Wiltshire Council Planning Consultation Response

ECOLOGY

Officer name:	Rachel Whyte
Date:	04/08/2023
Application number:	PL/2023/05406
Proposal:	Retention of summerhouse
Site address:	Chittoe Mill, 125 Westbrook, Bromham, Chippenham, SN15 2EE
Case officer:	Jane Sanger

Recommendations:

	No comment
	Support
	No objection
x	Condition (no objection subject to conditions)
	Objection - further information required
	Objection in principle
	HRA completed

Further Information Required:

	Issue	Policy/Legislative Compliance	Date Information Requested & Further Information Required	Satisfactorily Addressed (Document & Date)

The outstanding document(s) listed above are needed to enable the council's ecology team to consider all the relevant impacts and benefits of the proposed scheme. The council's ecologists will provide a further response once all the above information has been submitted via the case officer.
Please Note: When resubmitting a revised document, ALL changes must be highlighted to enable review.

Thank you for consulting Ecology, I have reviewed the application and supporting documents against OS Maps and aerial photography of the site and surrounding area, together with GIS layers of statutory and non-statutory sites and existing records of protected species.

The application has been supported by an Ecology Technical Note by Malford Environmental Consulting Ltd and an email from Ayers Forestry Limited.

The documents address the sites location within Chittoe Mill Meadow County Wildlife Site (CWS) and adjacent to Prickmoor Wood CWS, priority woodland habitat and Ancient Replanted Woodland.

The ecology report concludes that there are no predicted significant impacts on habitats, designated sites or protected/notable species from construction of the summerhouse. As stated in the report this is because the building was deliberately sited in an area of least ecological value i.e., 10 m away from the woodland edge and in an area high in nutrients due to historical land use, the building was designed and constructed to be low impact and sit above ground, and the building was sited and built under the guidance of Wiltshire Wildlife Trust and Spye Park

Estate woodland manager. The email from Ayers Forestry Limited provides background for the site, including species composition and historical management of habitats within and adjacent to the site. Ayers Forestry Limited also state that the summerhouse was sited in an area of least ecological value and that the summerhouse was constructed in such a way that it has not impacted adjacent trees.

I am satisfied that sufficient information has been provided to address concerns regarding the protection of ecological features on and adjacent to the site, and I agree with the assessments by Malford Environmental Consulting Ltd and Ayers Forestry Limited that ecological features will not be significantly impacted by the construction or operation of the summerhouse.

Recommendations to remove lighting from the summerhouse, change the veranda material and provide five bat roosting features are welcomed. To secure the provision of the bat roosting boxes a condition has been included which requires the submission of a site plan with the locations of the bat boxes marked. This plan should include the following details: location, number, type (include make/model, if appropriate) and positioning (height, aspect, surrounding habitat, as applicable).

Artificial Lighting

The habitat within the proposed development site and the surrounding area is suitable for roosting, foraging and commuting bats. An increase in artificial lux levels can deter bats which could result in roost abandonment and/or the severance of key foraging areas. This will likely result in a significant negative impact upon the health of bat populations across the region. Artificial light at night can have a substantial adverse effect on biodiversity. Any new lighting should be for the purposes for safe access and security and be in accordance with the appropriate Environmental Zone standards set out by the Institute of Lighting Engineers in their publication GN01:2021, 'Guidance for the Reduction of Obtrusive Light' (ILP, 2021), and Guidance note GN08-18 "Bats and artificial lighting in the UK", issued by the Bat Conservation Trust and Institution of Lighting Professionals.

CONDITIONS:

1. The development will be carried out in strict accordance with the following documents:
    - Ecology Technical Note. Malford Environmental Consulting.

    REASON: For the avoidance of doubt and for the protection, mitigation and enhancement of biodiversity.

2. No new external artificial lighting shall be installed at the site unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority.

    REASON: In the interests of conserving biodiversity.

3. Details of the number, design and locations of bat roosts shall be submitted to the local authority for approval. These details should be clearly shown on a site plan. The approved details shall be implemented before occupation of the final works.

    REASON: To provide enhancement for biodiversity.

Final sign off – all matters addressed:

Ecologist **Rachel Whyte, Ecologist**	Date **04/08/2023**