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

Our ref: 16265
Date: 28 April 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/26/0830
Location: Oathall Community College Appledore Gardens Lindfield
Haywards Heath
Proposal: Installation of cricket nets

Thank you for consulting Place Services on the above application.

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

Summary

We have reviewed the documents supplied by the applicant and note that no ecological information has been submitted relating to the likely impacts of development on designated sites, protected & Priority species. As a result, we have carried out a desk study to assess the likely ecological impacts of the development. This includes an assessment of Magic Maps, Local Wildlife Site records and aerial imagery.

We have also reviewed the information submitted relating to mandatory biodiversity net gains, including the Biodiversity Gain Plan (January 2026), Small Sites Statutory Biodiversity Metric (January 2025) and Baseline and Post Development Habitats Maps (submitted March 2026). Condition assessment sheets are not required for this application.

We note from the Planning Statement Rev 1 (Philips Surveyors, submitted March 2026) that there are no buildings on site and that no trees or hedgerows will be impacted by the development. Therefore, we do not consider that bats will be impacted by the works and that an ecological report is not required.

The proposed cricket nets will be 35 metres in length, 14.6 metres in width and up to 4 metres in height. In addition, it is indicated that there is limited scientific research relating to the impacts of cricket netting and that the majority of the issues typically relate to mammals getting tangled at the base of netting. Therefore, we are satisfied that impacts can be avoided upon mammals, birds and bats if the proposed netting is a dark colour for viability and kept under high tension to avoid potential tangling.

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

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.

With regard to mandatory biodiversity net gains, it is highlighted that we support the submitted (Biodiversity Gain Plan (January 2026), Small Sites Statutory Biodiversity Metric (January 2025) and Baseline and Post Development Habitats Maps (submitted March 2026). Biodiversity net gains is a statutory requirement set out under [Schedule 7A \(Biodiversity Gain in England\) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990](#) and we are satisfied that submitted information provides sufficient information at application stage. As a result, a Biodiversity Gain Plan should be submitted prior to commencement, which also 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, Mid Sussex are taking the approach that minor developments do 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). As a result, we are satisfied an HMMP will not be required for the Biodiversity Gain Plan.

We also generally support the proposed post-intervention values but indicate that consideration should be provided on whether mixed scrub in good condition is realistic and deliverable for the proposals. In addition, it is highlighted that off-site BNG is likely to be required based on the current landscape proposals. As a result, it is suggested that the applicant should consider further on-site landscape enhancements in the first instance. Where on-site enhancements can not be delivered, then off-site units should be secured from a habitat bank registered on the Biodiversity Gain Site Register.

Whilst bespoke biodiversity enhancements for protected, Priority and threatened species, should also typically be securing as part of planning applications to secure net gains for biodiversity, as outlined under Paragraph 187d and 193d of the National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024). We do not consider bespoke enhancements for this proposed development to be reasonable.

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.

We recommend that submission for approval and implementation of the details below should be a condition of any planning consent.

Biodiversity Gain condition

Natural England advises that 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](#). The condition is deemed to apply to every planning permission granted for the development of land in England (unless exemptions or transitional provisions apply), and there are separate provisions governing the Biodiversity Gain Plan.

The local planning authority is strongly encouraged to not include the biodiversity gain condition, or the reasons for applying this, in the list of conditions imposed in the written notice when granting planning permission. However, it is highlighted that biodiversity gain condition could be added as an informative, using [draft text](#) provided by the Secretary of State:

“Biodiversity Net Gain

The effect of paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 is that planning permission granted for the development of land in England is deemed to have been granted subject to the condition “(the biodiversity gain condition)” that development may not begin unless:

- (a) Biodiversity Gain Plan has been submitted to the planning authority, and*
- (b) the planning authority has approved the plan.*

The planning authority, for the purposes of determining whether to approve a Biodiversity Gain Plan if one is required in respect of this permission would be Mid Sussex District Council.

There are statutory exemptions and transitional arrangements which mean that the biodiversity gain condition does not always apply. These are listed in paragraph 17 of Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and the Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Exemptions) Regulations 2024.

Based on the information available this permission is considered to be one which will require the approval of a biodiversity gain plan before development is begun because none of the statutory exemptions or transitional arrangements are considered to apply.”

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.