

Several House, Several Road, Bepton, Midhurst, West Sussex, GU29 0LX

ECOSYSTEMS SERVICES STATEMENT

Doc No: 670-601

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Status: **Planning Application Issue**

Introduction

This Ecosystem Services Statement is provided in support of the Planning Application for the proposed garden room extension to Several House, Several Road, Bepton, Midhurst, West Sussex, GU29 0LX

Land Management

The site occupies a rural setting bounded by a mixture of boundary treatments, with woodland surrounding the dwelling. This creates habitats for a number of different species. The land is managed in a way that viably maintains the biodiversity, which in turn maintains the air and soil quality and balances the natural ecosystem.

Policy SD2 Criterion

- A) Sustainably manage land and water environments.
- B) Protect and provide more, better and joined up natural habitats.
- E) Improve the National Park's resilience to, and mitigation of, climate change.
- G) Conserve and enhance soils.
- H) Support the sustainable production and use of food, forestry and raw materials.
- I) Reduce levels of pollution

Pre-Construction/Demolition

During the works, all on-site contractors must be made aware of the potential presence of wildlife in the locality and a tool box talk should be given by a qualified person immediately prior to the start of works to discuss the potential wildlife to pass through the site and to provide information on legislation and the ecology of that species.

During Construction

Trenches should be covered at night to prevent wildlife from falling in. All trenches and ditches should be inspected before the start of works in the morning and after each break.

Reptiles - In order to prevent any impact on reptiles that may be present within the development boundary, any clearance works involving the removal or movement of roots, logs or rock should be done during the active period for this species group. Surface vegetation that needs to be cleared should be removed in phases. Initially being trimmed to a height of 20cm and then to ground level on the subsequent day. The regrowth should not be allowed to develop, ensuring that the area is not recolonised by any reptiles in the area, before the development is complete.

Birds - The contractors will remain vigilant throughout the works and any breeding or nesting Bird behaviour observed or suspected on site should be reported immediately to the project ecologist. All works must cease until advice has been sought from the ecologist. The ecologist may need to re-visit the site to inspect the nest and in the event that an active nest is confirmed, an exclusion zone around the nest would be established. Works would have to cease within this buffer area until the young birds have fledged.

Bats – Currently, there is no evidence of bat/roosting activity within this building. Although, due to its construction, there are potential opportunities for bats to roost. Should bats be subsequently discovered then work must stop, until a suitably qualified ecologist is called to attend and oversee the continuing works, albeit a European Protected Species Mitigation Licence will be required.

Post Construction - Habitat Enhancement and Management

New development offers the opportunity for habitat enhancement in accordance with national and local planning policy. Specific wildlife habitat enhancement measures and maintenance practices are;

Bat Boxes - The redevelopment offers an opportunity to create bat roost features in the form of bat boxes. It is suggested that one bat box will be installed on the site. The box should be installed at an appropriate location in a sheltered position with partial sun, and generally with south-east, south, or south-west facing aspect. They should be installed at least 3-6m above ground level. Once installed, it is recommended the boxes are inspected annually by a licensed ecologist outside the hibernation period (September – March) for evidence of usage by bats.

Bird Boxes - As a measure to enhance the biodiversity value of the site, additional breeding bird provision shall be installed on the walls of the new building or in the remaining trees. Bird boxes should be installed under the eaves of the building at appropriate locations, generally facing north-east or north-west, with the box entrance being sheltered from prevailing wind, rain and away from direct sunlight, and at least 2m from ground level. Once installed the boxes should be inspected annually outside of the main nesting bird season (September – February) for evidence of nesting birds.

Log Piles - It is recommended that log piles are included in the site to provide habitat for reptiles. The log piles should be constructed from neatly stacked cord wood, locally sourced where possible, and stacked approximately 1m in height, either in a pyramidal/cuboid shape (bound with wire to prevent them breaking apart over time) or stacked against a semi-mature/mature tree trunk. Arisings from any felled trees within the site could be used to construct the log piles. Dead wood also supports a diverse invertebrate fauna; a food source for reptiles. These should be maintained and repaired as necessary as part of the long-term management at the site.

Existing Buildings

In extending the existing dwelling, the applicants will be able to meet their requirements without the need to contemplate moving or replacing the building in order to meet these needs. The proposal safeguards the continued use of the building and thus mitigating the increases in pollution, potential for flooding and, on a broader spectrum, climate change that an additional dwelling would create.

Policy SD2 Criterion

- A) Sustainably manage land and water environments.
- D) Protect and provide more, better and joined up natural habitats.
- E) Improve the National Park's resilience to, and mitigation of, climate change.
- I) Reduce levels of pollution.
- J) Improve opportunities for peoples' health and wellbeing.
- K) Provide opportunities for access to the natural and cultural resources which contribute to the special qualities.

Proposal

Conversion of the existing buildings offers an opportunity to upgrade these spaces to become more environmentally conscious. Current building regulation's documentation will require the building to be thermally upgraded, thus reducing the potential carbon impact of the building along with ensuring better human comfort levels for the users. This will bring the building in line with new build building without creating the additional waste of demolition to achieve this efficiency. This in turn will prevent large amounts of construction waste leaving the site and going to landfill. Additionally, energy efficient systems, including LED lighting etc, will further reduce the impact on the environment and reduce pollution level both directly and indirectly.

Maintenance – Long Term

The site owner shall be responsible for ensuring the proposed habitat enhancement measures, their management and maintenance should be undertaken by the client or their appointed contractors.

All plants and vegetation will need to be maintained according to their individual requirements. However, shrubs should not be cut during the bird breeding season. Lower growing grasses and plants should be cut carefully in a controlled phased clearance if done during the active reptile period in order to enable wildlife to escape unharmed.

Waste - Any waste generated will be disposed of in accordance with current legislation. The waste will be segregated as required and stored in suitable containers. All waste removed off site will have an appropriate Transfer Note, or Consignment Note, as required.

Where possible the waste hierarchy will be followed:

- Waste prevention.
- Reuse.
- Recycle/composting
- Disposal.

During the ongoing maintenance of the site, vegetative waste will be generated, primarily from grass cuttings and shrub/plant pruning. The vegetative waste will be composted where possible, although if there are diseased plants then these will be removed from site, and not composted, where appropriate

Water Management

Effective water management will allow for supporting the natural water cycle and soil improvement. In turn this reduces the need for additional drainage, which could become overwhelmed in heavy rainfall causing flash flooding.

Water butts - The positions of the existing rainwater downpipes and associated below ground stormwater drainage runs shall be retained, along with addition of appropriately positioned water butts. This will serve to minimise the water required by the site, as well as slowing the water entering the landscape.

Rainwater discharge - Where rainwater cannot be collected in water butts, it shall discharge into below ground soakaways which, again serving to slow down the water flow into the environment and ensure it is locally available for vegetation on site.

Permeable Surfaces - It is suggested that where possible, permeable external surfaces shall be used to reduce flood risk and slow water flow into the environment, whilst also ensuring it is available to plants in the vicinity.

Policy SD2 Criterion

- A) Sustainably manage land and water environments.
- C) Conserve water resources and improve water quality.
- D) Manage and mitigate the risk of flooding.

Access to the Countryside

Located within the SDNP, the site has access, although not through the site, to a number of public footpaths and bridleways. These enable direct access to the National Park, aiding in enrichment for the residents, promoting a healthy living and providing access to recreation space, generally benefitting overall sense of wellbeing for the occupants.

Policy SD2 Criterion

- J) Improve opportunities for peoples' health and wellbeing.
- K) Provide opportunities for access to the natural and cultural resources which contribute to the special qualities.

Access to Cultural Resources

Situated close to the A272, the site is within close proximity to a number of culturally enriched destinations. These destinations include Midhurst, Petersfield and Chichester, each offering an eclectic mix of cultural assets. Within closer proximity to the site, there are several cultural and historical assets which contribute to the special quality of the area. Namely, Midhurst Conservation Area, Stedham Conservation Area and a number of Listed and locally listed buildings. Further away, the Roman road from Chichester and Ilchester.

Policy SD2 Criterion

J) Improve opportunities for peoples' health and wellbeing.

K) Provide opportunities for access to the natural and cultural resources which contribute to the special qualities.

Conclusion

The extension and alteration of The Sorrells will have little discernible change to its surroundings. The design will provide high aesthetic qualities and sits harmoniously within its context. Access to the National Park and wider countryside are within close proximity to the site, leading to a high standard of living and general wellbeing.

Benjamin Hume RIBA | ARB | Architect

For & on behalf of Pullen Architecture

20th May 2022