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Biodiversity Enhancement Statement

Site Address: 7 First Avenue, Worthing, West Sussex, BN14 9NH

Local Planning Authority: Worthing Borough Council

Proposed Development: Removal of detached garage, conservatory and lean-to. Construction of single-storey rear and side extensions, in connection with providing annexe accommodation for a dependant relative.

Introduction

This Biodiversity Enhancement Statement has been prepared in support of a householder planning application. The purpose of the statement is to demonstrate that the proposed development has been designed to protect existing biodiversity and to provide proportionate enhancements, in accordance with national and local planning policy.

Site Description

The application site comprises a detached residential dwelling set within a typical domestic garden. The curtilage includes areas of hardstanding and patio, lawn, and ornamental planting. Boundary treatments consist of fencing and garden boundaries typical of the surrounding residential area. The site is surrounded to the front and sides by other residential properties, and to the rear by a recreation ground.

The area of the proposed side extension is currently a concrete-surfaced driveway leading to a brick-built garage which is to be removed. The area of the proposed rear extension is currently occupied by a large conservatory and lean-to utility room, and small area of patio.

Description of the Proposed Development

The proposal is to remove the existing detached garage, conservatory and lean-to, and construct a single-storey side extension with flat roof and tiled false-pitch feature, to provide annexe accommodation also occupying the existing lounge and kitchen of the property. Also the construction of a single-storey rear extension with a flat roof and parapet. The extension will be constructed within the existing residential curtilage and will not affect the existing roof structure of the dwelling.

No trees, hedgerows, or boundary vegetation will be removed or impacted by the proposed works.

Existing Biodiversity Value

The site consists primarily of managed domestic garden habitats of low ecological value. These habitats are common in residential areas and do not constitute priority habitats.

There are:

- No trees or hedgerows affected by the development.
- No watercourses or ponds present.
- No designated ecological sites within the application boundary.

The existing dwelling has no identified features of high potential for roosting bats, and the proposed works do not affect the existing roof or roof voids.

Protected Species Considerations

While the site is of low ecological value, legally protected species such as nesting birds may occasionally be present in garden environments.

To ensure compliance with wildlife legislation:

- Any vegetation clearance will be undertaken outside the bird nesting season (March to August inclusive), or following a precautionary check to confirm no active nests are present.
- Should any protected species be discovered unexpectedly during works, construction will cease in the affected area and appropriate advice will be sought.

Avoidance and Mitigation Measures

The proposed development incorporates the following measures to avoid ecological harm:

- The proposed extensions replace an existing large conservatory lean-to and concrete driveway, resulting in no loss of vegetated habitat.
- No trees, hedges, or shrubs will be removed.
- Construction materials will be stored responsibly to avoid harm to wildlife.
- Construction activity will be confined to the defined development footprint.

Biodiversity Enhancements

Although the proposal is a small-scale householder development, opportunities for biodiversity enhancement have been identified and will be incorporated as part of the scheme.

These enhancements include:

- Installation of bird nesting boxes fixed to the existing side elevations of the dwelling, positioned at an appropriate height and orientation.
- The removal of the existing detached garage allows for more ornamental planting to be added to the garden.
- Installation of a water butt to collect rainwater, contributing to sustainable water management and providing a water resource for garden planting.
- Retention of existing garden planting and continued use of the garden as a green space.

These measures will provide a net benefit for local wildlife, particularly birds and invertebrates, and contribute positively to biodiversity at the site.

Biodiversity Net Gain

The proposal constitutes a householder development and is therefore exempt from the mandatory 10% Biodiversity Net Gain requirement. Nevertheless, the enhancements described above ensure that the development delivers a proportionate and positive contribution to biodiversity.

Policy Compliance and Conclusion

The proposed development:

- Protects existing biodiversity on site.
- Avoids harm to protected species.
- Delivers proportionate biodiversity enhancements.

The proposal is therefore considered to comply with the objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework and relevant policies of the Worthing Borough Council Local Plan relating to biodiversity conservation and enhancement.