

From: Laura Downs <Laura.Downs@naturespaceuk.com>
Sent: 14 May 2026 11:39:53 UTC+01:00
To: "Andy Watt" <andy.watt@midsussex.gov.uk>
Subject: DM/26/0165 | Wishing Wells Farm Shop Green Field Farm London Road Hickstead

Good morning Andy,

Thank you for consulting us on the above application. The applicant has submitted some ecological in the form of, *Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Report, Land to the North of Wishing Wells Farm, Old London Road, Hickstead, West Sussex, RH17 5LZ, Wychwood Environmental Ltd, January 2026*, which states that:

- *"There are no existing ponds on site however there is a wet ditch running parallel to part of the northern boundary which connects to a pond off-site approximately 5m to the west. Ten waterbodies are located within 500m of the site"*
- *"The habitats onsite are considered to provide limited foraging habitat due to the lack of dense scrub and refugia opportunities, although the ruderal/ephemeral habitat provides some foraging and commuting opportunities particularly surrounding the ditch"*
- *"Due to there being potential breeding habitat onsite which will be removed as part of the proposed development, further surveys for GCN are recommended to determine present/absence of GCN within the site"*
- *"Alternatively, the applicant may wish to explore Natural England's District Level Licensing scheme instead of further surveys"*

The above report has noted that there is suitable terrestrial habitat onsite, which according to site photos does appear dense enough to provide opportunities for GCN. Additionally the ditch onsite has the potential to provide breeding opportunities. We are in agreement that further survey work would be needed here in order to determine the potential impact of the development on GCN and/or their habitat and establish the need for mitigation/licensing. The report has recommended the onsite ditch and pond 5m to the west are surveyed, however as there are several ponds in close proximity we would recommend all the ponds surrounding the site and with connectivity are also captured during this exercise.

Alternatively, the applicant has the option of enquiring for the council's District Licensing scheme which can be joined at any time without the need for further surveys. This route involves submitting a NatureSpace Report or Certificate to demonstrate that the impacts of the proposed development can be addressed through Mid Sussex District Council's District Licence. More details and details on how to enquire can be found at www.naturespaceuk.com

Best wishes,

Laura Downs (*she/her*)
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