

Biodiversity & Ecology Statement

Supporting Planning Application for Householder Development

Site Address:	Whistler Cottage, Castle End Road, Wokingham, RG10 0EX
Applicant:	Mr. S. Holdship
Proposal:	Erection of a timber-framed Carriage House / Coach House and associated driveway extension
Date:	18th June 2026

1. Introduction & Executive Summary

This Biodiversity and Ecology Statement has been prepared to accompany the householder planning application for a proposed timber-framed Carriage House / Coach House at Whistler Cottage. This statement addresses local validation requirements concerning biodiversity, specifically assessing potential ecological impacts related to site features.

Following a desktop review and physical assessment of the proposed development footprint, it is concluded that the overall ecological impact of the development is negligible. The project incorporates appropriate mitigation measures to ensure no net loss of local biodiversity, fully adhering to local and national planning policies.

2. Site Context & Baseline Ecology

The application site consists of an established, domestic residential curtilage (managed garden lawn) associated with Whistler Cottage. The area designated for the new outbuilding lacks complex ecological features and is of very low ecological value.

Two notable site features have been identified within the wider property boundaries:

- **An existing garden hedgerow** running along the eastern boundary adjacent to the private access road.
- **An ornamental pond** located near the southern entrance of the property boundary.

3. Impact Assessment & Mitigation Measures

3.1 Proposed Footprint & Managed Lawn

The proposed Carriage House (10.74m x 5.94m) is located entirely within an area of tightly managed, frequently mown residential lawn. No mature trees, undisturbed meadows, or priority habitats will be removed or altered to facilitate construction. Consequently, there is a negligible impact on terrestrial wildlife habitats.

3.2 Boundary Hedgerow Replacement

To accommodate the proposed building positioning and driveway extension, a small section of the existing garden hedgerow will be removed. To fully mitigate this, the applicant is implementing a 1.8m high high-quality boundary treatment (fencing or brick wall) combined with comprehensive replacement native planting. This replacement strategy ensures that nesting and foraging opportunities for local birds are maintained and enhanced, reducing any short-term impact to a negligible level.

3.3 Proximity to the Pond

As detailed on the submitted Site Plan, the proposed Carriage House footprint is situated approximately 50 meters away from the onsite pond. Because of this substantial buffer distance, there is no direct risk of disturbance to the pond environment or any potential aquatic species during construction or subsequent use.

3.4 Drainage & Surface Water Management

To prevent any indirect or runoff impacts on the pond or local water table, surface water from the non-porous roof area will drain directly into a new localized soakaway system installed strictly within the red line boundary. This ensures that the hydrology of the site remains entirely self-contained and stable.

4. Conclusion

The proposed development represents a minor, low-impact householder addition within an existing residential garden. Given that the construction takes place entirely on managed lawn, maintains a 50m buffer from the pond, and includes a full native planting mitigation scheme for the boundary, the ecological impact is firmly established as negligible. The proposal satisfies all relevant local ecological guidelines.

Declaration: This statement has been prepared by the applicant, Mr. S. Holdship, based on a physical assessment of the domestic curtilage and the submitted site plans. It represents a good-faith layout of the facts to assist the local authority's validation process.