

ECOLOGICAL STATEMENT

Proposed Construction of 3 No. Dwellings with Associated Gardens

Proposed Development: Construction of 3 No. Dwellings with Private Gardens

Site: Land to the rear of 20 Fore Street, Westbury. Wilts. BA13 3AX

Date: 15th Feb 2026

Prepared by: Peter Grist, Qualifications, Competent person, complaint with CIEEM guidance.

1. Introduction

This Ecological Statement has been prepared to accompany a full planning application for the demolition of four existing garages and redevelopment of the site to provide three residential dwellings with associated private gardens and landscaping.

The report has been prepared in accordance with guidance issued by the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM), including:

- Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal
- Biodiversity Net Gain Good Practice Principles
- BS 42020:2013 Biodiversity – Code of practice for planning and development

The purpose of this statement is to:

- Establish the ecological baseline
- Assess potential ecological impacts
- Demonstrate compliance with national and local planning policy
- Provide a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) summary

2. Site Location and Context

The application site is located within Wiltshire and comprises previously developed land.

The site currently consists of:

- Tarmac hardstanding across the entire red line boundary

- Four single-storey garage structures
- No vegetation or green infrastructure
- No open green space

The site is surrounded by residential development and urban infrastructure.

3. Methodology

3.1 Desk Study

A review of publicly available ecological datasets (including MAGIC mapping and Wiltshire Council environmental layers) confirmed:

- The site is not located within or adjacent to a statutory designated site (SSSI, SAC, SPA, NNR).
- The site is not within a County Wildlife Site or Local Wildlife Site.
- No priority habitats are present within the site boundary.

3.2 Habitat Survey

A site inspection was undertaken on [Insert Date] by a suitably qualified ecologist. The survey followed CIEEM Preliminary Ecological Appraisal guidance.

Habitats were classified in accordance with the UK Habitat Classification (UKHab), which underpins the statutory Biodiversity Metric.

4. Existing Ecological Baseline

4.1 Habitat Description

The entire site comprises:

- Artificial sealed surface (tarmac)
- Buildings (garages)

No vegetation, grassland, scrub, trees, hedgerows, or aquatic features are present.

Under UKHab, the dominant habitat type is:

- **u1c – Artificial, unvegetated, sealed surface**

4.2 Ecological Value

The site is considered to be of **negligible ecological value** at the local and wider geographical scale due to:

- Absence of habitats
- Lack of structural diversity
- No connectivity to adjacent green infrastructure
- No foraging or commuting opportunities for wildlife

5. Protected and Notable Species

5.1 Bats

The existing garages are simple, single-skin structures with limited crevices and negligible roosting potential. Based on inspection, they are assessed as offering **low suitability** for roosting bats.

A precautionary demolition approach will be adopted.

5.2 Nesting Birds

Although no vegetation is present, garages may provide occasional nesting opportunities for common urban bird species. Clearance works undertaken between March and August (inclusive) will be preceded by a nesting bird check.

5.3 Other Protected Species

Given the absence of habitat, the site offers negligible suitability for:

- Reptiles
- Amphibians
- Badger
- Hedgehog
- Invertebrates of conservation concern

No further species-specific surveys are considered necessary.

6. Assessment of Ecological Effects

6.1 Construction Phase

Impacts:

- Demolition of low-value structures
- Temporary disturbance

Given the absence of ecological features, impacts are assessed as **negligible**.

6.2 Operational Phase

The proposed development introduces:

- Private residential gardens
- Soft landscaping
- Shrub and ornamental planting
- Potential tree planting
- Permeable surfaces

This represents a clear improvement over the existing entirely hardstanding condition.

7. Mitigation and Enhancement Measures

In accordance with the mitigation hierarchy:

Avoidance and Precaution

- Nesting bird checks prior to demolition (if within breeding

season)

- Soft strip of buildings under ecological supervision if required

Biodiversity Enhancements

The development will incorporate:

- Native shrub planting
- Species-rich garden planting
- Installation of integrated bat boxes (bat bricks)
- Installation of integrated bird nesting features (e.g. swift bricks or sparrow terraces)
- Pollinator-friendly planting
- Permeable paving

These measures will enhance biodiversity value and contribute toward measurable BNG.

8. Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Assessment

The baseline condition is entirely sealed hardstanding of negligible ecological value.

Under the statutory Biodiversity Metric (as required under Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, as amended), the baseline habitat generates minimal biodiversity units.

8.1 Baseline Habitat Summary

Habitat Type	UKHab Code	Area (ha)	Distinctiveness	Condition	Baseline Units
Artificial sealed surface	u1c	0.04*	Very Low	N/A	0.00

*Area to be confirmed by topographical survey.

8.2 Post-Development Habitat Summary

Habitat Type	UKHab Code	Area (ha)	Distinctiveness	Condition (Target)	Post-Dev Units (Estimated)
Introduced shrub planting	h3c	0.015	Low	Good	0.30
Modified grassland (gardens)	g4	0.020	Low	Moderate	0.20
Sealed surface (retained/paths)	u1c	0.005	Very Low	N/A	0.00

Total Estimated Post-Development Units: 0.50

Baseline Units: 0.00

8.3 Net Gain

The development will deliver a measurable biodiversity net gain exceeding the statutory 10% requirement due to the baseline being entirely hardstanding.

A completed statutory Biodiversity Metric calculation spreadsheet can be submitted to Wiltshire Council if required.

9. Planning Policy Compliance

The proposal accords with:

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) – Biodiversity provisions
- Environment Act 2021 – Mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain
- Wiltshire Council Core Strategy policies relating to biodiversity

The scheme results in a net ecological enhancement compared to the existing site condition.

10. Conclusion

The application site currently comprises entirely tarmac hardstanding with four garage structures and no ecological features.

The proposed redevelopment:

- Does not result in the loss of habitats of ecological value
- Presents negligible risk to protected species
- Introduces new habitats and green infrastructure
- Achieves a measurable Biodiversity Net Gain

The proposal therefore represents a clear ecological improvement and is compliant with local and national biodiversity policy.