

BIRD AND BAT BOX PLAN

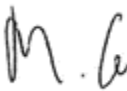
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JD Campus, Phase 1
Hollins Brook Way,
Bury,
BL9 8RR

U R B A N
G R E E N



QUALITY MANAGEMENT

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1 Introduction

1.1 Background to the Scheme

JD Group Ltd are proposing to develop land at Hollins Brook Way in Bury (hereafter referred to as ‘the site’). The proposals include the development the site, in two phases. Phase 1 is planned to develop a “Kiddy Hub”, comprising a creche, private garden, car park, and one multi-purpose all weather pitch.

Urban Green have been appointed to provide a Bird and Bat Box Plan (BBBP) for the site.

The author of the report is Jake Healy QCIEEM, Ecologist. Jake has experience providing ecological consulting services for a range of development schemes across the UK, including residential, commercial mineral extraction and road infrastructure schemes.

1.2 Site Context

The site is located at National Grid Reference SD 81480 08664 and comprises a total area of approximately 0.8ha (see Figure 1).

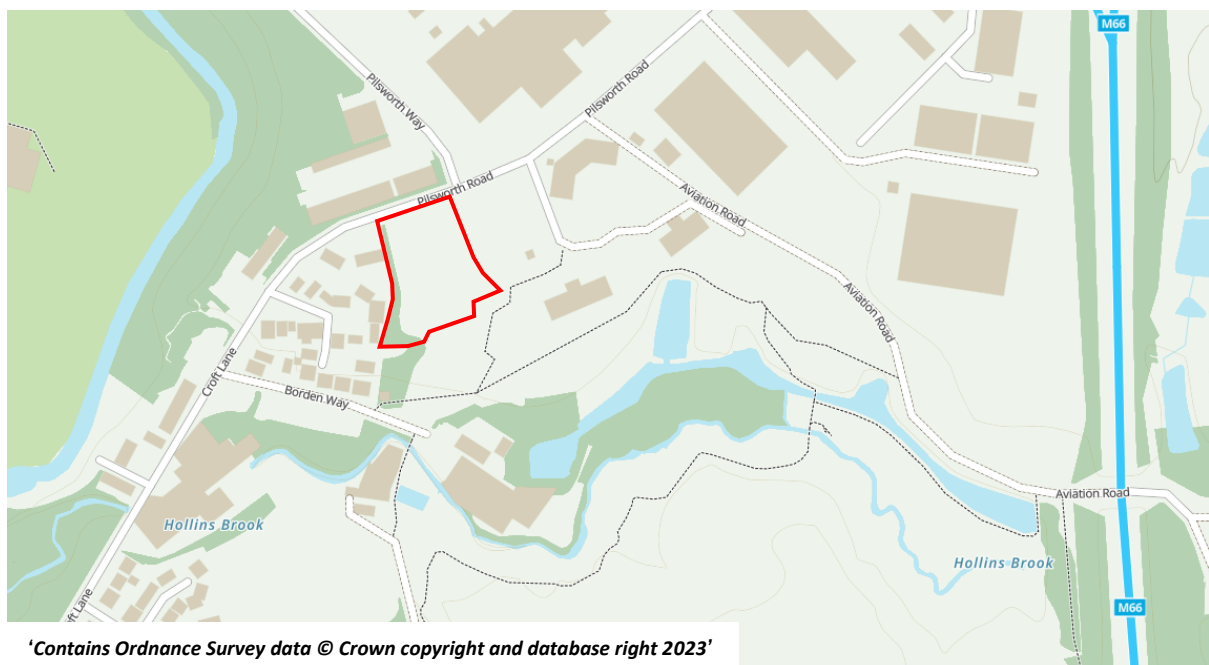


Figure 1 – Site Extent

The site is located on the rural-urban fringe of Bury, the centre of which is located approximately 2.5km north-west of the site. Pilsworth Industrial Estate is present immediately to the north-east of the site, comprising office blocks and commercial retail outlets. Hollins Vale Local Nature Reserve (LNR) immediately borders the south of the site. Hollins Brook and the River Roch are present close to the site, located approximately 100m south and 200m west of the site, respectively.

1.3 Purpose of this Report

Urban Green have been appointed to complete a BBBP in order to discharge Condition 18 of the Planning Application (REF: 68530/Full). Condition 18 states:

“Prior to the commencement of development, a bird and bat box plan should be provided to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The plan should include the provision of bird/bat boxes in trees to be retained. The plan shall thereafter be implemented prior to the first use/occupation of the development hereby approved and be retained in situ thereafter.”

Appendix 1 includes the relevant legislation.

2 Previous Reports

2.1 Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (Urban Green, 2022a)

Urban Green provided a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal of the site in 2022, detailing the site ecological baseline and potential to support various protected species of both fauna and flora.

In summary the assessment identified the following bird and bat species using and potentially using the site, based on a data search conducted in February 2022:

- A total of 82 records of bats, including:
 - 23 records relating to bat roosts, including common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*) and unidentified pipistrelle species (*Pipistrellus sp.*).
 - A further 59 records relating to field signs were also returned within the data search including common pipistrelle, soprano pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*), unidentified pipistrelle species, daubentons bat (*Myotis daubentonii*), noctule bat (*Nyctalus noctula*), and unidentified bat species (*Chiroptera sp.*).
- A Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) was also conducted on site and three trees were assessed as providing suitable bat roosting potential. Further surveys were recommended.
- A total of 43 records relating to protected or notable birds were returned within the data search. With the following bird species also identified on site during the field survey:
 - Feral pigeon (*Columba livia domestica*)
 - Wren (*Troglodytes troglodytes*)
 - Blue tit (*Cyanistes caeruleus*)
 - Magpie (*Pica pica*)

The species identified during the previous surveys or identified within the local data search (detailed within the EA) have been considered to select the appropriate boxes to be installed within the site.

2.2 Bat Surveys (Urban Green, 2022b)

Following the findings of the PEA (Urban Green, 2022a) further bat surveys were recommended to be undertaken on site.

T14 and T35 were assessed as providing low bat roosting potential and soft felling techniques were advised should removal be required as part of the project. T34 was assessed as providing moderate bat roosting potential and two nocturnal emergence /re-entry surveys were undertaken.

Bat activity was recorded throughout the first survey which constituted a dusk emergence survey, with no activity recorded during the second survey (a dawn re-entry). A peak count of 4 common pipistrelle were recorded during the dusk emergence survey and the level of activity recorded suggested that the site provides valuable foraging opportunities around the treeline at the south-western extent of the site, adjacent Hollins Local Nature Reserve (LNR). No roosts were identified, and all activity comprised solely of common pipistrelle.

The recommendations of this report will consider these findings.

3 Bat Boxes

A total of 3 bat boxes are to be installed across the site, which is expected to be a suitable provision for the size and nature of the site following the results of previous surveys. The bat boxes selected will provide a range of suitable conditions and target pipistrelle species that were confirmed foraging and commuting on site during the previous nocturnal bat surveys.

Externally mounted bat boxes are to be positioned on an onsite mature tree. Please refer to Table 1 for the bat box specifications example. A bat box design of similar specification can be selected for the site.

Table 1 - Bat box specification

Bird Box Type	Image	Total Number of Boxes
Improved Crevice Bat Box – double chamber Height of back panel: 335mm Internal height of roost chamber: 197mm External depth of roost chamber: 69mm External depth including roof overhang: 101mm External width: 166mm Weight: 1.4kg		3

3.1.1 Positioning of Bat Boxes

Bat boxes must be positioned between 4–6m high and are most effective when located on a south-eastern to south-western facing aspect, as this will provide additional heat throughout the day. Bats prefer to change roosts to benefit from varying ambient temperatures, so the boxes are to be clustered in a group of three upon a single retained tree, spanning the south-western, southern, and south-eastern aspects. Please refer to Appendix 3 for the Location Plan.

3.1.2 Timing of Installation

Bat boxes are to be installed prior to the operational phase of the development commencing.

3.1.3 Maintenance of Bat Boxes

Bat boxes are considered self-cleaning and require minimal maintenance once installed. The boxes are made of hard-wearing material that is generally long-lasting. Bat boxes should be checked periodically (e.g. every two years) to assess their use and the condition of the boxes. Section 5 includes the maintenance schedule.

If any boxes are identified as damaged or missing, they are to be replaced with a box of similar specification.

Note only those holding the appropriate Natural England Class 2 bat licence may open and inspect these boxes. It is an offence for anyone without this licence to open a bat box. If a bat box becomes occupied by a bird the nest must be left *in situ* until after the bird nesting season (March to September inclusive).

4 Bird Boxes

The development has the potential to enhance bird nesting opportunities through the provision of bird nest boxes. The condition and the PEA do not specify the number of bird provisions to be included within the development. It has been considered suitable that a total of 4 bird boxes are to be installed across the site.

Bird boxes come in various types and sizes, which vary in their suitability from species to species. Table 1 provides details of bird nest box types and the likely species they attract. Bird species that are known to inhabit the local area and readily utilise artificial nest boxes have been selected. Boxes of similar specifications as those detailed in Table 2 can be selected, in the case the example boxes are not available.

Table 2 – Bird nest box hole sizes and associated species

Box entrance hole size	Associated species
28mm	Great tit (<i>Parus major</i>), tree sparrow (<i>Passer montanus</i>), pied flycatchers (<i>Ficedula hypoleuca</i>)
32mm	House sparrow and nuthatch (<i>Sitta europaea</i>)
45mm	Starling
100mm (open fronted)	Robin (<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>) and pied wagtails (<i>Motacilla alba</i>)

Table 3 – Bird nest boxes that can be bought from websites such as nhbs.com, habibat.co.uk or other online retailers

Bird box type	Image	Number of boxes
Vivara Pro Woodstone starling nest box (externally mounted) Dimensions: Height: 385mm Width: 220mm Depth: 215mm Weight: 7.4 kg Entrance hole diameter: 45mm Material: WoodStone®		1
Woodstone® Seville Nest Box 28mm Dimensions: Entrance hole diameter: 28mm Width: 20cm Height: 31cm Length: 20cm Weight: 5.9kg Material: WoodStone®		1

Bird box type	Image	Number of boxes
Vivara Pro Woodstone 32mm nest box (externally mounted) Dimensions: Entrance hole diameter: 32mm Width: 20cm Height: 31cm Length: 20cm Weight: 6.9kg Material: WoodStone®		1
Vivara Pro Barcelona WoodStone Open Nest Box Dimensions: * Width: 19cm * Height: 24cm * Length: 17.5cm * Entrance hole: Open		1

4.1.1 Positioning of Bird Boxes

Bird boxes are most effective when positioned on a north-east to north-west facing aspect to prevent overheating during the summer nesting season. Care should be taken to make sure boxes are not angled in such a manner to allow rain to enter them. Nest boxes are to be affixed to vertical surfaces on mature trees at a minimum height of 3m. Please refer to Appendix 3 for the Location Plan.

4.1.2 Timing of Installation

Bird boxes are to be prior to the operational phase of the development commencing. Appendix 2 includes the Schedule of Works.

4.1.3 Maintenance of Bird Boxes

The following maintenance measures are to be completed, following the installation of the boxes:

- Bird boxes will require periodic checking and cleaning, (e.g. once every two years).
- Unhatched eggs may be removed legally between September and January and must then be disposed of.
- Disused nests must be removed and cleaned using boiling water to remove parasites. Boxes should be left to dry before replacing the lid. Insecticides and flea powders must not be used.
- If any boxes are identified as damaged or missing, they are to be replaced with a box of similar specification.

Note bird boxes must only be opened and cleaned outside the bird nesting season (which is between March to September inclusive).

5 Conclusion

This plan has demonstrated that the requirements to discharge condition 18 of the relevant application, have been met by demonstrating the following:

- A layout plan detailing where the nesting/roost features to be positioned, detailed in Appendix 3.
- A specification concerning the type of features to be used, as detailed in Section 3 and 4. Specifically targeting species identified on site during previous ecological surveys (detailed in Section 2) and associated with urban areas.
- Implementation programme as detailed in Appendix 2.

6 References

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- NHBS. *Vivara Pro WoodStone Starling Nest Box*. Available URL: <https://www.nhbs.com/vivara-pro-woodstone-starling-nest-box>
- NHBS. *WoodStone Swift Nest Box*. Available URL: <https://www.nhbs.com/woodstone-swift-nest-box>

Appendix 1 – Relevant Legislation

Breeding Birds

With certain exceptions¹, all wild birds, their nests and eggs are protected by Section 1 of the *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981* (as amended). Therefore, it is an offence to:

- intentionally kill, injure or take any wild bird;
- intentionally take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while it is in use or being built; or
- intentionally take or destroy the egg of any wild bird.

These offences do not apply to hunting of birds listed in Schedule 2 subject to various controls.

Bird species listed on Schedule 1 of the Act receive further protection, thus for these species it is also an offence to:

- intentionally or recklessly disturb any bird while it is nest building, or is at a nest containing eggs or young; or
- intentionally or recklessly disturb the dependent young of any such bird.

¹ Some species, such as game birds, are exempt in certain circumstances.

Appendix 2 - Timings of Works

Box Positioning

During construction works	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Erect boxes	Prior to the occupation of the buildings the boxes are to be situated upon.											

Box Maintenance

Habitat box maintenance	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
Box checks to see if boxes are in good condition and working appropriately		Operational phase Sept - Oct		Operational phase Sept - Oct
Bird box cleaning		Operational phase Sept - Oct		Operational phase Sept - Oct

Key

	Recommended times when works can be conducted
	Times to avoid work either through recommendation or under licence

Appendix 3 – Bird and Bat Box Location Plan

