



ECOLOGICAL ADVICE SERVICE

TO: Gary Edwards
FROM: Jessica Holdway
DATE: 01 October 2025
SUBJECT: Meadow Cottage, Meopham; ref 20250671

The following is provided by Kent County Council's Ecological Advice Service (KCC EAS) for Local Planning Authorities. It is independent, professional advice and is not a comment/position on the application from the county council. It is intended to advise the relevant planning officer(s) on the potential ecological impacts of the planning application and if sufficient/appropriate ecological information has been provided.

Any additional information, queries or comments on this advice that the applicant or other interested parties may have must be directed in every instance to the planning officer, who will seek input from the EAS where appropriate and necessary.

SUMMARY: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION REQUIRED

We have reviewed the information submitted in support of this application and advise that insufficient ecological information has been provided to determine the application. The following information is required prior to determination:

- Further information to show if there is 25m² of vegetated habitat on site.
- If there is 25m² of vegetated habitat onsite, BNG information will be required.

BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN: DE MINIMIS

Under the Environment Act 2021 and the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended), all planning applications received in England (with a few exemptions) must deliver at least a 10% biodiversity net gain (BNG) from the 12th February 2024 and all minor applications from the 2nd April 2024.

The applicant has claimed an exemption from BNG (de minimis). This exemption only applies on sites where the loss/degradation of onsite habitat with a biodiversity value greater than zero does not exceed 25m² and/or 5 linear metres of habitat, as per The Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Exemptions) Regulations 2024.

Having reviewed the submitted information, we believe that this site may have over 25m² of habitat present (as shown in the photograph below) between 45 and 46 Beechwood Drive, and that the proposed development will result in habitat degradation. If this vegetated area is in excess of 25m² it does not meet the de minimis exemption requirements for Biodiversity Net Gain.



Figure 1: Google Earth, Imagery dated 06/08/2025

Should the applicant disagree with above, and there is not in excess of 25m² of vegetated habitat and it is exempt from BNG, additional information (including site photographs) will need to be provided on this area to clarify how, with the loss of this green space, the site meets the de minimis BNG exemption.

Should the applicant agree with this comment that over 25m² of vegetated habitat is present, as with any application that is required to achieve a 10% BNG, the following information must be submitted:

- confirmation that the applicant believes that planning permission, if granted, the development would be subject to the biodiversity gain condition;
- the pre-development biodiversity value(s), either on the date of application or earlier proposed date (as appropriate);
- the completed metric calculation tool showing the calculations of the pre-development biodiversity value of the onsite habitat on the date of application (or proposed earlier date) including the publication date of the biodiversity metric used to calculate that value;
- a statement whether activities have been carried out prior to the date of application (or earlier proposed date), that result in loss of onsite biodiversity value ('degradation'), and where they have:
 - a statement to the effect that these activities have been carried out;
 - the date immediately before these activities were carried out;
 - the pre-development biodiversity value of the onsite habitat on this date;
 - the completed metric calculation tool showing the calculations, and
 - any available supporting evidence of this;
- plan(s), drawn to an identified scale and showing the direction of North, showing onsite habitat existing on the date of application (or earlier proposed date), including any irreplaceable habitat (if applicable).

FURTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- Biodiversity enhancement plan
- Sensitive Lighting Plan

If you have any queries regarding our comments, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Jessica Holdway
Biodiversity Officer

This response was submitted following consideration of the following documents:

- Revised Design & Access Statement (September 2025)
- Block Plans- Existing and Proposed (TBT Design Service, July 2025)
- Location Plan (July 2025)