



Andy Watt
Mid Sussex District Council
Oaklands Road
Haywards Heath
West Sussex
RH16 1SS

Our ref: 15105
Date: 7 April 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/26/0171
Location: Oak Tree Caravan Bishopstone Lane Ansty Haywards Heath
Proposal: Replace existing caravan and 2x outbuildings with new permanent dwelling

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 Ecological Impact Assessment Report (WM Ecology Ltd., September 2025), relating to the likely impacts of development on designated sites, protected & Priority species and habitats, and identification of appropriate mitigation measures and mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain.

We have also reviewed the information submitted relating to mandatory biodiversity net gains, including the Self-Build and Custom Build Statement (February 2026) and Biodiversity Net Gain Statement (WM Ecology Ltd., July 2025).

We note from the Ecological Impact Assessment Report (WM Ecology Ltd., September 2025) that Building B1 (Static Caravan) underwent a single bat emergence survey in July 2025 and Building B2 (garage building) underwent two bat emergence surveys in July and August 2025. We understand that no bats were recorded emerging from either building and note that the Ecological Impact Assessment Report (WM Ecology Ltd., September 2025) concludes that there is a likely absence of bat roosts within the buildings.

We also understand from the Tree Survey & Arboricultural Impact Assessment (Hellis Solutions Limited, January 2026) that no trees will be pruned or removed for this development. We therefore agree that no further surveys for bats are required.

We support the Precautionary Method Statement for reptiles, common amphibians and mobile protected and Priority species (including Hedgehog, which is a threatened and Priority species) in Sections 6.16, 6.29 to 6.37, 6.42 and 6.47 of the Ecological Impact Assessment Report (WM Ecology Ltd., September 2025), which should be secured by a condition of any consent and implemented in full.

We are satisfied that there is sufficient ecological information available to support determination of this application. 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. We recommend that the NatureSpace Partnership is consulted on this application.

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.

The mitigation measures identified in the Ecological Impact Assessment Report (WM Ecology Ltd., September 2025) should be secured by a condition of any consent and implemented in full. This is necessary to conserve and enhance protected and Priority species particularly those recorded in the locality, including bats, reptiles, common amphibians and mobile protected and Priority species.

With regard to mandatory biodiversity net gains, it is highlighted that we have reviewed the submitted Self-Build and Custom Build Statement (February 2026) and Biodiversity Net Gain Statement (WM Ecology Ltd., July 2025). 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. As a result, we have reviewed the submitted details and are satisfied that this application is exempt, as the proposals is for one self-build dwelling for an area less 0.5 ha. A condition may be considered necessary to be imposed by the council to ensure that the development must be occupied by a person or persons who had a primary input into the design and layout of the dwelling and who will live in the dwelling for at least 3 years.

We also recommend that reasonable biodiversity enhancements for protected, Priority and threatened species should be identified by a suitably qualified ecologist and implemented 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 need to be outlined within a separate Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy and secured by a condition of any consent.

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.

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. ACTION REQUIRED IN ACCORDANCE WITH ECOLOGICAL APPRAISAL RECOMMENDATIONS

“All mitigation measures and/or works shall be carried out in accordance with the details contained in the Ecological Impact Assessment Report (WM Ecology Ltd., September 2025), as already submitted with the planning application and agreed in principle with the local planning authority prior to determination. This includes the Precautionary Method Statement for reptiles, common amphibians and mobile protected and Priority species in Sections 6.16, 6.29 to 6.37, 6.42 and 6.47 of the Ecological Impact Assessment Report (WM Ecology Ltd., September 2025). This avoids impacts on protected species.

This may include the appointment of an appropriately competent person e.g. an ecological clerk of works (ECoW) to provide on-site ecological expertise during construction. The appointed person shall undertake all activities, and works shall be carried out, in accordance with the approved details.”

Reason: To conserve protected and Priority species and 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).

2. **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, prepared by a suitably qualified ecologist, 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);*
- d) persons responsible for implementing the enhancement measures; and*
- e) details of initial aftercare and long-term maintenance (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 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.