



Catherine Cardin
Mid Sussex District Council
Oaklands Road
Haywards Heath
West Sussex
RH16 1SS

Our ref: 12010
Date: 19 January 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/25/2966
Location: Pickeridge Cottage Cob Lane Ardingly Haywards Heath
Proposal: Demolition of existing house, replacement new build house with associated landscaping

Thank you for consulting Place Services on the above full planning application.

No ecological objection	<input type="checkbox"/>
Recommend approval subject to attached conditions	<input type="checkbox"/>
Further information required/Temporary holding objection for European Protected Species (bats and Hazel Dormouse)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Recommend Refusal	<input type="checkbox"/>
Subject to Natural England's formal comments on the conclusion of the LPA's Appropriate Assessment	<input type="checkbox"/>

Summary

We have reviewed the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (Eco 360 Ltd., July 2025) supplied by the applicant, relating to the likely impacts of development on designated sites, protected & Priority species and habitats and identification of proportionate mitigation and mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain.

We are not satisfied that there is sufficient ecological information available for determination of this application and recommend that further information with regard to bats and Hazel Dormouse is provided prior to determination. The reasons for this are outlined below:

We note from the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (Eco 360 Ltd., July 2025) that a European Protected Species Mitigation Licence (EPSML) will be required before commencement of any works. This is because there is an active bat maternity roost (species not specified) in the existing two storey brick-built building. We support the recommendation in the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (Eco 360 Ltd., July 2025) that three emergence surveys should be undertaken to determine the species, size of roost and emergence locations. The proposed outline mitigation measures to be secured under an EPSML need to be submitted to the LPA prior to determination.

This is required because the Local Planning Authority, as a competent authority, should have regard to the requirements of The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) when reaching planning decisions and must not leave this until the licence application stage. Therefore, as European Protected Species Mitigation Licence is required for this application, appropriate mitigation measures to support the provision of the licence must also be outlined prior to determination to allow certainty to the LPA that a licence will likely be granted.

In addition, it is not clear from the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (Eco 360 Ltd., July 2025) if a Ground Level Tree Assessment for Potential Roost Features for bats on any trees which are to be felled to facilitate the development nor if surveys for bats have been undertaken on the two sheds. Therefore, we request clarification as to whether these surveys have been undertaken in accordance with the 4th Ed. Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists Bat Conservation Trust (Collins ed., 2023).

In addition, Section 5.3.4 of the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (Eco 360 Ltd., July 2025) states that if any scrub is to be removed, then mitigation measures will be required for Hazel Dormouse, which is also a European Protected Species. Therefore, we highlight that confirmation of the finalised development details needs to be submitted prior to determination.

To fully assess the impacts of the proposal the LPA needs further information on bats and Hazel Dormouse, European Protected Species. This information is required prior to determination in accordance with [Government Standing Advice for bats](#) which 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” and [Government Standing Advice for Hazel Dormouse](#) which says you should “survey for Hazel Dormouse if the development proposal will affect an area of woodland (including deciduous, conifer or mixed woodland), hedgerow or scrub.”

The information is 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.

Furthermore, the Local Planning Authority, as a competent authority, should have regard to the requirements of The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) when reaching planning decisions and must not leave this until the licence application stage. Therefore, if a European Protected Species Mitigation Licence is required for this application, appropriate mitigation measures to support the provision of the licence must also be outlined prior to determination to allow certainty to the LPA that a licence will likely be granted.

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 support the Precautionary Method Statement for reptiles and mobile protected and Priority species (including Hedgehog, which is a Priority and threatened species) in Sections 5.3.5 and 5.3.7 of the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (Eco 360 Ltd., July 2025). This needs to be secured by a condition of any consent and implemented in full.

With regard to mandatory biodiversity net gains, it is highlighted that no information has been submitted. 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](#). We are satisfied that this application is exempt, as the proposals are for one self-build dwelling for an area of less than 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 support the proposed reasonable biodiversity enhancements for protected, Priority and threatened species, which have been recommended in the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (Eco 360 Ltd., July 2025) 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.

We also support the recommendation that a Wildlife Friendly Lighting Strategy is implemented for this application (Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (Eco 360 Ltd., July 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.

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 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.