

BIODIVERSITY STATEMENT

Proposal : Side Extension and Loft Conversion
at

Address : 5, The Holt, Haywards Heath,
RH16 4XR



1. Introduction

This Biodiversity Statement outlines the ecological considerations and measures taken in the design and construction of the proposed extensions and loft conversion at 5, The Holt, Haywards Heath, RH16 4XR. The property is a semi-detached house located adjacent to a forest, which adds significant ecological value to the surrounding area. The proposal includes the following works:

- Front extension (Ground Floor) to extend the existing garage.
- Side extension (First Floor) over the existing garage and room.
- Hip-to-gable loft conversion with dormers and a Juliet balcony.

The aim of this statement is to demonstrate the consideration of local biodiversity, address potential impacts, and outline mitigation strategies to minimize any adverse effects on the environment during construction and occupation.

2. Existing Site Conditions

The property is situated within a semi-urban environment, with the front of the house facing a forested area. The surrounding area includes a mix of residential housing and natural woodland, which supports local wildlife species. The current site consists of an established lawn, shrubs, and trees along the boundary, which offer habitat for small mammals, birds, and insects.

The adjacent forest contributes to the biodiversity of the area, providing important habitats for a variety of species, particularly birds, insects, and small mammals. As such, any development in this area should consider the potential impact on these habitats.

3. Potential Impacts on Biodiversity

The proposed development will involve some alteration of the site's current landscape. The construction of the front extension, side extension, and loft conversion may result in the following potential impacts on biodiversity:

1. **Habitat Loss:** The removal or alteration of existing vegetation or landscaping elements could affect local wildlife.
2. **Disturbance to Wildlife:** Noise and movement from construction activities could disturb local species, particularly birds and small mammals that may be nesting or foraging in the area.
3. **Increased Runoff:** Increased hard surfaces from the extensions may affect drainage patterns, leading to potential runoff into nearby natural habitats.

4. Mitigation Measures

To minimize the impact of the development on local biodiversity, the following mitigation measures will be implemented:

4.1 Preservation of Green Spaces:

- Existing trees, shrubs, and landscaping will be preserved wherever possible. Any removal of plants or vegetation will be minimized, and replacement planting will be undertaken to maintain green cover around the property.

- New landscaping will be designed if required to incorporate native plants that provide food and shelter for local wildlife, with an emphasis on nectar-rich flowers to support pollinators, such as bees and butterflies.

4.2 Wildlife-Friendly Construction:

- The construction phase will include measures to reduce disturbance to wildlife, particularly during the breeding seasons of birds (spring and early summer). Works will be scheduled to avoid this period if possible.
- If vegetation removal is required, it will be carried out outside of the bird breeding season (March to August) to avoid disturbing nesting birds.

4.3 Sustainable Drainage Solutions:

- The design will incorporate sustainable drainage systems (SuDS), such as permeable surfaces for parking areas, to minimize the risk of increased runoff and reduce the impact on surrounding natural habitats.
- Roof extensions, including the proposed dormers, will feature rainwater harvesting systems where feasible, further reducing surface runoff.

4.4 Bat and Bird Protection:

- As the property is located near a wooded area, there is the potential for bat and bird species to inhabit the area. To support local populations, bird and bat boxes will be installed on the property, especially in the new loft space, which may offer suitable roosting opportunities.
- In addition, the creation of a Juliet balcony in the front dormer will consider the potential for nesting birds. The design will include protective measures to prevent birds from nesting in inappropriate areas.

4.5 Habitat Connectivity:

- The proposal will ensure that any developments do not obstruct the movement of wildlife between the forest and other green spaces. For example, any fencing or hard landscaping will be designed with gaps or permeable materials to allow small mammals, insects, and other species to move freely.

5. Conclusion

The proposed extension and loft conversion at 5, The Holt, Haywards Heath, RH16 4XR have been designed with careful consideration of local biodiversity. By implementing the outlined mitigation measures, the development aims to minimize adverse environmental impacts and contribute positively to the surrounding natural habitat. The proposed additions will integrate seamlessly with the existing property while enhancing the ecological value of the site, ensuring that the local wildlife continues to thrive in the vicinity.