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

Our ref: 13995
Date: 27 February 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/26/0135
Location: Finches 75 Folders Lane Burgess Hill West Sussex
Proposal: Demolition of existing building and development of 4 dwellings, with associated access and landscaping.

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

No ecological objection	☐
Recommend approval subject to attached conditions	☐
Further information required/Temporary holding objection Mandatory Biodiversity Net Gains	☒
Recommend Refusal	☐
Subject to Natural England's formal comments on the conclusion of the LPA's Appropriate Assessment	☐

Summary

We have reviewed the Bat Survey Report (CSA Environmental Ltd., January 2026) and Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (CSA Environmental Ltd., January 2026) relating to the likely impacts of development on designated sites, protected and Priority species & 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 Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment: Design Stage (CSA Environmental Ltd., January 2026) and Statutory Biodiversity Metric (November 2025). We note that Appendix A of the Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment: Design Stage (CSA Environmental Ltd., January 2026) comprises the Baseline Habitats Plan, Appendix B comprises the Proposed Habitats Plan and Appendix C comprises the habitat condition assessments.

We are not satisfied that appropriate information with regard to mandatory biodiversity net gains has been supplied for the application prior to determination. The reason for this is outlined below:

Mandatory Biodiversity Net Gains:

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](#).

Biodiversity net gains is a statutory requirement set out under [Schedule 7A \(Biodiversity Gain in England\) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990](#). This legislation was inserted into the 1990 Act by Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021, and was amended by the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023. The Biodiversity Gain (Town and Country Planning) (Consequential Amendments) Regulations 2024 made consequential amendments to other parts of the 1990 Act.

The [Biodiversity Net Gain Planning Practice Guidance \(PPG\)](#) sets out how mandatory biodiversity net gains should be applied through the planning process and Paragraph: 011 Reference ID: 74-011-20240214 sets out what information should be submitted as part of a planning application if the statutory biodiversity gain condition applies.

As a result, we have reviewed the Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment: Design Stage (CSA Environmental Ltd., January 2026) and Statutory Biodiversity Metric (November 2025) and are not satisfied that appropriate information has been provided prior to determination. This is because of the reason set out below:

- The submitted habitat map does not match the red line boundary for this application. Therefore, we are not certain that the pre-development baseline contained within the Statutory Biodiversity Metric – Calculation Tool has been completed appropriately for this application. As a result, we recommend that an updated habitat map and calculations must be supplied to ensure this matches the redline boundary for this application.

Where mandatory biodiversity net gains apply, the planning authority will be required to secure a biodiversity gain condition as a pre-commencement requirement. The biodiversity gain condition has its own separate statutory basis, as a planning condition

under [paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990](#) and should be included as an informative within the decision notice. The biodiversity gain condition should secure the provision of a Biodiversity Gain Plan prior to commencement, which includes the following:

- a) A Biodiversity Gain Plan form (Ideally using the Government's template: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/biodiversity-gain-plan>)
- b) The completed metric calculation tool showing the calculations of the pre-development and post-intervention biodiversity values.
- c) Pre and post development habitat plans.
- d) Legal agreement(s)
- e) Biodiversity Gain Site Register reference numbers (if using off-site units).
- f) Proof of purchase (if buying statutory biodiversity credits at a last resort).

In addition, a [Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan](#) (HMMP) should be secured for all [significant on-site enhancements](#). However, we understand that Mid Sussex are taking the approach that minor development does not contain significant on-site enhancements and are not required to be monitored for a period of 30 years from the completion of development via a Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (HMMP).

Additional comments:

We note from the Bat Survey Report (CSA Environmental Ltd., January 2026) and Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (CSA Environmental Ltd., January 2026) that a licence for roosting 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 three dusk emergence surveys in August and September 2025 identified one occasional Common Pipistrelle day roost in Building B1 (one storey bungalow). We support the outline mitigation measures to support the application for a European Protected Species Mitigation Licence in Section 5.5 of the Bat Survey Report (CSA Environmental Ltd., January 2026)

We also note from the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (CSA Environmental Ltd., January 2026) that Buildings B2 (wooden panelled outbuilding) and B3 (wooden shed) have negligible bat roost potential. Therefore, we agree that no further surveys are required for this building and bats.

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 5.10 and 5.21 of the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (CSA Environmental Ltd., January 2026). This needs to be secured by a condition of any consent and implemented in full.

If external lighting is required, we also support the recommendation that a Wildlife Friendly Lighting Strategy is implemented for this application (Bat Survey Report (CSA

Environmental Ltd., January 2026)) 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.

We also support the proposed reasonable biodiversity enhancements for protected, Priority and threatened species, which have been recommended in the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (CSA Environmental Ltd., January 2026) 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.

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.

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.