

The amended plan has addressed my concerns. The bat and swift boxes are good enhancements and a planted area will provide food for pollinators and the animals that feed upon them. Although there may have been no evidence of hedgehogs recorded at the time of the survey, there are records of hedgehogs in the area. The survey was done at the beginning of February when hedgehogs would have been hibernating, and their droppings degrade over time. The hedgehog openings in the existing fencing appear to be in the right places.

From an ecologist's point of view scrub can be valuable habitat for nesting birds and can provide shelter for small mammals. The bramble flowers provide nectar and pollen for moths, bees and other pollinating insects. Bats and birds feed on these insects. Bramble fruits and seeds also provide food for wildlife.

Condition: Vegetation removal should be done outside of bird nesting season which is usually 1st March through 31st August. If the scrub has not already been removed, it must be carefully checked for nesting birds before removal. The applicant is reminded that, under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, as amended (section 1), it is an offence to remove, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while that nest is in use or being built. If evidence of an active bird's nest is found during construction, a 5 m buffer must be erected around the nest to protect it from disturbance until after the chicks have fledged and left the nest.

Reason: To prevent harm to nesting birds.

The tree is now shown on the plan to be retained. The root protection area of the tree must be taken into account when paving the driveway. As currently shown the pavement appears to be too close to the tree may damage its roots and would restrict its growth. The tree officer may have some suggestions on how to protect the tree.

The proposed new planted area (0.5 to 1.0 metre wide) will provide a good area of green infrastructure along the part of the northern and the eastern boundary of the driveway. This would be a good resource for pollinators and birds. Climbing flowering plants such as honeysuckle, dog rose, jasmine, wisteria and clematis would enhance the fence. I would recommend flowering and fruiting native shrubs such as hawthorn, spindle, Guelder rose and flowering currant towards the back of the bed and smaller pollinator-friendly flowering plants at the front such as lavender, night-scented stock, salvia, catmint, yarrow, shrubby cinquefoil, thrift, rosemary, hardy geraniums. This website explains what to look for in bee-friendly plants: <https://www.gardenersworld.com/plants/plants-for-bees/>. The 1.8 m fence will block the morning sun and the house will block some of the late afternoon sun, but the area is open enough that it will get sun during the middle of the day. The porous block paved driveway will also soak up heat and provide extra warmth for this area.