

Biodiversity Enhancement Plan

June 2026

Project Reference: PR-26-0123

Larkins Farm
Gellings Lane
Knowsley
L34 9EN

National Grid Reference: SJ 41446 96324



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Document Context

As part of a granted planning application with Knowsley Council (Ref: 23/02676/FUL¹) regarding Larkins Farm in Knowsley, Tyrer Ecological Consultants Ltd (Tyrer Ecological) were commissioned by MAT Design Limited to undertake a number of ecological surveys, including a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) (April 2023) and Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) assessment.

Proposals entail the construction of a solar farm installation on arable land and the enhancement of land within the wider ownership to create a wildflower meadow.

In July 2024 the application was granted consent with conditions. Tyrer Ecological Consultants Ltd have therefore been commissioned to produce a biodiversity enhancement plan in order to adequately enhance the site to fulfil Condition 7 of the granted permission, which states:

“Prior to the generation of electricity from the site, details of bird and bat boxes (including their number, location and detailed specification) shall have been submitted to and have been approved by the local planning authority. All works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details and retained as such thereafter.”

Proposed Biodiversity Enhancement Plan

A Biodiversity Enhancement Plan has been provided (see **Figure 1**), with recommendations in relation to bats and breeding birds, fulfilling Condition 7 of the decision notice.

The plan comprises the installation of four pole mounted Beaumaris Woodstone bat boxes, two Vivara Pro Seville 32mm Woodstone nest boxes and one 1B Schwegler Nest Box within the site boundary, inclusive of the wider ownership. These provisions will suitably enhance the development site for breeding birds and bats. See **Appendix I** for further information in relation to each enhancement measure.

These enhancement measures will also be undertaken in tandem with native replanting where feasible; native landscaping would improve the value of the site for a wide variety of native wildlife through provision of food and shelter, whereas non-native species are frequently not used or are of lower value to UK biodiversity. See **Appendix I** for native species to include within any planting.

Timings

The proposed enhancement measures for bats and birds, as indicated above, should be implemented prior to the respective breeding / active seasons for these groups (typically March – August for nesting birds and May – August / September for bats). To minimise potential impacts to bats and birds, measures should be installed following the completion of all works likely to cause disturbance.

All wild birds (with only minor exceptions) and their nests, whilst being built or containing eggs or dependent young, are protected from destruction, damage and disturbance under the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). It is a punishable offence to interfere in any way with an active nest. As such, it is imperative that the mitigation measures are erected prior to this time period and are left undisturbed through the breeding season, unless they have been checked by a suitably qualified ecologist within 48 hours or less of any works which may have potential to disturb the nests.

¹ <https://planapp.knowsley.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=consulteeComments&keyVal=S1AGF5IXGN100>

All British bats and their roosts are afforded full protection under the Wildlife & Countryside Act (1981) (as amended) and are listed in Schedule 2 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2017) (EU Exit). When dealing with cases where a European Protected Species (all UK bats) may be affected, a planning authority is a competent authority within the meaning of the Regulation 7 of the Regulations, that has a statutory duty as the local authority to have due regard to the provisions of the Regulations in the exercise of its functions.

Tyrer Ecological Consultants Ltd can confirm that the contents of this document can be relied upon, and the information contained within has been presented using best practice survey methodology and an understanding of the site, benchmarked by the long-standing experience of the Ecologists affiliated with the company.

Best wishes,

Mr. D. Burrows ACIEEM
Senior Ecologist at Tyrer Ecological Consultants Ltd

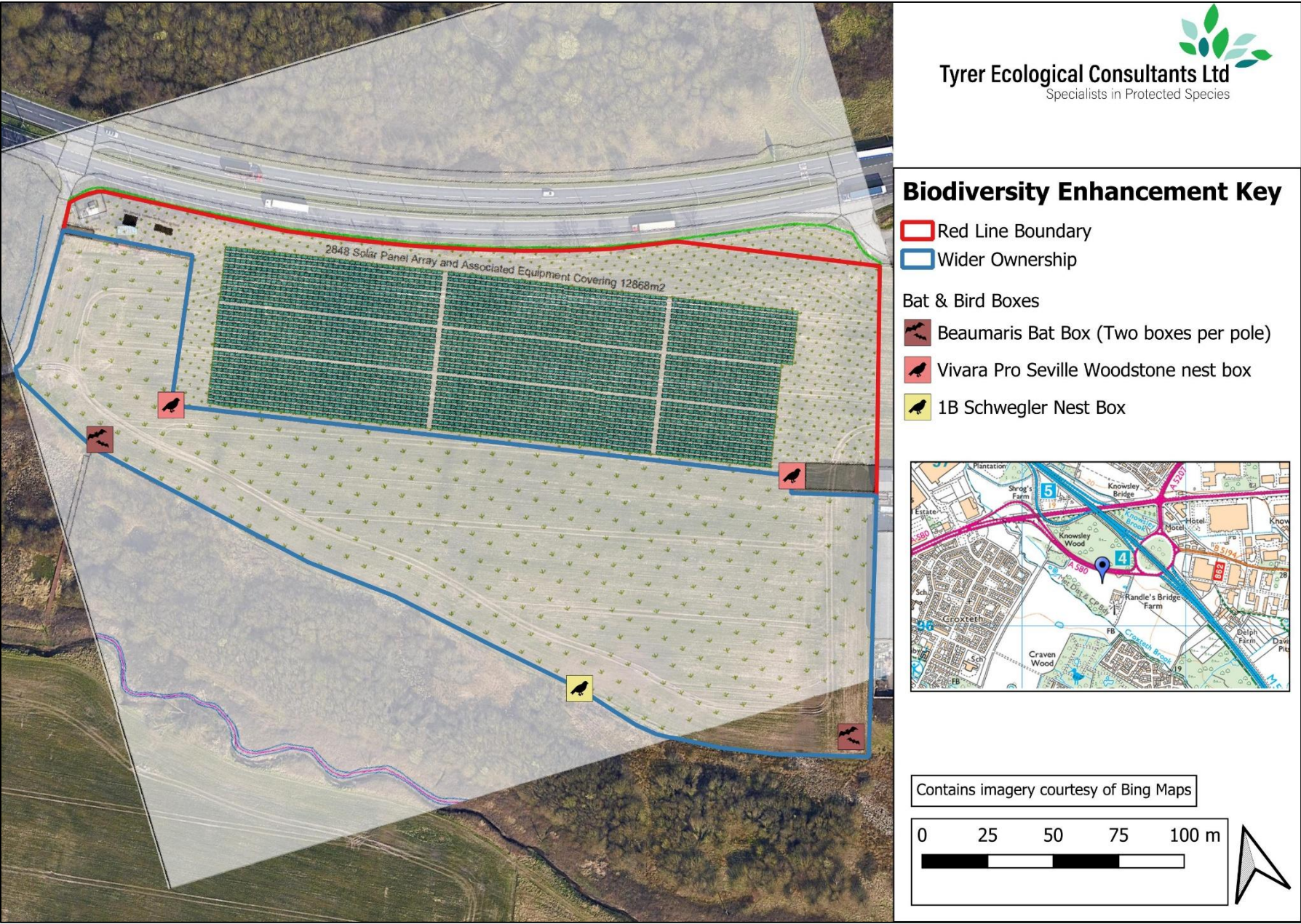


Figure 1 – Proposed enhancement measures on the proposed site plan (Adapted from © MAT Design Ltd)

Appendix I – Guide to enhancement / mitigation for breeding birds and bats

Beaumaris Woodstone Bat Box: This bat box is made entirely from woodstone®, a robust material comprising concrete and wood fibres. This means that the box has excellent insulating properties maintaining a more consistent temperature throughout the year and provides excellent protection from predators. The Beaumaris box has a single narrow entrance, making it suitable for crevice roosting bats such as the common pipistrelle, soprano pipistrelle, Nathusius' pipistrelle, Brandt's bat and whiskered bat. The box's interior has a rough surface for bats to cling to and the front of the box features a subtle but attractive imprint of a bat in flight.



Suitable for attaching to external walls or purpose-built poles and should be sited as high up on the pole as possible, at a height of at least 4m from the ground. Avoid siting under artificial lights. Bats prefer to change roosts to benefit from varying ambient temperatures, so bat boxes should ideally be clustered in small groups. Fit 2 boxes per pole, with one south facing and the other positioned to the north.

See: <https://www.wildcare.co.uk/beaumaris-bat-box.html>



Vivara Pro Seville Woodstone Bird Box: These attractive nestboxes are manufactured from WoodStone® which is a mix of concrete and certified sustainable wood fibres. Unlike a traditional wooden nest box, these boxes will not rot away or deteriorate and are guaranteed for 10 years. This robust material safeguards against attacks from predators such as woodpeckers, cats and squirrels, whilst also providing a well insulated interior with a more consistent internal temperature than an ordinary wooden box. This is especially important during the breeding season and ensures that young birds have a greater chance of survival. Nesting sites have become rare for cavity nesting birds due to changes in woodland management practices, so you can provide much-needed space for rearing chicks and birds that are roosting overwinter with these durable, long-lasting nest boxes.



This nest box is manufactured from woodstone®, a durable material that is very resistant to rot and also provides increased thermal insulation and protection from predators. Woodstone® is also breathable, ensuring that the nesting chamber maintains the optimum temperature and humidity levels. The Seville nest box should be sited on an external wall, tree or purpose mounted pole at a height of at least 1.5m using an aluminium

nail or screw and wall plug (not included). Site near to vegetation if possible, as this will provide additional protection and cover.

See: <https://www.nhbs.com/vivara-pro-seville-32mm-woodstone-nest-box>

Schwegler 1B Nest Box: The 1B nest box will attract a wide range of species and is available with different entrance hole sizes to prevent birds from competing with each other for the boxes. The nest box can be attached to the tree or wall using an aluminium nail or by hanging over a branch and is made from Woodcrete to ensure that it lasts for decades. The front panel is removable for inspection and cleaning.



Two different entrance sizes have been suggested in the enhancement plan in order to enhance the site for a variety of bird species. Should be placed on the northern aspect to avoid overheating.

See: <https://www.nhbs.com/1b-schwegler-nest-box?bkfno=174756>

Native Planting

New feature landscaping should incorporate native woody plants as opposed to non-native species that are of significantly less benefit to biodiversity. Species such as Blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*), Honeysuckle (*Lonicera periclymenum*) and Guelder-rose (*Viburnum opulus*) are native and will provide a valuable resource for a myriad of wildlife as opposed to non-native, exotic species which are generally much less effective, particularly to pollinator groups including bees, butterflies and moths.

Suitable Trees	Suitable Woody Shrubs	Suitable Hedgerow Species
English Oak (<i>Quercus robur</i>)	Honeysuckle (<i>Lonicera periclymenum</i>)	Hawthorn (<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>)
Wild Service Tree (<i>Sorbus torminialis</i>)	Guelder Rose (<i>Viburnum opulus</i>)	Dogwood (<i>Cornus sanguinea</i>)
Silver Birch (<i>Betula pendula</i>)	Elder (<i>Sambucus nigra</i>)	Hazel (<i>Corylus avellana</i>)
Ash (<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>)	Wild Privet (<i>Ligustrum vulgare</i>)	Holly (<i>Ilex aquifolium</i>)
Goat Willow (<i>Salix capraea</i>)	Blackthorn (<i>Prunus spinosa</i>)	
Beech (<i>Fagus sylvatica</i>)		