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West Sussex
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Our ref: 16137
Date: 18 May 2026

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.

Application: DM/26/0696
Location: Adastra Park Keymer Road Hassocks West Sussex
Proposal: Construction of a two lane cricket net structure measuring approximately up to 35 metres in length and 9.3 metres in width and up to 4 metres in height

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 documents supplied by the applicant and note information has been submitted in relation to ecology, other than that for Biodiversity Net Gain.

We have also reviewed the information submitted relating to mandatory biodiversity net gains, including the Statutory Biodiversity Metric – Calculation Tool, Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment V1 (Phlorum Limited, February 2026), Offsite Baseline Condition Assessments,

Offsite Post-Development Condition Assessments and Onsite Baseline Condition Assessments.

We understand from the Design & Access Statement (submitted March 2026) that there are no buildings or trees on site and that no additional lighting is required for this scheme. As a result, we are satisfied that there is sufficient ecological information available to support determination of this application, as potential impacts upon designated sites, protected and Priority habitats and species are unlikely to be caused by the potential development.

We note that the proposed cricket nets will be 35 metres in length, 9.3 metres in width and up to 4 metres in height. As a result, it is indicated that there is limited evidence relating to the impacts of cricket netting upon wildlife, albeit the majority of the issues typically relate to mammals getting tangled at the base of netting. However, we are satisfied that impacts can be avoided upon mammals, birds and bats if the proposed netting is a dark colour for viability and kept under high tension to avoid potential tangling.

This provides certainty for the LPA of the likely impacts on designated sites, protected and Priority species & habitats and, with appropriate mitigation measures secured, the development can be made acceptable. However, please note that we have no comments on Great Crested Newt as we have been instructed to leave comments on this European Protected Species to the [NatureSpace Partnership](#).

With regard to mandatory biodiversity net gains, it is highlighted that we support the submitted biodiversity net gain information for the pre-development baseline. Biodiversity net gains is a statutory requirement set out under [Schedule 7A \(Biodiversity Gain in England\) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990](#) and we are satisfied that submitted information provides sufficient information at application stage. As a result, a Biodiversity Gain Plan should be submitted prior to commencement, which also includes the following:

- a) A Biodiversity Gain Plan form (Ideally using the Government's template: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/biodiversity-gain-plan>)
- b) The completed metric calculation tool showing the calculations of the pre-development and post-intervention biodiversity values.
- c) Pre and post development habitat plans.
- d) Legal agreement(s)
- e) Biodiversity Gain Site Register reference numbers (if using off-site units).
- f) Proof of purchase (if buying statutory biodiversity credits at a last resort).

In addition, a [Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan](#) (HMMP) should be secured for all [significant on-site enhancements](#). However, Mid Sussex are taking the approach that minor developments do not contain significant on-site enhancements and are not required to be monitored for a period of 30 years from the completion of development via a Habitat

Management and Monitoring Plan (HMMP). As a result, we are satisfied an HMMP for significant on-site enhancements will not be required for the Biodiversity Gain Plan.

However, it is recommended that the following matters will need to be considered by the applicant as part of the biodiversity gain condition:

- We note that the applicant is intending to demonstrate a 10% measurable biodiversity net gain by creating an area of 0.03ha of Other neutral grassland within blue line boundary land. Firstly, it is outlined that proposals to create Other neutral grassland from Modified grassland should be reflected as an 'off-site enhancement'. Secondly, it is indicated that any off-site enhancements will require a legal agreement with the Council to be secured for a 30-year period from the completion of development. In addition, a HMMP would be required as part of the Biodiversity Gain Plan, as well as evidence of registration onto the Biodiversity Gain Site Register. As a result, this not considered a proportionate action for the scale of the proposed enhancements and recommend that off-site units are secured by a habitat bank registered on the Biodiversity Gain Site Register. Alternatively, the red line boundary could be amended to include on-site enhancements, which would also require a revised metric and map of the habitat pre-development baseline.

This will enable LPA to demonstrate its compliance with its statutory duties including its biodiversity duty under s40 NERC Act 2006 (as amended) and delivery of mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain.

We recommend that submission for approval and implementation of the details below should be a condition of any planning consent.

Biodiversity Gain condition

Natural England advises that the biodiversity gain condition has its own separate statutory basis, as a planning condition under [paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990](#). The condition is deemed to apply to every planning permission granted for the development of land in England (unless exemptions or transitional provisions apply), and there are separate provisions governing the Biodiversity Gain Plan.

The local planning authority is strongly encouraged to not include the biodiversity gain condition, or the reasons for applying this, in the list of conditions imposed in the written notice when granting planning permission. However, it is highlighted that biodiversity gain condition could be added as an informative, using [draft text](#) provided by the Secretary of State:

“Biodiversity Net Gain

The effect of paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 is that planning permission granted for the development of land in England is

deemed to have been granted subject to the condition “(the biodiversity gain condition)” that development may not begin unless:

- (a) Biodiversity Gain Plan has been submitted to the planning authority, and*
- (b) the planning authority has approved the plan.*

The planning authority, for the purposes of determining whether to approve a Biodiversity Gain Plan if one is required in respect of this permission would be Mid Sussex District Council.

There are statutory exemptions and transitional arrangements which mean that the biodiversity gain condition does not always apply. These are listed in paragraph 17 of Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and the Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Exemptions) Regulations 2024.

Based on the information available this permission is considered to be one which will require the approval of a biodiversity gain plan before development is begun because none of the statutory exemptions or transitional arrangements are considered to apply.”

Please 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.

We are unable to respond directly to applicants/agents or other interested parties. Any additional information, queries or comments on this advice that the applicant/agent or other interested parties may have, must be directed to the Planning Officer at the relevant LPA, who will seek further advice from us where appropriate.