



Date: 25 September 2025

Our ref: 08560

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

By email only: Planning Department, [planninginfo@midsussex.gov.uk](mailto:planninginfo@midsussex.gov.uk)

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*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.*

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**Application:** DM/24/2733  
**Location:** Rose Cottage Day Nursery The Old Sawmills Copyhold Lane Lindfield Haywards Heath West Sussex RH16 1XT  
**Proposal:** Conversion of vacant adjoined barn into nursery space at ground floor level, alterations to ground floor layout and an increase of child numbers to 70 children.

Thank you for re-consulting Place Services on the above application.

|                                                                                                           |                                     |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <b>No ecological objection</b>                                                                            | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| <b>No ecological objection subject to attached conditions</b>                                             | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| <b>Further information required/Temporary holding objection</b>                                           | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| <b>Recommend Refusal</b>                                                                                  | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| <b>Subject to Natural England's formal comments on the conclusion of the LPA's Appropriate Assessment</b> | <input type="checkbox"/>            |

## **Summary**

We have reviewed the Bat Emergence and Re-Entry Surveys (BERS) (Arbtech Consulting Ltd., August 2025) and Ecological Impact Assessment (Arbtech Consulting Ltd., November 2024) relating to the likely impacts of development on designated sites, protected and Priority species & habitats, identification of appropriate mitigation measures and mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain.

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.

We note from the Bat Emergence and Re-Entry Surveys (BERS) (Arbtech Consulting Ltd., August 2025) that a licence for bats will be required before commencement of any works and recommend that a copy of this is secured by a condition of any consent. This is because the dusk emergence surveys in May, June and July 2025 confirmed the following bat roosts in Building B1 (nursery and attached barn):

1. Soprano Pipistrelle maternity roost
2. Soprano Pipistrelle day roost
3. Soprano Pipistrelle day roost
4. Soprano Pipistrelle day roost
5. Common Pipistrelle day roost
6. Common Pipistrelle day roost

We support the outline mitigation measures under EPSML Recommendations in the Bat Emergence and Re-Entry Surveys (BERS) (Arbtech Consulting Ltd., August 2025).

We also support the Precautionary Method Statement for reptiles and mobile protected species (such as Hedgehog, which is a Priority and threatened species) in the Ecological Impact Assessment (Arbtech Consulting Ltd., November 2024). This should be secured by a condition of any consent and implemented in full.

We are now satisfied that there is sufficient ecological information available to support determination of this application. However, please note 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](#).

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 Bat Emergence and Re-Entry Surveys (BERS) (Arbtech Consulting Ltd., August 2025) and Ecological Impact Assessment (Arbtech Consulting Ltd., November 2024) 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, which includes bats.

We support the recommendation that a Wildlife Friendly Lighting Strategy is implemented for this application (Bat Emergence and Re-Entry Surveys (BERS) (Arbtech Consulting Ltd., August 2025) and Ecological Impact Assessment (Arbtech Consulting Ltd., November 2024))

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.

With regard to Biodiversity Net Gain, 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 25m<sup>2</sup>, we are satisfied that the development is exempt from the statutory requirement of mandatory biodiversity net gains.

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

We also recommend that reasonable biodiversity enhancements for protected, Priority and threatened species (such as bird boxes) 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 should be outlined within a separate Biodiversity Enhancement Layout and should be 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 Bat Emergence and Re-Entry Surveys (BERS) (Arbtech Consulting Ltd., August 2025), as already submitted with the planning application and agreed in principle with the local planning authority prior to determination.*

*This will 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 COMMENCEMENT OF ANY WORKS WHICH WILL IMPACT THE BREEDING / RESTING PLACE OF BATS: SUBMISSION OF A COPY OF EPS MITIGATION LICENCE OR EVIDENCE OF SITE REGISTRATION UNDER A BAT MITIGATION CLASS LICENCE FOR BATS**

*“Any works which will impact the breeding / resting place of bats, shall not in in any circumstances commence unless the local planning authority has been provided with either:*

- a) a licence issued by Natural England pursuant to Regulation 55 of The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) authorizing the specified activity/development to go ahead; or*
- b) bevidence of site registration supplied by an individual registered to use a Bat Mitigation Class Licence; or*
- c) a statement in writing from the Natural England to the effect that it does not consider that the specified activity/development will require a licence.”*

**Reason:** To conserve protected 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 s17 Crime & Disorder Act 1998.

### 3. **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).

### 4. **PRIOR TO BENEFICIAL USE: WILDLIFE SENSITIVE LIGHTING DESIGN SCHEME**

*“Prior to occupation, a “lighting design strategy for biodiversity” in accordance with Guidance Note 08/23 (Institute of Lighting Professionals) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The strategy shall:*

- a) identify those areas/features on site that are particularly sensitive for bats and that are likely to cause disturbance in or around their breeding sites and resting places or along important routes used to access key areas of their territory, for example, for foraging; and*
- b) show how and where external lighting will be installed so that it can be clearly demonstrated that areas to be lit will not disturb or prevent the above species using their territory or having access to their breeding sites and resting places.*

*All external lighting shall be installed in accordance with the specifications and locations set out in the scheme and maintained thereafter in accordance with the scheme. Under no circumstances should any other external lighting be installed without prior consent from the local planning authority.”*

**Reason:** To 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).

Please do not hesitate to 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

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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.*