



Date: 9 May 2025

Our ref: 03565

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Mid Sussex District Council
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By email only: Planning Department, planninginfo@midsussex.gov.uk

Thank you for requesting advice on this discharge of condition 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/25/0387
Location: Homebase 219 - 225 London Road East Grinstead West Sussex
Proposal: Discharge of condition BNG1 relating to planning application DM/24/0981

Thank you for consulting Place Services on the above discharge of condition application. We can only comment on conditions related to ecology.

Conditions

Condition BNG 1:

"This permission is considered to be one which will require the approval of a biodiversity gain plan before development is begun (which includes demolition) because none of the statutory exemptions or transitional arrangements are considered to apply"

Comments

We have reviewed the Statutory Biodiversity Metric – Calculation Tool, the Biodiversity Net Gain Statement & Assessment V1.2 (Biodiverse Consulting Ltd, February 2025) and Biodiversity Gain Plan and Cover Letter.

We are satisfied that the submitted information includes the detail required by this condition.

The on-site enhancements are realistic and deliverable and reflect the site layout for the application. We note that Urban trees have been recorded as being 'formally identified in a local strategy', due to policy DP37: Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows in the adopted District Plan. We have no objection to the use of strategic significance being used in this manner but suggest that LPA should determine whether it also supports this approach, as it does result in an increase of 0.03 habitat units.

To address the shortfall in units, the applicant has secured 0.02 (rounded up from 0.19) habitat units of Lowland Meadow from Ardingly Habitat Bank (ref. BGS-281024001), which has been set out on the biodiversity gain site register. This ensures a total net change of 23.41% in habitat units, which is greater than the 10% minimum mandatory biodiversity net gain requirement. An increase of 19.04% would be caused if the LPA does not accept the proposed strategic significance values for the on-site urban tree creation.

The LPA has confirmed that they do not consider the habitat creation on-site to consist of significant on-site enhancements. Therefore, whilst the delivery of the proposed landscaping should be implemented by the applicant, there will be no legal requirement for the LPA to monitor the on-site enhancements for the 30 year period from the completion of development.

Recommendation

Subject to implementation in full of the submitted details, we recommend discharge of the statutory biodiversity gain condition. However, the LPA should confirm whether the support the strategic significance proposals for 'urban trees' before the discharge of the condition.

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

Yours sincerely,

Hamish Jackson ACIEEM BSc (Hons)

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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.