



Date: 22 September 2025

Our ref: 06138

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

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. 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/25/1406
Location: Willowbrook Danworth Lane Hurstpierpoint Hassocks
Proposal: Proposed conversion and extension of hay barn to create 1 no. one bedroom dwelling with two proposed parking spaces and removal of existing mobile home.

Thank you for consulting Place Services on the above application.

No ecological objection	<input type="checkbox"/>
Recommend approval subject to attached conditions	<input type="checkbox"/>
Further information required/Temporary holding objection: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• European Protected Species (Bats)	<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 Daytime Bat Potential Roost Assessment (PRA) - letter of report (Wychwood Environmental Ltd., February 2023), 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 on protected species available for determination. This is because the ecological assessment (Daytime Bat Potential Roost Assessment (PRA) - letter of report (Wychwood Environmental Ltd., February 2023)) is out of date to support this application, in line with CIEEM Guidance¹ and paragraph 6.2.1 of British Standard (BS) BS42020 'Biodiversity – Code of practice for planning and development 2013'. This is because the initial site walkover was undertaken in February 2023.

As a result, we recommend that the applicant's ecologist provides an ecological addendum or an updated ecological report to support this application, which should require an additional site visit and may require updated desk study information. The ecologist will be required to provide appropriate justification, on:

- The validity of the initial report;
- Which, if any, of the surveys need to be updated; and
- The appropriate scope, timing and methods for the update survey(s).

If additional impacts to protected species are identified as a result of the additional ecological assessment, then any necessary further surveys for protected species should also be provided prior to determination. This is necessary as the Government Circular 06/2005 identifies that the presence of a protected species is a material consideration when a planning authority is considering a development proposal that, if carried out, would be likely to result in harm to the species or its habitat. Therefore, it is essential that the presence or otherwise of protected species, and the extent that they may be affected by the proposed application, is established before planning permission is granted.

Therefore, this further information is required to provide the LPA with certainty of impacts on protected and priority species and enable it to demonstrate compliance with its statutory duties, as well as its biodiversity duty under s.40 NERC Act 2006 (as amended).

Additional comments:

With regard to mandatory biodiversity net gains, it is highlighted that we have reviewed the submitted Application Form. 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 proposal 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.

¹ CIEEM (2019) Advice note on the Lifespan of Ecological Reports and Surveys - <https://cieem.net/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Advice-Note.pdf>

We also recommend that reasonable biodiversity enhancements for protected, Priority and threatened species should be identified 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.

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 do not hesitate to contact us if you have any queries in relation to this advice.

Yours sincerely,

Hamish Jackson ACIEEM BSc (Hons)
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 Place Services at Essex County Council
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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.