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Biodiversity Enhancement Statement

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45 Warblington Road, Emsworth, PO10 7HG

Erection of first-floor side and rear extensions, a single-storey rear extension and a modest front extension to the existing garage, together with associated roof alterations, formation of a balcony above the garage and a rear Juliet balcony, and alterations to existing rear fenestration and other associated external alterations.

1. Introduction

This Biodiversity Enhancement Statement has been prepared in support of the proposed extensions and associated alterations to the existing dwelling at 45 Warblington Road, Emsworth.

The purpose of the statement is to demonstrate how the development will retain the existing ecological value of the site wherever possible and introduce proportionate biodiversity enhancements appropriate to the scale and nature of the proposals.

The approach has regard to relevant local and national planning policies which seek to conserve and, where possible, enhance biodiversity and provide opportunities for wildlife as part of new development.

The proposals are the subject of a householder planning application and are therefore exempt from the statutory Biodiversity Net Gain requirement. Notwithstanding this exemption, the scheme incorporates a number of voluntary and practical measures intended to provide additional opportunities for wildlife.

An accompanying Biodiversity Layout Plan identifies the proposed locations of the principal enhancement measures described below.

2. Existing Site and Ecological Context

The application site comprises an established detached dwelling within a substantial mature residential garden.

The garden contains established trees, hedges, shrubs, planted areas and lawn, providing a varied domestic garden environment capable of offering shelter, feeding and movement opportunities for birds, small mammals, invertebrates and potentially foraging bats.

There are no ponds, ditches or other known areas of standing water within the site.

The proposed development is concentrated predominantly over the footprint of the existing dwelling, conservatory and other previously developed areas. Consequently, the development will result in very limited loss of existing soft landscaping.

No significant trees or established boundary hedgerows are proposed to be removed as part of the development.

3. Retention of Existing Habitat

The first principle of the biodiversity strategy is to retain the ecological features already present within the garden.

Existing mature trees, hedges and established planting will therefore be retained wherever practicable throughout the works.

Construction activity will be concentrated within the immediate development footprint and unnecessary disturbance to adjoining planted areas will be avoided.

Any areas of garden temporarily disturbed during construction will be reinstated following completion of the works.

Where supplementary or replacement planting is undertaken in the future, preference will be given to native and wildlife-friendly species, including flowering and fruiting plants capable of providing nectar, pollen, seeds and berries for insects and birds.

4. Bird Nesting Opportunities

Two purpose-made bird nesting boxes will be provided within the site.

Bird Box 1 – Schwegler 1B Nest Box with 26mm Entrance

One Schwegler 1B wood-concrete nest box with a 26mm entrance hole will be installed. This type of box is suitable for smaller tit species including Blue Tit, Marsh Tit and Coal Tit.

The box will be mounted on a retained mature tree within the garden at approximately 2–4 metres above ground level. It will be positioned with the entrance facing generally between north and east, in a sheltered location with a clear flight path and away from prolonged direct sunlight.

Bird Box 2 – Schwegler 1B Nest Box with 32mm Entrance

A second Schwegler 1B wood-concrete nest box will be installed with a 32mm entrance hole. The larger entrance provides nesting opportunities for a broader range of common garden birds including Great Tit, Blue Tit and sparrows.

This box will be mounted on a suitable north- or north-east-facing part of the dwelling, approximately 2–4 metres above ground level, away from frequently used doors and windows.

Locating one box on the building and one within the retained garden vegetation will provide differing nesting opportunities within the site.

The boxes will be positioned in sheltered locations which avoid excessive direct sunlight and exposure to prevailing weather.

5. Bat Roosting Opportunity

One Schwegler 1FF Flat Bat Box will be installed as a permanent biodiversity enhancement.

The 1FF is a purpose-made wood-concrete crevice roost suitable for attachment to buildings. Its open-base design allows droppings to fall clear and generally avoids the need for routine internal cleaning.

The box will be positioned at high level on a suitable south-, south-east- or south-west-facing part of the dwelling, preferably approximately 4 metres or more above ground level, with:

- a clear and unobstructed flight path;
- no direct artificial lighting illuminating the entrance;
- separation from frequently used windows and doors; and
- a relationship with retained trees, hedges and garden vegetation.

The precise position will be identified on the accompanying Biodiversity Layout Plan.

The bat box is proposed as an ecological enhancement and should not be regarded as mitigation for any existing bat roost.

6. Hedgehog and Small Mammal Connectivity

To maintain movement between the application site and neighbouring gardens, a dedicated hedgehog access opening will be provided within a suitable retained timber boundary fence.

The opening will measure approximately 130mm × 130mm and will be positioned at ground level in a location which provides useful connectivity between adjoining garden habitats.

The opening will be kept permanently free from obstruction.

This simple measure will allow hedgehogs and other small terrestrial wildlife to move between gardens for feeding, shelter and breeding.

7. Log and Brushwood Refuge

A small permanent log and brushwood refuge will be established within a quiet and relatively undisturbed part of the rear garden.

The refuge will utilise suitable untreated logs, branches and other natural woody material and will be positioned amongst or adjacent to established planting.

The refuge will provide potential:

- shelter for hedgehogs and other small mammals;
- habitat for beetles and other invertebrates;
- refuge for amphibians should they occur within the wider area; and
- decaying wood habitat supporting fungi and other organisms.

The feature will be deliberately informal in character and integrated into the established garden rather than forming a formal landscape feature.

8. External Lighting

No significant changes to the existing external lighting arrangements are proposed as part of the development.

The biodiversity enhancements will be positioned away from direct artificial illumination wherever practicable.

In particular, no new external lighting will be directed towards the proposed bat box, bird boxes, retained mature vegetation or principal garden boundary habitats.

This will help retain darker areas within the garden for nocturnal wildlife.

9. Protected Species and Biodiversity Checklist

There are no known existing bat boxes, bird boxes, bat roosts or specific nesting sites currently identified by the applicant within the parts of the property affected by the proposals.

This statement does not constitute an ecological or protected species survey and no assumption is made that protected species are absent from the property.

A Havant Borough Council Biodiversity Checklist will accompany the planning application as part of the ecological due-diligence process.

Should the Local Planning Authority determine that a Preliminary Roost Assessment or other ecological survey is required because of the proposed works to the existing building and roof structure, this can be commissioned and the findings addressed accordingly.

Any recommendations arising from a subsequent ecological assessment would take precedence over the indicative positioning of biodiversity features where necessary.

10. Construction and Implementation

During construction:

- existing trees, hedges and significant garden planting will be retained and protected from unnecessary damage;
- storage of construction materials and machinery will be concentrated within existing developed or hard-surfaced areas wherever reasonably practicable;
- disturbance to areas of soft landscaping outside the immediate construction footprint will be minimised; and
- any temporarily disturbed garden areas will be reinstated following completion of the works.

The bird boxes, bat box, hedgehog access and log/brushwood refuge will be installed or established following completion of the principal construction works and will thereafter be retained as permanent biodiversity features.

11. Long-Term Management

The biodiversity enhancements are deliberately simple and low-maintenance so that they can remain effective over the long term.

The property owner will retain the bird and bat boxes in suitable condition and replace them with equivalent units should they become damaged or reach the end of their serviceable life.

The hedgehog opening will remain unobstructed and the log and brushwood refuge will be retained and replenished with suitable natural material where necessary.

Existing mature garden vegetation will continue to be managed as part of the established residential garden.

12. Expected Biodiversity Benefits

The proposed measures will:

- retain the principal existing garden habitats;
- avoid unnecessary loss of mature vegetation;
- provide additional nesting opportunities for a range of garden bird species;
- provide an additional potential crevice-roosting opportunity for bats;
- maintain movement opportunities for hedgehogs and other small mammals;
- create additional habitat for insects and other invertebrates;
- retain darker areas of garden habitat; and
- encourage wildlife-friendly management of the established residential garden.

13. Conclusion

The proposed development is predominantly concentrated upon existing buildings and previously developed parts of the site and consequently results in only limited disturbance to existing garden habitat.

The established trees, hedges and mature planting which provide the principal ecological value of the residential curtilage will be retained.

Alongside this retention, the proposal introduces a proportionate package of practical biodiversity enhancements comprising two purpose-made bird nesting boxes, one purpose-made bat box, a hedgehog access opening, a log and brushwood refuge and wildlife-friendly future planting.

The locations of these measures will be clearly identified on the accompanying Biodiversity Layout Plan.

Taken together, the measures provide a modest but meaningful enhancement to the ecological opportunities available within the site and represent an appropriate biodiversity response to the scale and nature of this householder development.