

Biodiversity Statement

Site: Seabrae, 3 Argyll Terrace, Tobermory, Isle of Mull, Argyll & Bute, PA75 6PB

Planning Reference: 24/01466/DOC01

Condition 4: Biodiversity Statement

Prepared for: Argyll and Bute Council

Date: 26/09/25

1. Introduction

This Biodiversity Statement has been prepared to discharge Condition 4 of planning approval 24/01466/DOC01 for works at Seabrae, 3 Argyll Terrace, Tobermory, Isle of Mull.

The purpose of this report is to demonstrate how the proposed development will incorporate biodiversity enhancement measures consistent with Policy 3(c) of National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) and associated NatureScot guidance, ensuring that the project delivers positive effects for biodiversity.

This Biodiversity Statement demonstrates positive effects for biodiversity in line with NPF4 Policy 3(c) and follows NatureScot's Developing with Nature guidance for local development.

2. Site Description and Baseline

2.1 Location and Setting

The site is a small residential property located within Tobermory, on the Isle of Mull, part of the Argyll and Bute Council area. It sits within a coastal settlement characterised by traditional stone buildings, steeply sloping gardens, and proximity to both marine and terrestrial habitats, including the Sound of Mull.

- OS Grid Reference: NM 504 553
- Site Area: Approx. 233 sqm
- Nearby Environmental Designations:
 - Sound of Mull Marine Spatial Plan – approx. 100m to the east
 - Loch Sunart to Sound of Jura Marine Protected Area (MPA) – approx. 100 m to the east.

No statutory nature conservation designations are within the site boundary.

2.2 Existing Habitats

A site walkover on 25 September 2025 identified the following:

- Gravel covered back garden (low ecological value)
- Stone boundary wall (invertebrate habitat) on the south boundary; timber fence on the north boundary

No mature trees or semi-natural habitats were recorded. Connectivity to wider ecological networks exists via adjacent gardens.

2.3 Protected and Priority Species

Data from NatureScot, NBN Atlas, and local biodiversity records indicate potential presence of:

- Bats – common and soprano pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*, *P. pygmaeus*) foraging along coastal fringe.
- Breeding birds – house sparrow (*Passer domesticus*), starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*), swallow (*Hirundo rustica*).
- Pollinators – bumblebees and hoverflies associated with flowering plants.

No evidence of roosting bats or nesting birds was recorded on site.

3. Potential Impacts

The proposed development involves minor residential works, including landscaping changes and bringing back an existing Bothy into residential use.

Potential ecological impacts are limited due to the low baseline biodiversity value but include:

- Potential temporary disturbance to birds during construction.
- Lighting impacts on foraging bats.
- Opportunities for net biodiversity gains through enhancement measures.

4. Proposed Biodiversity Enhancement Measures

These measures are designed to ensure a net positive effect for biodiversity and are proportionate to the scale of development.

4.1 Habitat Creation

- Creation of a pollinator-friendly planting scheme using native, coastal-tolerant species such as *Thymus polytrichus*, *Silene uniflora*, and *Filipendula ulmaria*.
- Peat-free local compost and sustainable soil management.
- A wildflower strip/planters to provide nectar from spring to autumn.

4.2 Nesting and Roosting Features

- An integrated bird and/or bat box was considered but there is not sufficient height available on a suitable elevation of the bothy (3–5 m height, north or east aspect).

4.3 Sustainable Garden Management

- Insertion of planting beds.
- Avoidance of pesticides and herbicides.
- Retention and repair of stone wall as wildlife corridors using lime mortar.
- Permeability of fencing to enable wildlife corridors

4.4 Lighting

- All new external lighting will comply with ILP GN08/23 principles — warm white spectrum, downward-facing, low-spill, PIR timers — to avoid disturbance to bats and nocturnal species.

5. Quantified Biodiversity Enhancement Schedule

Measure	Specification	Quantity / Area	Installation	Maintenance (5 yrs)
Pollinator bed	Native, coastal-tolerant mix; peat-free soil	$\geq 6 \text{ m}^2$	Post-build	Annual autumn cut
Wildflower strip	Extended flowering mix; peat-free	$\geq 3 \text{ m}^2$	Post-build	Annual autumn cut
Stone wall retention	Lime mortar repairs where required	n/a	During build	Retain plant pockets selectively

7. Compliance with NPF4 Policy 3(c)

Requirement	Response
Enhance biodiversity	Creation of pollinator habitats
Strengthen ecological networks	Linking planting to neighbouring gardens and wildlife corridors
Support climate resilience	Drought-tolerant planting, peat-free soils, low-carbon management

This package represents a practical and proportionate response for a small householder-scale project, delivering tangible biodiversity benefits in line with NPF4 Policy 3(c).

8. Conclusion

The proposed development will have no significant adverse effects on biodiversity. Through the delivery of these measures, the project will achieve a net positive outcome, supporting local species and ecological resilience.

This statement therefore satisfies the requirements of Condition 3 under NPF4 Policy 3(c) and NatureScot's biodiversity enhancement guidance.

References

- Scottish Government (2023). *National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4)*. Policy 3: Biodiversity. [NPF4 Guidance](#)
- NatureScot (2024). *Developing with Nature Guidance for Local Development*. [NatureScot Resource](#)
- Institution of Lighting Professionals (2023). *Guidance Note 08/23: Bats and Artificial Lighting at Night*.

- Argyll & Bute Council (2017). *Biodiversity Technical Note for Planners and Developers*. https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2025-01/biodiversity_technical_note_feb_2017_4.pdf
- Argyll & Bute Council (2025). *Biodiversity Webpage*. <https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/environment/countryside/biodiversity>
- Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended, Scotland).