



Date: 8 August 2025

Our ref: 06136

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Haywards Heath
West Sussex
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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/25/1354
Location: Land North Of 24 Oak Hall Park Burgess Hill West Sussex RH15 0BX
Proposal: Proposed 1 bed, two-person semi-detached dwelling.

Thank you for consulting Place Services on the above full planning 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 and note no ecological information has been provided. As a result, we have conducted a desk study to determine the likely impacts of the development upon designated sites, protected and Priority species & habitats. This included a review of local records, Magic map and aerial imagery.

The desk study confirmed that the site does not contain Priority habitat, nor will the proposals impact upon any designated sites. In addition, as the site contains shingle and artificial grass, the proposals are not likely to impact upon protected or Priority habitats.

With regard to mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain, we have reviewed the submitted Small Sites Metric – Calculation Tool and Habitat Map of the pre-development baseline.

There are number of inconsistencies with the Small Sites Metric – Calculation Tool and habitat map pre-development baseline. This includes the following measures which would typically be considered at application stage:

- Bareground has been recorded within the baseline, when the habitat map states the site contains shingle and artificial grass.
- The habitat map does clearly relate to any defined habitat type within the submitted metric. Therefore, it is difficult to compare the submitted information.
- The area within the metric (117m²) does not match the application form area (87m²).

There are also a number of inconsistencies with the Small Sites Metric – Calculation Tool for the post intervention values, which would typically have to be addressed as part of the biodiversity gain condition:

- The area of habitat creation must match area lost.
- Habitats are proposed to be enhanced in a private garden, including 'Bareground'. As a result, the proposals should state that either 'Vegetated garden' or 'Unvegetated garden' is proposed. In line with the Small Sites Metric – User Guide, no other habitat types should be proposed in private gardens, including individual trees.

Nevertheless, on consideration of the submitted information we actually consider that this application is exempt from mandatory biodiversity net gains under The Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Exemptions) Regulations 2024. This is because we consider that the baseline can be classified as 'developed land; sealed surface' and 'unvegetated garden', which results in the pre-development baseline containing a score of '0' units. As a result, the de-minimis exemption would apply in this instance and no further mandatory BNG considerations is required.

Nevertheless, we still recommend the LPA secures reasonable biodiversity enhancements for protected, Priority and threatened species, which have been recommended to secure net gains for biodiversity, as outlined under Paragraph 187d of the National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024). The reasonable biodiversity enhancement measures should be outlined within a separate Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy and should be secured by a condition of any consent and include the submission of bird or bat boxes.

As a result, we are satisfied that sufficient ecological information is available for determination of this application.

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

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 ANY WORKS ABOVE SLAB LEVEL: BIODIVERSITY ENHANCEMENT STRATEGY

"Prior to any works above slab level, a Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy for protected, Priority and threatened species, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.

The content of the Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy shall include the following:

- a) Purpose and conservation objectives for the proposed enhancement measures;*
- b) detailed designs or product descriptions to achieve stated objectives;*
- c) locations of proposed enhancement measures by appropriate maps and plans (where relevant);*

The works shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details shall be retained in that manner thereafter."

Reason: To enhance protected, Priority and threatened species and allow the LPA to discharge its duties under paragraph 187d of NPPF 2024 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,

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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.