



Date: 26 September 2025

Our ref: 06123

Catherine Cardin
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/25/1533
Location: Stonehurts, North Lodge Selsfield Road Ardingly Haywards Heath
Proposal: Construction of an infill extension. Conversion of an existing garage bay into habitable accommodation at ground and first floor. New conservation style rooflight, replacement garage doors and new fenestration. Relocation of existing oil tank. New air source heat pump (ASHP) and replace existing paved drive with gravel.

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

No ecological objection	☐
Recommend approval subject to attached conditions	☐
Further information required/Temporary holding objection for European Protected Species (bats)	☒
Recommend Refusal	☐
Subject to Natural England's formal comments on the conclusion of the LPA's Appropriate Assessment	☐

Summary

We have reviewed the Bat Scoping Report (The Ecology Co-op, March 2025), 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 meet the requirements of mandatory biodiversity net gains, which includes the Application Form.

We are not satisfied that there is sufficient ecological information available for determination of this application and recommend that details of survey results, mitigation & enhancement measures for bats are required prior to determination. The reasons for this are outlined below:

European Protected Species: bats

We support the recommendation in the Bat Scoping Report (The Ecology Co-op, March 2025) that three bat emergence/re-entry surveys are required between May and mid-September on the the single storey dwelling (The Cottage) and associated garage blocks in accordance with Government Standing Advice. This is because the buildings have high bat roost potential overall and there is a confirmed bat roost in void 1 of The Cottage. In addition, there is bat hibernation roost potential at the site.

To fully assess the impacts of the proposal the LPA needs ecological information for the site, particularly for bats, which are European Protected Species. These surveys are required prior to determination because Government Standing Advice 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”.

The results of these surveys are 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.

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:

With regard to mandatory biodiversity net gains, it is highlighted that 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 are satisfied that this application is exempt from mandatory biodiversity net gains, as the development meets the householder exemption.

We also support the proposed reasonable biodiversity enhancements for protected, Priority and threatened species, which have been recommended 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 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.

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.