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SOLAR SAVINGS 4U LTD.

51 LONDON LANE, HUNTINGDON

BIODIVERSITY ENHANCEMENT STRATEGY (BES)

JANUARY 2025

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SOLAR SAVINGS 4U LTD.

51 LONDON ROAD, HUNTINGDON

JANUARY 2025

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APPENDIX 1 LOCATIONS FOR BIODIVERSITY ENHANCEMENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Wardell Armstrong was commissioned by Solar Savings 4U Ltd. to produce a Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy (BES), to British Standard BS42020, to satisfy Condition 9 of the planning application 22/02302/FUL, for the proposed development located at the land north of 51 London Lane, Great Paxton, St. Neots, PE19 6RH, grid reference TL210636.

Condition 9 of the Planning Permission 22/02302/FUL is as follows:

> *Notwithstanding the details on the submitted plans, no development above slab level shall take place (aside from demolition) until a scheme for the enhancement of the site for biodiversity purposes and a timescale for implementation and future management in accordance with the submitted Preliminary Ecological Appraisal has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved scheme of enhancements shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details and thereafter so retained.*

The biodiversity enhancements on site will consist of one bat box, one bird box, one insect nest box, one habitat pile, species rich native hedgerow planting, species rich lawn planting and hedgehog holes in fences. Full details of these measures are outlined within this report.

If this Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy is followed, appropriate enhancement measures that will benefit a variety of local wildlife will have been provided on the site, and the described management should maintain the features into the future.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

1.1.1 Wardell Armstrong was commissioned by Solar Savings 4U Ltd. to produce a Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy (BES), to British Standard BS42020, to satisfy Condition 9 of the planning application 22/02302/FUL, for the proposed development located at the land north of 51 London Lane, Great Paxton, St. Neots, PE19 6RH, grid reference TL210636.

1.1.2 It was understood the proposed development is for the demolition of four existing garages and construction of one dwelling, including off-street parking provision, and outdoor amenity space.

1.1.3 Condition 9 of the planning permission application 22/02302/FUL states:

Notwithstanding the details on the submitted plans, no development above slab level shall take place (aside from demolition) until a scheme for the enhancement of the site for biodiversity purposes and a timescale for implementation and future management in accordance with the submitted Preliminary Ecological Appraisal has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved scheme of enhancements shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details and thereafter so retained.

1.1.4 This strategy outlines the ecological enhancements, as recommended within the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal by Adonis Ecology Ltd (2022), for the site to meet the above condition, as well as a timescale for implementation and future management.

1.1.5 The site owner will be responsible for implementing the enhancement measures on the site during the construction works. The management and maintenance of the enhancement features will be the responsibility of the future site owners.

2 ECOLOGICAL METHOD STATEMENT

2.1 Purpose and Conservation Objectives

2.1.1 The purpose of this BES is to ensure that the proposed development provides ecological enhancements suitable for species which may occur in the local area.

2.1.2 The conservation objective is to provide increased potential for wildlife to shelter on site, through provision of wildlife boxes and habitat features which may be suitable for invertebrates and many small animals, particularly small mammals, reptiles and amphibians.

2.1.3 The species targeted were chosen based upon:

- conservation status;
- likely occurrence in the local area;
- suitability of habitats on and immediately surrounding the site.

2.2 Enhancement Features

Bat Boxes

2.2.1 A single bat box is to be installed of a type that can potentially be used by a range of bat species throughout the year.

2.2.2 The Schwegler 1FE Bat Box (fitted with optional back plate) is recommended to be installed within the masonry of the building. This is suitable for most common bat species, requires no maintenance and there are no diseases known to be associated with bat droppings. The bat box should be positioned at a height of more than 4m above ground level, away from external lighting, and where there is a clear path of flight to the boxes, ideally close to unlit linear features in the form of lines of trees and hedgerows.

2.2.3 The recommended proposed location for the bat box can be seen on the proposed location plan in Appendix 1.

2.2.4 As bat roosts are protected by the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2017) (as amended), and Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) (as amended), should any internal checks of the bat boxes be required, for example in the event the box is damaged and requires replacement, but it cannot be confirmed from ground level that no bats are present in the box, this will only be carried out by a suitably licensed ecologist.

Bird Boxes

2.2.5 One integrated Vivara Pro WoodStone House Sparrow Nest Box to be installed, increasing the potential of the site to support the red-listed BoCC and Section 41 species house sparrow *Passer domesticus*, by providing nesting opportunities for house sparrows which do not currently have suitable nesting habitat on site. The nest box should be positioned under the eaves, at least 2m high, close to vegetation and not south facing.

2.2.6 The recommended proposed location for the bird box can be seen on the proposed location plan in Appendix 1.

Insect Nesting Aid

2.2.7 One Schwegler Clay and Reed Insect Nest (or other type approved in writing by an ecologist if this is unavailable) to benefit a variety of native insects is to be installed firmly (not allowed to swing) in a sheltered and sunny position on a tree or fence (above 2m). These nests are designed to attract only harmless insects, including solitary bees which are harmless to humans and pets, and are useful pollinators.

2.2.8 The recommended proposed location for the insect nest box can be seen on the proposed location plan in Appendix 1.

2.2.9 Alternative bat, bird and insect nest boxes could be used but these must be confirmed for suitability by an ecologist in writing.

Habitat Pile

2.2.10 One habitat pile should be created on site and comprise vegetation and logs piled to a minimum height of 50cm, covering an area of at least 1m^2. This could provide potential hibernation sites for a variety of wildlife, including amphibians, reptiles and hedgehogs. Vegetation and logs from site maintenance activities could continue to be added to the pile and used to create additional habitats. Allowing the log pile to naturally decay and break down would also create potential habitat for invertebrates, and in turn, food for birds and bats.

2.2.11 The recommended proposed location for the habitat pile can be seen on the proposed location plan in Appendix 1.

Species-Rich Native Hedgerow Planting

2.2.12 New species-rich native hedgerow should be planted around the entire site boundary (except to the north where the treeline is), with a minimum of six different species

planted per 20m of hedgerow to create a species-rich hedgerow of high value to wildlife, with flowering, nectar-producing, and/or fruit and nut bearing species providing food and habitat sources all through the year, see Table 1 below for species composition. Approximately 70% of the hedgerow should be made up of hawthorn, blackthorn, field maple, hazel and holly. The remaining 30% will be made up of a variety of species to ensure the hedgerows will be species rich and benefit wildlife to the fullest.

Table 1: Recommended species composition of species-rich native hedgerow planting.

Common Name	Scientific Name	Percentage of Hedgerow	Characteristics
Plants throughout in hedgerow			
Hawthorn	*Crataegus monogyna*	20%	Provides food for birds and mammals and help reduce cat predation
Blackthorn	*Prunus Spinosa*	20%	Provides food for birds and mammals and help reduce cat predation
Field maple	*Acer campestre*	10%	Seeds are eaten by small mammals
Hazel	*Corylus avellana*	10%	Provides autumn food for small mammals
Holly	*Ilex aquifolium*	10%	Provides screening and refuge habitat all year round as well as berries
Plants in rotation every 20m hedgerow making up the remaining 30%			
Dogwood	*Cornus sanguinea*	5%	Provides berries which are eaten by wildlife
Guelder rose	*Viburnum opulus*	7.5%	Provides berries which are eaten by wildlife
Dog rose	*Rosa canina*	7.5%	Provides nectar for insects and hips for small mammals
Spindle	*Euonymus europaeus*	5%	The seeds are eaten by wildlife
Honeysuckle	*Lonicera periclymenum*	5%	Provides nectar sources for pollinators

2.2.13 In addition to the native hedgerow, native trees, shrubs and flowers should be planted in appropriate areas on site, covering at least 30 percent of the garden area in addition to the hedgerow. This would increase the structural diversity of the site and attract a greater number and diversity of animal species. The planting of nectar rich species would particularly benefit native invertebrates.

2.2.14 If possible, plants of local provenance should be sourced, as these have a better chance of thriving. For bio-security purposes, only UK-grown species should be planted.

Species Rich Lawn Planting

2.2.15 Any area of the site which is to be laid to lawn should be sowed with a species rich lawn mixture to become a low-maintenance amenity lawn. This would provide a valuable resource for bees and other insects, which in turn provides food for other wildlife such as bats and nesting birds. Pausing the mowing of the lawns in May and June to allow the wildflowers to bloom will be of particular value to invertebrates and other wildlife.

2.2.16 EL1 Flowering Lawn Mixture from Emorsgate seeds are recommended that provide a slow growing grass lawn with flowering species that tolerate regular mowing. EL1 comprises of 20% wild flowers and 80% meadow grasses. Full composition of species can be seen on the Emorsgate website.

2.2.17 Sowing and maintenance should follow the Emorsgate guidance to ensure efficient habitat creation and upkeep is maintained in the future. This is outlined within the management plan in section 2.3 below.

Hedgehog holes

2.2.18 Any fencing provided on the site should have access provided in the form of 13cm diameter, semi-circular holes cut at 10m intervals in the base of the fence allowing hedgehogs and other small animals free access. In order to reduce the likelihood of these holes being closed up by future residents, small signs should be put above holes to inform people of why these holes are there. Recommended signs are: https://shop.britishhedgehogs.org.uk/product/hedgehog-highway-sign.

2.3 Management Plan

2.3.1 Table 2 below provides a summary of enhancements as well as management prescriptions that will be undertaken on site, with planned timescales and any subsequent requirements:

Table 2: Summary and Timings of Ecological Enhancements and Management Procedures for Land 51 London Road.

Month	Years	Task	Notes
Enhancement			
Any	1	Installation of bat box.	To be installed following manufacturer's instructions, during construction of the buildings. Locations as in Appendix 1.
Any	1	Installation of bird box.	To be installed following manufacturer's instructions during construction. Locations as in Appendix 1.
Any	1	Installation of insect box.	To be installed following manufacturer's instructions during construction. Location as in Appendix 1.
Any	1	Creation of habitat pile.	Construct habitat piles using materials from site clearance where possible. Locations as in Appendix 1.
November to February	1	Creation of species-rich native hedgerow.	To be planted either bare rooted or in pots and promptly watered generously.
Autumn or spring	1	Creation of species rich lawn.	Surface sown by machine or hand, as per producers guidance.
Any	1	Creation of hedgehog holes in fencing.	Create 13cm diameter semi-circle holes at base of fence every 10m length.
Habitat Management			
April to September	2-5	Check habitat piles are still present annually.	Add tree prunings or logs to piles as necessary to maintain initial size.
Any	2-5	Check hedgehog holes.	Enable access if blocked.
October to February	2-5	Check integrated bat and bird boxes.	Replace lost or damaged boxes only if not occupied, or with a suitable licence holder present.
October to February	2-5	Check insect box.	Replace lost or damaged boxes or cut back vegetation to allow access if needed.
June to August	2-3	Native hedgerow management.	Keep earth around shrubs well-watered during dry spells in summer to ensure successful establishment. Replace any damaged shrubs.
Any	2-5	Lawn management	Mow regularly during the first year to establish a good sward structure. Mowing can be reduced during subsequent years and delayed late spring to allow flowers to bloom.

3 CONCLUSION

3.1.1 If this Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy is followed, appropriate enhancement measures for a variety of local wildlife will have been provided on the site and the described management should maintain the features into the future.

4 REFERENCES

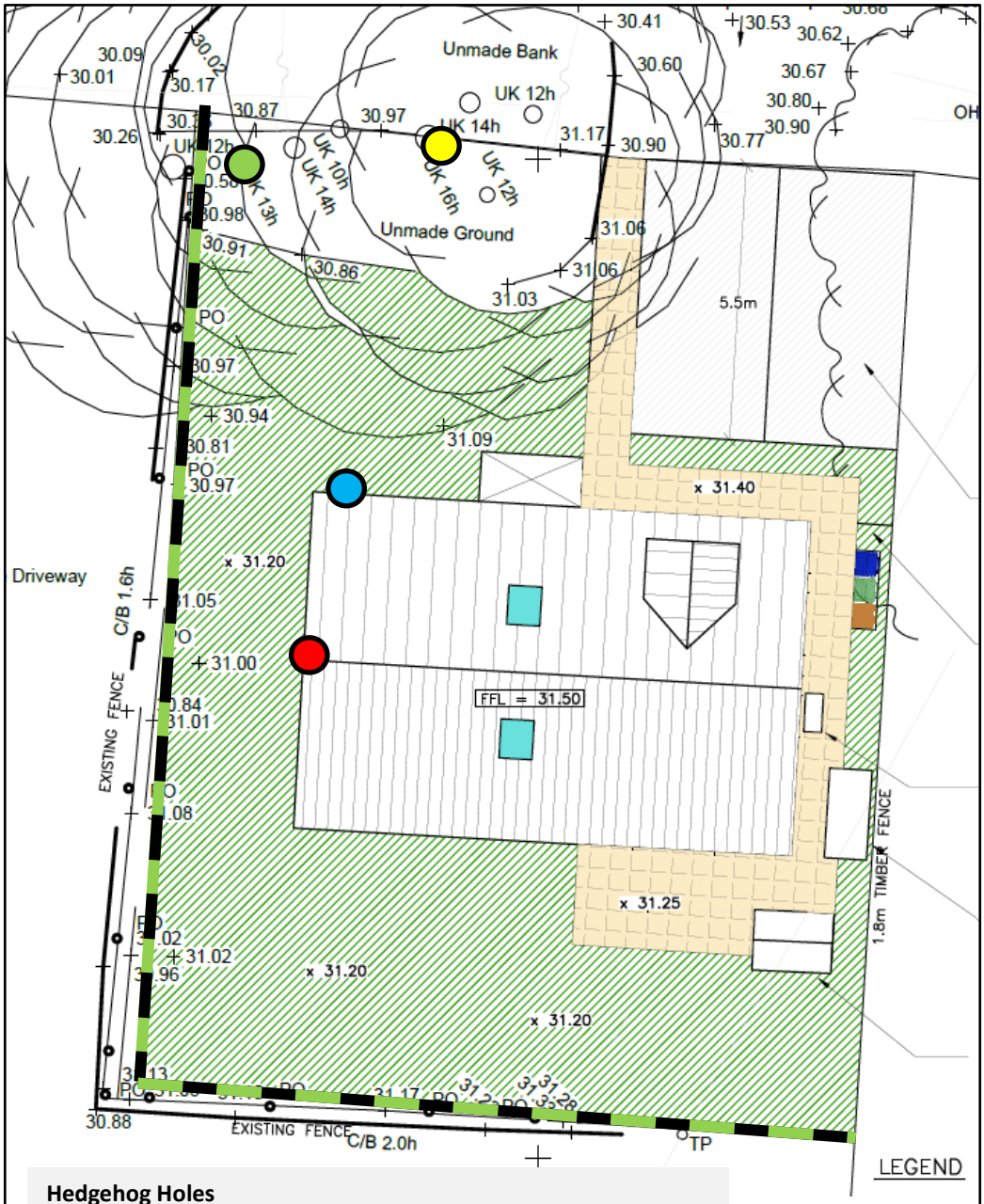
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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Locations for biodiversity enhancements.



Hedgehog Holes
13cm diameter, semi-circular holes cut at 10m intervals in the base of any fencing allowing hedgehogs and other small animals free access.

Key

- 1FE Schwegler Bat Access Panel fitted with optional back plate
- Vivara Pro WoodStone House Sparrow Nest Box
- Schwegler Clay and Reed Insect Nest
- Habitat Pile
- Species-Rich Native-Hedgerow Planting

Background image adapted from “Existing Site Plan & Proposed Site Plan” produced by Morton & Hall Consulting Limited, Drawing No. H9359/03, dated Nov 2024.

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