Wiltshire Council Planning Consultation Response

ECOLOGY

Officer name:	Max Hemmings
Date:	01/09/2023
Application number:	PL/2023/06050
Proposal:	Conversion of Stables to Annex
Site address:	Fosse Barn, North Wraxall, Chippenham, SN14 7PQ
Case officer:	James Webster

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.

The ecology reports that have been submitted to this application are welcome and have been used to inform this consultation:

- Preliminary Roost Assessment, the Stable Block at Fosse Barn, February 2023 by Acer Ecology.
- Nocturnal Bat Survey Report for Stable block, Fosse Barn, Date: 11.07.2023 by NKM Associates

The reports detail a sufficient survey effort to determine the ecological baseline of the site. The reports confirmed the stable has moderate potential to host roosting bats however the subsequent emergence and re-entry surveys confirm the likely absence of roosting bats.

Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) - Test of likely significance

The application site is within a consultation zone for bats associated with the Bath & Bradford on Avon Bats Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and therefore has potential to result in significant adverse impact on the special features of that site. A test of likely significance has been carried

out by the relevant Competent Authority (Wiltshire Council) as required by Regulation 63 Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019. This concluded that given the scale and nature of the development combined with the confirmation of likely absence of roosting Annex II bats there is no mechanism for adverse effect. **The HRA has concluded that the application is not likely to have significant impacts on the SAC and Appropriate Assessment is not required.**

CONDITIONS:

1. **Lighting**

No external light fixture or fitting will be installed within the application site unless details of existing and proposed new lighting have been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority in writing. The submitted details will demonstrate how the proposed lighting will impact on bat habitat compared to the existing situation.

REASON: To avoid illumination of habitat used by bats and to protect the condition of Cotswolds AONB.

INFORMATIVES:

Bats
Many species of bat depend on buildings for roosting, with each having its own preferred type of roost. Most species roost in crevices such as under ridge tiles, behind roofing felt or in cavity walls and are therefore not often seen in the roof space. Bat roosts are protected all times by the Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 even when bats are temporarily absent because, being creatures of habit, they usually return to the same roost site every year**. Planning permission for development does not provide a defence against prosecution under this legislation or substitute for the need to obtain a bat licence if an offence is likely. If bats or evidence of bats is found during the works, the applicant is advised to stop work and follow advice from an independent ecologist or the applicant is advised to follow the advice of a professional ecologist or to contact Natural England's Batline through the internet.**

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 GN08-23 "Bats and artificial lighting at night", issued by the Bat Conservation Trust and Institution of Lighting Professionals.

Final sign off – all matters addressed:

Ecologist **Max Hemmings**	Date **01/09/2023**