

Biodiversity Enhancement Statement

Site: 8 Polperro Close, Ferring, BN12 5JH

Proposal: Small rear extension to existing garage (approx. 5.6m²) and conversion of the entire garage into a home office with bathroom.

Local Planning Authority: Arun District Council

1. Introduction and Purpose of the Statement

This Biodiversity Enhancement Statement (BES) accompanies a minor householder application involving a small garage extension and conversion to a home office. Although the proposal is modest in scale, it is recognised that development presents an opportunity to protect existing features and provide targeted, proportionate enhancements for local biodiversity in line with the aims of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), Arun District Council's Natural Environment guidance, and best practice for small domestic plots.

This statement outlines the existing ecological context, identifies any potential impacts, and sets out specific, achievable enhancements that will contribute positively to the site's ecological value.

2. Existing Site Conditions

The site comprises a detached residential bungalow on a plot of approximately 321 m². The existing house footprint is around 101 m², with the proposed extension adding some 5.6 m² to the rear of the garage.

Front Garden

- Surface: block paving driveway, concrete paths and gravel elsewhere with scattered ornamental shrubs.
- No natural habitats of significance.

Rear Garden

- Predominantly artificial grass with a small number of shrubs.
- No ponds, hedgerows, or semi-natural habitat features.
- The area of works (rear of the garage) consists of amenity garden space of low ecological value.

Wildlife Observations

- No notable or protected species have been observed on-site by the applicant.
- Surrounding area is a typical residential neighbourhood with low ecological sensitivity.

Survey Status

- No ecological surveys have been undertaken, as the scale, nature, and location of the works do not reasonably trigger specialist assessment.

3. Description of Proposed Development

The proposal includes:

- A small rear extension to the existing garage (5.6 m²).
- Conversion of the entire garage into a home office with a WC / shower room.

Extent of disturbance:

- Limited to the immediate rear garden area where the extension footprint and drainage works will take place. Slight ground disturbance at abutment between driveway and garage front elevation.
- No disturbance to the front garden or wider grounds.
- No trees or significant vegetation will be removed.

Given the limited scope, the development presents negligible ecological risk.

4. Potential Impacts on Existing Biodiversity

Although the site currently supports minimal onsite habitat, the following potential impacts are acknowledged:

- Localised soil disturbance in a small section of the rear garden.
- Temporary construction noise and activity that may minimally affect common garden birds or invertebrates.

These impacts are minor, short-term, and confined to low-value habitat.

5. Biodiversity Protection Measures

To ensure the protection of any incidental wildlife:

- Works will avoid unnecessary disturbance outside the immediate extension area.
- Any existing shrubs that may need trimming will be handled outside the primary bird nesting season (March–August), or checked beforehand by a competent person.
- Construction materials will be stored responsibly to avoid creating hazards for small animals.
- External lighting associated with the office conversion will, where possible, be downward-facing and low-luminosity to minimise disturbance to any nocturnal wildlife such as bats and moths.

6. Biodiversity Enhancements Proposed

Despite the very small scale of the development, several meaningful, proportionate enhancements may be considered for implementation to increase the site's ecological value:

6.1 Integrated Bee Bricks

- **Bee brick** incorporation into an external wall of the garage/office or existing house elevation.
- Placed at an appropriate height and free of obstruction.

6.2 Bird Nesting Box

- **One bird nesting box** suitable for small garden species (e.g., robin, blue tit, great tit) could be installed in a quiet portion of the garden.
- Suggest mounting 2–4 m high and facing between north and east to avoid overheating.

6.3 Invertebrate and Small Wildlife Habitat

- A small **log pile or stacked deadwood feature** could be created in an unused corner of the rear garden.
- Purpose to provide microhabitats for beetles, solitary bees, other invertebrates, and shelter for amphibians or hedgehogs if present.

7. Long-Term Management and Maintenance

To ensure enhancements continue to deliver ecological benefit:

- Bird boxes checked annually and cleaned outside nesting/breeding seasons.
- The bee brick requires no maintenance.
- Shrubs and ornamental planting will be maintained in a way that avoids excessive pruning in peak nesting periods.
- If future planting is undertaken, native or wildlife-friendly species will be favoured, and the use of pesticides and herbicides will be minimised.

8. Summary and Conclusion

This minor residential scheme will result in no loss of significant habitat and minimal ecological impact. The suggested enhancement options: bee brick, bird box, and log pile represent a clear net improvement in the quality and diversity of wildlife opportunities on the site.

The measures are practical, proportionate to the scale of the works, and fully aligned with Arun District Council's expectations for small residential developments. They will contribute meaningfully to local biodiversity at a scale appropriate to the nature of the proposal.