



12th May 2025

Caroline Grist
Mid Sussex District Council
Oaklands Road
Haywards Heath
RH16 1SS

By email only

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/25/0636
Location: Grove Farm Cansiron Lane Ashurst Wood East Grinstead West Sussex RH19 3SG
Proposal: Conversion of redundant agricultural outbuilding into single storey one bedroom annex

Dear Caroline

Thank you for consulting Place Services on the above application.

No ecological objection	
Recommend approval subject to attached conditions	
Further information required/Temporary holding objection for European Protected Species (bats)	Yes
Recommend Refusal	
Subject to Natural England's formal comments on the conclusion of the LPA's Appropriate Assessment	

Summary

We have reviewed the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (The Ecology Partnership., March 2025), relating to the likely impacts of development on designated sites, protected & Priority species and habitats, and identification of appropriate mitigation measures.

We have also reviewed the information submitted to demonstrate that Biodiversity Net Gain can be delivered within the timescale promised and to meet any mandatory BNG requirements required. This includes the Application Form.

We are not satisfied that there is sufficient ecological information available for determination of this application and recommend that details of survey results, mitigation & enhancement measures for bats are required prior to determination. The reasons for this are outlined below:



European Protected Species: bats

We note from the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (The Ecology Partnership., March 2025) that Building B1 has low potential for roosting bats. Therefore, we support the recommendation for one bat emergence survey to confirm the presence or likely absence of any bat roosts in the building, in accordance with [Government Standing Advice](#).

To fully assess the impacts of the proposal the LPA needs ecological information for the site, particularly for bats, which are European Protected Species. These surveys are required prior to determination because Government Standing Advice indicates that you should *"Survey for bats if the area includes buildings or other structures that bats tend to use or there are trees with features that bats tend to use nearby"*.

The results of these surveys are required prior to determination because paragraph 99 of the ODPM Circular 06/2005 highlights that: *"It is essential that the presence or otherwise of protected species, and the extent that they may be affected by the proposed development, is established before the planning permission is granted, otherwise all relevant material considerations may not have been addressed in making the decision."*

This information is therefore required to provide the LPA with certainty of likely impacts on legally protected species and be able to secure appropriate mitigation either by a mitigation licence from Natural England or a condition of any consent. This will enable the LPA to demonstrate compliance with its statutory duties, including its biodiversity duty under s40 NERC Act 2006 (as amended) and prevent wildlife crime under s17 Crime and Disorder Act 1998.

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

Additional comments

We note from the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (The Ecology Partnership., March 2025) that Building B2 will not be impacted by the proposals and that the Ground Level Tree Assessment did not identify any Potential Roost Features for bats. We therefore agree that further surveys for bats with regard to Building B2 and trees are not required.

As mobile protected species, including Hedgehog (which is a Priority and threatened species) may be present, we support the Precautionary Method Statement for mobile protected species in Section 4.12 of the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (The Ecology Partnership., March 2025). This needs to be secured by a condition of any consent.

The de-minimis exemption, as set out under the [Biodiversity Gain Requirements \(Exemptions\) Regulations 2024](#), applies to development that does not impact a Priority habitat and impacts less than:

- 25 square metres (5m by 5m) of on-site habitat
- 5 metres of on-site linear habitats (e.g. hedgerows or watercourse)

The de-minimis threshold refers to impact and not size of the red-line boundary. A development 'impacts' a habitat if it [decreases the biodiversity value](#).



Providing that the development does not affect any more than 25m², we are satisfied that the development is exempt from the statutory requirement of mandatory biodiversity net gains.

We support the recommendation that a Wildlife Friendly Lighting Strategy is implemented for this application (Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (The Ecology Partnership., March 2025)), to avoid impacts from light disturbance. This should be secured by a condition of any consent and implemented in full. Therefore, technical specification should be submitted prior to occupation, 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:

- Do not provide excessive lighting. Light levels should be as low as possible as required to fulfil the lighting need.
- All luminaires should lack UV elements when manufactured. Metal halide, compact fluorescent sources should not be used.
- Warm White lights should be used at <2700k. This is necessary as lighting which emits an ultraviolet component or that has a blue spectral content has a high attraction effect on insects. This may lead in a reduction in prey availability for some light sensitive bat species.
- Where appropriate, external security lighting should be set on motion-sensors and set to as short a possible a timer as the risk assessment will allow.
- Luminaires should always be mounted horizontally, with no light output above 90° and/or no upward tilt.
- Only if all other options have been explored, accessories such as baffles, hoods or louvres can be used to reduce light spill and direct it only to where it is needed. However, due to the lensing and fine cut-off control of the beam inherent in modern LED luminaires, the effect of cowls and baffles is often far less than anticipated and so should not be relied upon solely.

We also support the proposed reasonable biodiversity enhancements for protected, Priority and threatened species, which have been recommended to secure net gains for biodiversity, as outlined under Paragraph 187d and 193d of the National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024). The reasonable biodiversity enhancement measures should be outlined within a separate Biodiversity Enhancement Layout and should be secured by a condition of any consent.

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](#).

We look forward to working with the LPA and the applicant to receive the additional information required to support a lawful decision and overcome our holding objection.

Please contact us with any queries.

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.