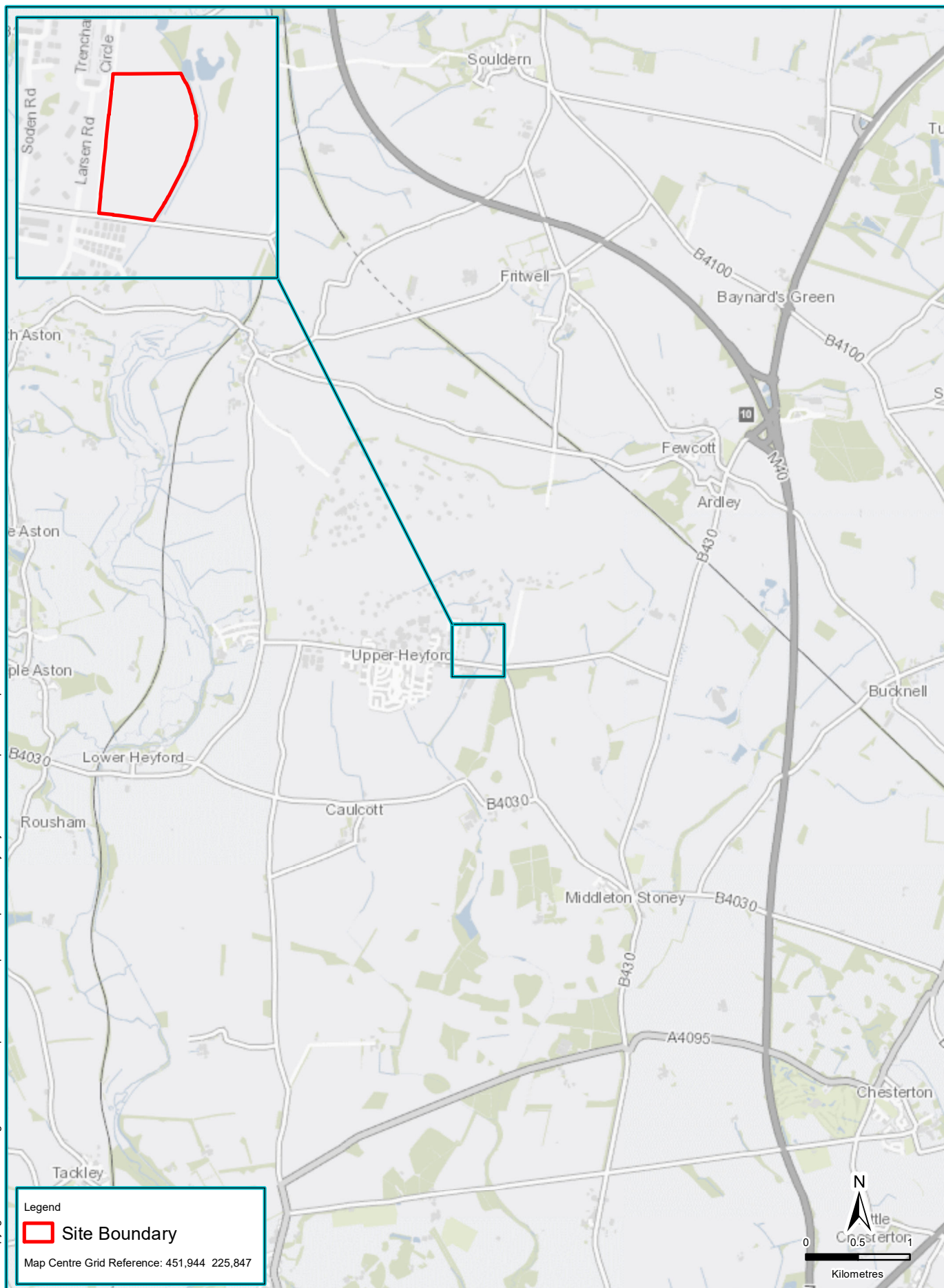
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Client	David Wilson Homes	Drawing Ref DWH001-029/403672/1	
Figure Number	1	Scale at A4 1:50,000	
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		Date 24/10/2023	Date 24/10/2023

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Legend

- Habitat Pile
- Hedgehog Highway - Approximate Location
- Insect Box
 - Bat brick. New opportunities for roosting bats provided in new buildings. 20 in total. Brick bat boxes provided by Bird Brick Houses, or similar
 - Swift box. New opportunities for nesting birds provided on new buildings, in groups of three. 117 in total. Manthorpe Swift Nesting Brick (built in) or similar
- f2d (849) - Aquatic marginal vegetation (bioswale)
- g3c - Other neutral grassland
- g4 - Modified grassland
- h3 (847) - Dense scrub (introduced scrub)
- h3h - Mixed scrub
- u1 (827) - Built-up areas and gardens (gardens)
- u1b5 - Buildings
- u1b6 - other developed land
- Site Boundary

Map Centre Grid Reference: 451,940 225,844
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This map has been drawn at a sufficient level of accuracy to fulfil the requirements of a Landscaping Plan. The level of accuracy depends on both the size of the area involved and the base mapping. Every effort has been made to create a map that is as accurate as possible. However, this map is not intended to represent a scaled landscape survey so should not be used to pin-point accurate engineering work or as a basis for detailed site planning.
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Drawing Ref	
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Date	Date
22/04/2024	22/04/2024
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David Wilson Homes	
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2	
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Proposed Faunal
Enhancements

1. Introduction

1.1 Development Background

- 1.1.1 David Wilson Homes Ltd ('David Wilson Homes') proposes to build 123 residential dwellings and associated hard and soft landscaping, including native shrub planting, ornamental planting, wildflower meadow planting, hedgerow planting and swales. The proposals described above are hereafter referred to collectively as "the development".
- 1.1.2 The development will be located on 4.3 hectares (ha) area of land north of Camp Road, Upper Heyford, Bicester, OX25 5BP (central grid reference: SP 51944 25847). The area of land affected by the development is hereafter referred to as "the site". The location of the site is shown on Figure 1.
- 1.1.3 David Wilson Homes is seeking full planning permission from for the development of the site. A previous planning application for the site, submitted in two phases (15/01357/F and 21/03523/OUT), which included biodiversity enhancements, has been submitted for a total of 120 units by Pye Homes, and David Wilson Homes proposes to increase this by three units to 123 units.

1.2 Ecology Background

- 1.2.1 Aspect Ecology produced a series of reports for the previous planning application on behalf of Pye Homes. A PEA was carried out on the site in 2021 (Aspect Ecology, 2021a; 2021b) and concluded with recommendations such as hedgerow and tree protection, district level licensing for great crested newts (*Triturus cristatus*) and pollution prevention.
- 1.2.2 Ecological enhancements were also suggested (Aspect Ecology 2021a; 2021b) including new planting, wildflower grassland, bat boxes, hedgehog (*Erinaceus europaeus*) nest domes, bird boxes, insect boxes and habitat piles.
- 1.2.3 An updated Biodiversity Net Gain assessment report has been commissioned and prepared by Thomson Environmental Consultants in 2023 for the 123 unit development. This is provided in a separate report (Thomson Environmental Consultants, 2024).

1.3 The Brief and Objectives

- 1.3.1 David Wilson Homes commissioned Thomson Environmental Consultants on 6th October 2023 to produce a Faunal Enhancement Plan for the development that details measures to enhance the site for fauna as part of the development. The plan will be supported by appropriate digitised mapping and will include:
- The purpose and conservation objectives for the proposed enhancement measures;
 - Recommended designs/specifications for the proposed enhancement measures;
 - The locations of the proposed enhancement measures;
 - The person(s) responsible for implementing the proposed enhancement measures; and

- Detail the initial aftercare and long-term maintenance (where relevant).

1.3.2 Following updates to the site layout, David Wilson Homes commissioned Thomson Environmental Consultants on 27th March 2024 to update the Faunal Enhancement Plan.

2. Legal and Planning Policy Considerations

- 2.1.1 The following legal and planning policy considerations should be taken into account during subsequent management to ensure compliance with wildlife legislation, based on the sites ecological constraints and key survey findings.

National and Local Planning Policy

- 2.1.2 Protection for biodiversity and habitats is provided through the following national and local planning policies:

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2023;
- Adopted Cherwell Local Plan 2011 - 2031 Part 1 (July 2015);
- Adopted Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 (Part 1) Partial Review - Oxford's Unmet Housing Need (September 2020);
- Minerals and Waste Core Strategy (September 2017);
- 'Made' Neighbourhood Plans in Cherwell District;
- Saved, retained policies of the Adopted Cherwell Local Plan 1996; and
- Saved policies from Oxfordshire County Council's Minerals and Waste Local Plan 1996.

- 2.1.3 Paragraph 174 of the NPPF (2023) makes clear that: *"Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:*

- *a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soil; and*
- *d) minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures;"*

- 2.1.4 Paragraph 175 states that: *"plans should b) promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species; and identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity."*

- 2.1.5 Cherwell's development plan currently comprises:

- Adopted Cherwell Local Plan 2011 - 2031 Part 1 (July 2015);
- Adopted Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 (Part 1) Partial Review - Oxford's Unmet Housing Need (September 2020);
- Minerals and Waste Core Strategy (September 2017);
- 'Made' Neighbourhood Plans in Cherwell District;
- Saved, retained policies of the Adopted Cherwell Local Plan 1996; and
- Saved policies from Oxfordshire County Council's Minerals and Waste Local Plan 1996.

-
- 2.1.6 Decisions on planning applications must be made in line with the development plan, unless there are clear material considerations which dictate why this should not be the case.
- 2.1.7 A Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and Strategic Environmental Assessments (SEA) were incorporated for the Local Plan Part 1 Partial Review and the new Cherwell Local Plan Review 2040 being produced for Cherwell.
- 2.1.8 The survey area is located within the Policy Villages 5: Former RAF Upper Heyford area, an area allocated for development. Policy Villages 5: Former RAF Upper Heyford states that:
- *“Development Area: 520 ha:*
 - *Development Description: This site will provide for a settlement of approximately 1,600 dwellings (in addition to the 761 dwellings (net) already permitted) and necessary supporting infrastructure, including primary and secondary education provision and appropriate community, recreational and employment opportunities, enabling environmental improvements and the heritage interest of the site as a military base with Cold War associations to be conserved, compatible with achieving a satisfactory living environment. A comprehensive integrated approach will be expected.”*
 - *“Proposals must demonstrate that the conservation of heritage resources, landscape, restoration, enhancement of biodiversity and other environmental improvements will be achieved across the whole of the site identified as Policy Villages 5.”*
 - *“The release of greenfield land within the allocated site Policy Villages 5 will not be allowed to compromise the necessary environmental improvements and conservation of heritage interest of the wider site”*
 - *“The conservation and enhancement of the ecological interest of the flying field through appropriate management and submission of an Ecological Mitigation and Management Plan, with biodiversity preserved and Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 Part 1 259 Section C - Policies for Cherwell's Places enhanced across the site identified as 'Policy Villages 5', and wildlife corridors enhanced, restored or created, including the provision for habitat for great crested newts and ground nesting birds in particular. A net gain in biodiversity will be sought”*
 - *“Development should protect and enhance the Local Wildlife Site (including the new extension to the south)”*
 - *“Provision of Green Infrastructure links to the wider development area and open countryside.”*

3. Faunal Enhancements

3.1 Responsible Person(s)

- 3.1.1 David Wilson Homes will be responsible for the delivery and maintenance (where required) of all faunal enhancements at the construction phase of the development.

3.2 Bird Boxes

- 3.2.1 Swift boxes will be incorporated into houses on the development to provide additional nesting opportunities. A total of 117 swift bird boxes will be installed within the buildings and placed in groups of three, in line with Barratt/David Wilson Homes Guidance (DB-SD11-002 as shown in Appendix 1). Indicative locations are shown on Figure 2. The swift boxes should be located as follows:

- Boxes should be sited to provide shelter from wind, rain and strong sunlight, with an orientation from north through east to south-east;
- Boxes should have at least 5m clearance below and in front of boxes;
- Boxes should be placed in areas where disturbance is likely to be minimal, *i.e.* away from door, windows, tall trees, and bushes;
- Boxes should be preferably located to the left hand side of the gable, which allows swift entrance to be closer to the verge;
- Boxes should be in groups of three per gable; and
- Boxes are best put up between August and February as most birds will not be nesting at this time.

- 3.2.2 The Manthorpe Swift Nesting Brick, or similar, is maintenance free, so no future maintenance is required.

3.3 Bats

- 3.3.1 To enhance the site for bats, bat bricks will also be installed on 20 houses within the development in line with Barratt/David Wilson Homes guidance (DB-SD11-003 as shown in Appendix 2). Indicative locations for bat bricks are shown on Figure 2.

- 3.3.2 General recommendations for the positioning of bat boxes are given as follows:

- Integrated bat bricks (e.g brick bat boxes provided by Bird Brick Houses, or similar) provide shelter and hibernation roosts for various bat species;
- Avoid placing bricks near to street lighting or any illuminated linear vegetation;
- Ideally place one brick per gable.
- Bricks should be located close to suitable bat foraging habitat, *e.g.* close to the hedgerows, that can all be used as commuting and foraging routes;
- The flight-path leading from each brick should be kept clear (*i.e.* cut away branches);
- Bricks should be sited to provide shelter from wind, rain and strong sunlight, and placed on a sunny aspect, facing south-east through south to south-west;

- Bricks should be placed in the apex of the gable and with a 5m clear drop beneath the box, to prevent predation and tampering; and
- Avoid placing bricks above windows and in cold, windy and shaded gaps between houses.

3.3.3 Bat bricks should not require any maintenance other than replacement or repair if damaged. Roosting bats are protected from disturbance under UK and EU legislation; therefore, if any boxes need to be repaired or removed this must be done by a licensed bat worker.

3.3.4 In addition to installing bat bricks, it would be useful for nature conservation purposes to monitor the boxes to know whether they are being used by bats, at what time of year and by which species. Since all bats and their roosts are protected by law and it is an offence to deliberately disturb, handle, injure or kill bats any monitoring of bricks must be done by a licensed bat worker.

3.4 Other Mammals

3.4.1 Hedgehog highways will be included within the development. Hedgehog highways are circular or square holes at the base of boundary fencing to allow hedgehogs to move freely across the development. Indicative locations for the hedgehog highways are shown on Figure 2. Guidance on hedgehog highways is as follows:

- Highway holes will be located as close to the ground as possible;
- Holes will be 130x150mm square (fence) or 150mm diameter circular (brick wall);
- At least one hole will be located between every garden and outdoor space it shares a boundary with;
- Where possible holes will be located adjacent to areas of shrub planting; and
- Where possible entry and exit points to the wider site will be away from driveways and roads/signage will be included to illustrate the presence.

3.4.2 It is recommended that occupants are encouraged not to block the access holes and to leave areas of un-cut vegetation for shelter and protection.

3.5 Habitat Piles

3.5.1 Four habitat piles will be included in the development and located in suitable areas around the site (indicative locations are shown on Figure 2). The habitat pile guidance is as follows:

- Wood such as oak, beech or fruit trees are most suitable;
- Four posts approximately 8-10cm in diameter, should be installed vertically at least 20cm into the ground;
- Logs (preferably with bark) of 1.5m-2m in length should be stacked into the space between the upright logs;
- Avoid log piles being too high, otherwise the timber will dry out. Allowing plants to grow over the piles will retain moisture and avoid the timber from drying out, and also provides shade for invertebrates;
- It is recommended that a buffer zone is placed around the log pile so that the vegetation and soils are protected from any disturbance; and

- It is recommended that the vegetation surrounding the log pile should not be cut between May and September.

3.5.2 As these habitat piles are designed to replicate natural conditions, once established it is not anticipated that the habitat piles will require any maintenance.

3.6 Insect Boxes

3.6.1 Four insect boxes will be included in the development and located in suitable areas around the site (indicative locations are shown on Figure 2). The insect box guidance is as follows:

- The Schwegler Clay and Reed insect nest box (or similar) provides a range of environments, with reeds on either side and clay central section. This is suitable for a variety of insects and designed to attract only harmless insects;
- It is recommended to be hung in a sunny location and protected from wind and rain;
- The Schwegler Insect Nesting Aid wood-concrete box, is made from wood-concrete, designed to mimic natural nest sites;
- With holes of different sizes, it provides a habitat for a variety of valuable species including bees and wasps; and
- It is recommended that the box is placed in a sunny location and protected from wind and rain.

3.6.2 It is not anticipated that any maintenance of these boxes is required, unless they become damaged, in which case they should be replaced.

4. Conclusion

- 4.1.1 Recommendations for faunal enhancements are set out in this report in Section 3 and displayed on Figure 2.
- 4.1.2 The application is considered to be compliant with ecological legislation and polices and the faunal enhancement will provide benefits to biodiversity on site.

5. References

Aspect Ecology Ltd (2021a) Land off Larsen Road, Upper Heyford Updated Ecological Appraisal, September 2021.

Aspect Ecology Ltd (2021b) Land south of Heyford Frange, Letchmere Farm, Upper Heyford, Oxfordshire Ecological Appraisal. October 2021.

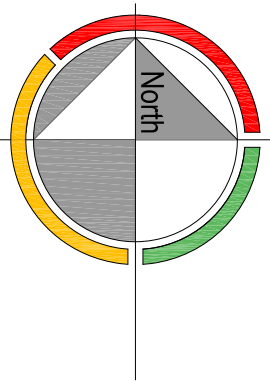
Barratt / David Wilson Homes (2010) Swift Box Guidance (reference: DB-SD11-002)

Barratt / David Wilson Homes (2010) Bat Box Guidance (reference: DB-SD11-003)

Thomson Environmental Consultants (2024) Land North of Camp Road, Upper Heyford Biodiversity Metrics Report. Report reference: DWH001-029-002/001/001

Appendix 1 - Swift Box Guidance

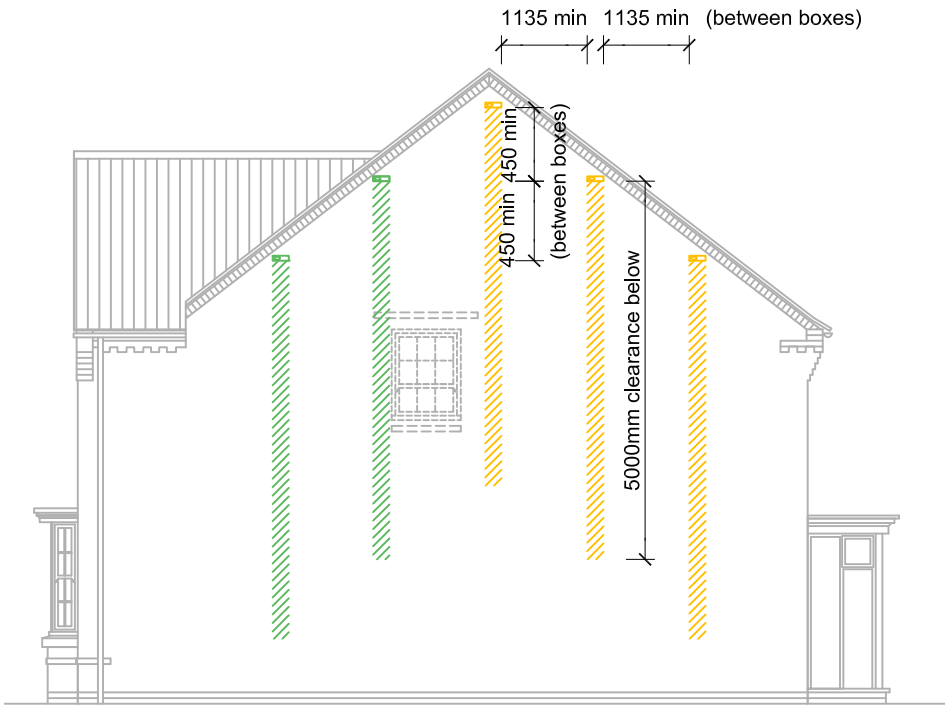
Typical site plan highlighting suitable facing elevations



- Primary Elevation
- Secondary Elevation
- Unsuitable Elevation

Swift Guidance

- At least 5m clear below and in front of box.
- Away from doors, windows and tall trees / bushes
- Ideally 3 per gable
- Preferably allow 1 swift box per house per development. i.e 30 house development requires 30 swift boxes fitted to approximately 10 houses. (3 on each)
- Do not locate in cold, windy, shady alleys between houses
- Preference is to locate to the left hand side of the gable allowing swift entrance to be closer to verge



Typical elevation

EXTERNAL REFERENCE :

Brand: **BARRATT / DAVID WILSON HOMES**
Range: **2010 / 2016 & -5 / -7**
Title: **Swift Box Guidance**
Detail No: **DB-SD11-002**
Drawn: **GDT** Checked: **GDT** Scale: **NTS** Date: **Oct 18**

Rev:

Description:

Date:



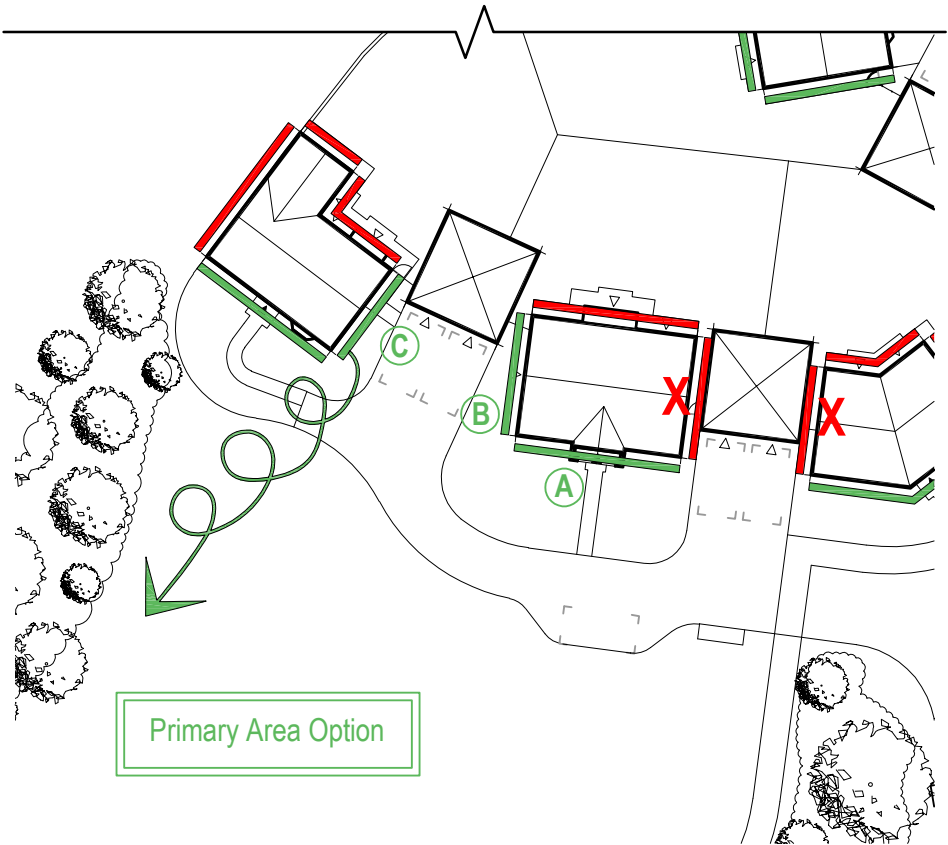
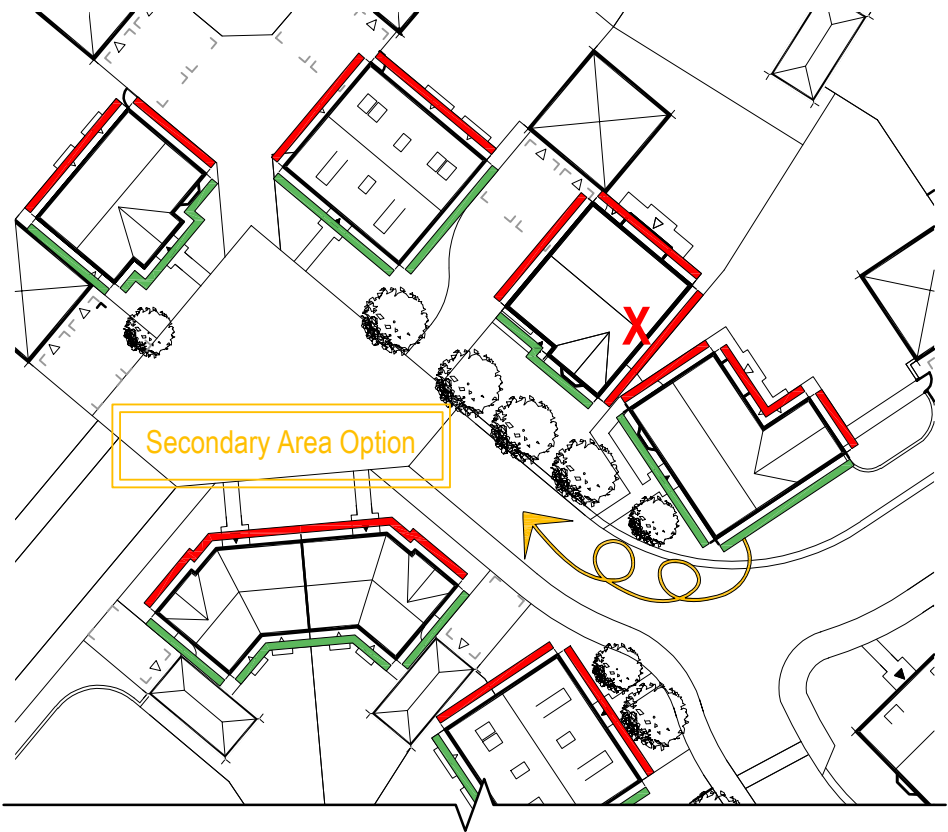
BARRATT
DEVELOPMENTS PLC



DAVID WILSON HOMES

Appendix 2 - Bat Box Guidance

Typical site plan highlighting suitable facing elevations



Bat Guidance

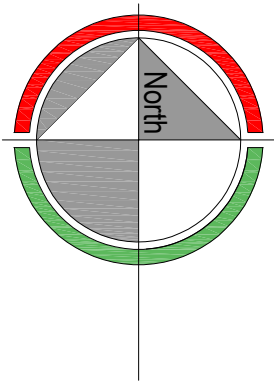
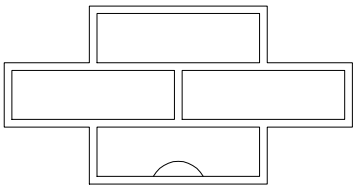
- Siting bat bricks should be informed by the site lighting and landscaping/green infrastructure plans.
- Avoid placing bricks near to street lighting or illuminated linear vegetation **
- Ideally 1 per gable
- Ideally, place bricks close to dark areas of existing mature trees and hedges. Where not possible, place bricks close to areas of suitable landscaping which will mature over time.
- Place roost bricks on warm sunny aspects, facing south-east through south to south-west.
- Ideally locate bricks in the apex of the gable with a 5m clear drop beneath, to prevent predation and tampering.
- Locate bricks around clusters of houses which can cumulatively meet their requirements. See letters A, B & C of landscape plan.

Avoid placing bricks above windows and locating in cold, windy and shaded gaps between houses. See X on landscape plan

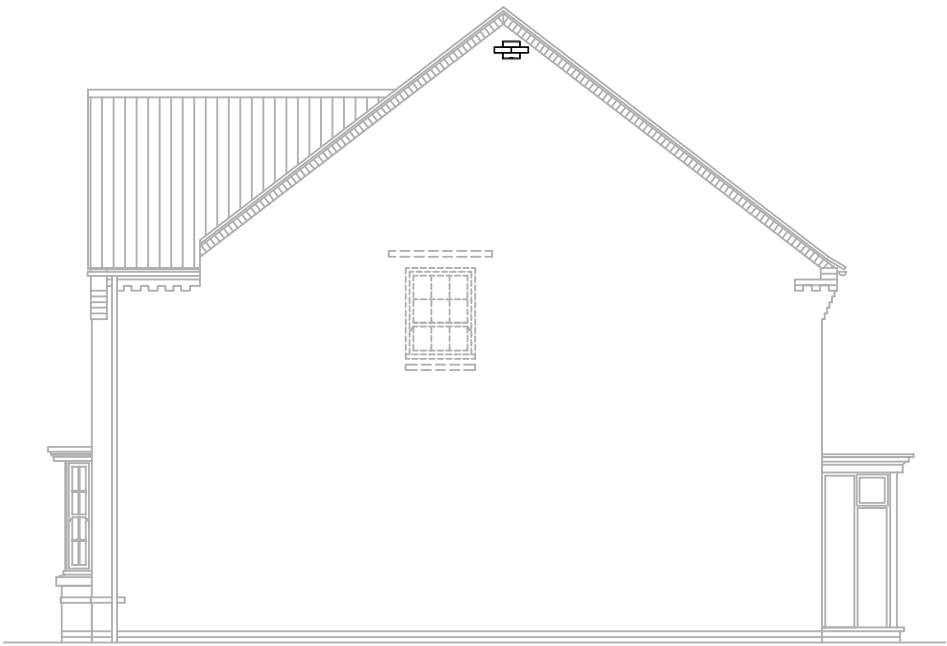
Brick example shown below is indicative and serves to illustrate correct placement only. Brick choice should be informed by planning condition and project ecological consultant.

**** No light on any roost entrance / bat box location nor between bat box and linear vegetation. Refer to site ecologist and "Bats and artificial lighting in the UK, Guidance Note 08/18". Provide a bat lighting constraints plan to the appropriate lighting plans.**

Example Bat Brick from "Bird Brick House"



Primary Elevation
Unsuitable Elevation



Typical elevation

EXTERNAL REFERENCE :

Brand: **BARRATT / DAVID WILSON HOMES**
Range: **2010 / 2016 & -5 / -7**
Title: **Bat Box Guidance**
Detail No: **DB-SD11-003**
Drawn: **GDT** Checked: **GDT** Scale: **NTS** Date: **Nov 20**

Date:

Description:

Rev:

