

Biodiversity Survey and Report Statement

Site Address: 14 Birch Road, Finchampstead, Wokingham, RG40 3LB

Proposal: Single-storey rear extension with apex pitched roof

Local Planning Authority: Wokingham Borough Council

1. Introduction

This Biodiversity Statement supports a householder planning application for a proposed single-storey rear extension with an apex pitched roof at 14 Birch Road. The statement addresses potential ecological impacts in line with Wokingham Borough Council policies, including Core Strategy Policy CP7 (Biodiversity) and Managing Development Delivery (MDD) Local Plan Policy CC03 (Green Infrastructure, Trees and Landscaping), as well as the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

2. Site Context and Description

The application site is a detached residential dwelling located in a suburban setting. The property has a private rear garden consisting of well-maintained lawn, patio, and small ornamental shrubs. The proposed development will be within this existing domestic garden space, with no alteration to the front garden or access routes.

There are no watercourses, ponds, mature trees, or outbuildings in or near the development area that could support protected species. The surrounding area is predominantly residential, with no known designated ecological sites (such as SSSIs, SINC, or ancient woodland) within proximity of the site.

3. Proposed Works

The application proposes a single-storey rear extension with an apex pitched roof, to be constructed within the private garden. The structure will be attached to the rear elevation of the main dwelling and will replace a portion of the lawn and patio.

No demolition of roof voids or external roof elements is required, and there will be no removal of mature trees or vegetation that could serve as habitats for protected species.

4. Assessment of Potential Biodiversity Impact

A desktop review and site inspection indicate minimal ecological value within the development footprint. A summary of potential impacts is provided below:

- **Bats and Roosting Sites:** The proposed works will not disturb roof voids, soffits, or eaves of the main house. No known bat roosts or evidence of bat activity were observed. The extension itself does not create additional bat roost potential beyond existing structures.
- **Nesting Birds:** There are no hedges, shrubs, or trees being removed. Work will avoid bird nesting season (March–August) or will be preceded by a visual check for active nests if required.
- **Other Protected Species:** There are no signs or habitats suitable for reptiles, amphibians, badgers, or other protected species within the proposed construction area.

Given these observations, the ecological impact of the proposed extension is assessed to be negligible.

5. Biodiversity Enhancement Measures

In accordance with paragraph 180 of the NPPF and local biodiversity enhancement policies, the applicant proposes the following low-impact, proportionate biodiversity enhancements:

- Installation of one integrated bat box or bird box on a rear-facing wall or fence.
- Introduction of pollinator-friendly planting within the garden (e.g. lavender, salvia, verbenas).
- Retention of permeable surfaces where possible to support sustainable drainage and habitat-friendly runoff.

These measures will help ensure the development supports biodiversity net gain in line with national and local policy objectives.

6. Conclusion

The proposed rear extension is modest in scale and will be constructed within an area of low ecological value. There is no reasonable likelihood of harm to protected species or habitats, and no designated ecological sites are affected. The proposal includes appropriate biodiversity enhancements to deliver a minor net gain.

Therefore, the proposal is fully compliant with Wokingham Borough Council's planning and biodiversity policies and the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework.