



Date: 17 December 2025

Our ref: 11639

Stefan Galyas
Mid Sussex District Council
Oaklands Road
Haywards Heath
West Sussex
RH16 1SS

By email only: Planning Department, planninginfo@midsussex.gov.uk

Thank you for requesting advice on this application from Place Services' ecological advice service. This service provides advice to planning officers to inform Mid Sussex District Council planning decisions with regard to potential ecological impacts from development. Any additional information, queries or comments on this advice that the applicant or other interested parties may have, must be directed to the Planning Officer who will seek further advice from us where appropriate and necessary.

Application: DM/25/1185
Location: Tennis Courts At St Francis Sports And Social Club Colwell Road Haywards Heath West Sussex
Proposal: Temporary (36 months) permission for change of use of existing tennis courts to padel courts and associated works (Further acoustic and lighting information received 04.11.2025 and plans 7.11.2025 and 11.11.2025)

Thank you for consulting Place Services on the above application.

No ecological objection	☐
No ecological objection subject to attached conditions	☒
Further information required/Temporary holding objection	☐
Recommend Refusal	☐
Subject to Natural England's formal comments on the conclusion of the LPA's Appropriate Assessment	☐

Summary

We have reviewed the submitted documents for this application and note no ecological information has been provided. As a result, we have conducted a desk study to confirm the likely impacts upon designated sites, protected and Priority species & habitats. This includes a review of local records, Magic Maps and aerial imagery.

The desk study confirmed that the site is within 30m from ancient woodland, which is classified as an irreplaceable habitat. However, it is considered unlikely that the change of use will result in any direct impacts upon the protected / Priority habitat. However, the proposals could result in direct impacts upon bats (European Protected Species) which likely occupy the ancient woodland.

As a result, whilst we do not object to the proposed change of use, we recommend that the submitted lighting scheme is not supported until a detailed Wildlife Sensitive Lighting Strategy is submitted and approved to the LPA. Therefore, technical specification should be submitted prior to beneficial use, which demonstrates measures to avoid lighting impacts to foraging / commuting bats, which are likely to be present within the local area. This should summarise the following measures recommended by Guidance Note:08/23 (Institute of Lighting Professionals) will be implemented:

- Lux contour plan for the proposed lighting, including the following:
 - Clear show contours (and/or coloured numbers) for 0.2, 0.5, 1, 5, and 10 lux, as well as appropriate contours for values above
 - A table showing minimum and maximum illuminance/lux values.
 - Lux levels recorded at ground level, as well as ideally 1 – 2m, to account for impacts upon foraging and commuting bats.
 - A calculation showing output of luminaires is expected at 'Day 1' of operation should be included, where the luminaire and/or scheme Maintenance Factor is set to 1.
 - An explanatory note on whether any impacts from glare will likely to be present.
 - Evidence that no lux levels will be recorded on the ancient woodland and that lighting has been minimised on the southern boundary of the site.
- All luminaires should lack UV elements when manufactured. Metal halide, compact fluorescent sources should not be used
- LED luminaires should be used where possible due to their sharp cut-off, lower intensity, good colour rendition and dimming capability
- Luminaires should be mounted horizontally, with no light output above 90° and/or no upward tilt.
- Baffles, hoods or louvres could also be used to further reduce light spill and direct it only to where it is needed.
- Further Lighting restrictions could be considered to ensure that lighting is not operational throughout the majority of the night.

We do not expect any designated sites or any other protected or Priority species to be present and affected by the proposals. As a result, we are satisfied that the LPA can recommend determination of this application, subject to a Wildlife Sensitive Lighting Strategy being secured as a condition of any consent.

With regard to mandatory biodiversity net gains, it is highlighted that we have reviewed the submitted application form. Applications are required to deliver a mandatory 10% measurable biodiversity net gain, unless exempt under paragraph 17 of Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and the Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Exemptions) Regulations 2024. Therefore, we are satisfied that the submitted documents provides sufficient information that the development meets the de-minimis exemption. As a result, we are satisfied that the development is exempt from the statutory requirement of mandatory biodiversity net gains.

This will enable LPA to demonstrate its compliance with its statutory duties including its biodiversity duty under s40 NERC Act 2006 (as amended).

Impacts will be minimised such that the proposal is acceptable, subject to the conditions below based on BS42020:2013. We recommend that submission for approval and implementation of the details below should be a condition of any planning consent.

Recommended conditions

1. PRIOR TO OCCUPATION: WILDLIFE SENSITIVE LIGHTING DESIGN SCHEME

“Prior to occupation, a “lighting design strategy for biodiversity” in accordance with Guidance Note 08/23 (Institute of Lighting Professionals) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The strategy shall:

- a) identify those areas/features on site that are particularly sensitive for bats and that are likely to cause disturbance in or around their breeding sites and resting places or along important routes used to access key areas of their territory, for example, for foraging; and*
- b) show how and where external lighting will be installed (through provision of appropriate lighting contour plans and technical specifications) so that it can be clearly demonstrated that areas to be lit will not disturb or prevent the above species using their territory or having access to their breeding sites and resting places.*

All external lighting shall be installed in accordance with the specifications and locations set out in the scheme and maintained thereafter in accordance with the scheme. Under no circumstances should any other external lighting be installed without prior consent from the local planning authority.”

Reason: To allow the LPA to discharge its duties under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and s40 of the NERC Act 2006 (as amended).

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any queries in relation to this advice.

Yours sincerely,

Hamish Jackson ACIEEM BSc (Hons)
Senior Ecological Consultant
 Place Services at Essex County Council



Place Services provide ecological advice on behalf of Mid Sussex District Council.

Please note: This letter is advisory and should only be considered as the opinion formed by specialist staff in relation to this particular matter.