Wiltshire Council Planning Consultation Response

ECOLOGY

Officer name:	Rachel Whyte
Date:	06/09/2023
Application number:	PL/2023/05626
Proposal:	Installation of lighting in car park
Site address:	Car Park, Land east of Village Hall, Bath Road, Atworth, Melksham, SN12 8JY
Case officer:	Selina Parker-Miles

Recommendations:

	No comment
	Support
	No objection
	Condition (no objection subject to conditions)
X	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)
1.	Bats	WCA 1981, Hab. Regs.	**06/09/2023** – Lux plot with existing and proposed lighting levels which shows zero increase in light spill onto linear features such as walls or hedgerows.	**NO**

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 <u>all</u> 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 not been supported by an ecology report. The site is located within a sensitive area for bats and in the absence of survey information which indicates otherwise, it is assumed that light sensitive bats, including greater horseshoe, could use habitats within and adjacent to the site for commuting and foraging. The proposed lighting specification is therefore considered inappropriate due to the height and intensity of the fixtures and the anticipated light spill on hedgerows and trees. 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.

Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)

The application site is located 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. Appropriate Assessment (AA) under Section 63 of the Habitats Regulations must be carried out by the relevant Competent Authority (the LPA) to determine the potential significant effects and the suitability of any measures proposed to avoid or mitigate those effects.

Insufficient information has so far been submitted to enable the AA to be undertaken, which must be completed, and the conclusion agreed with Natural England prior to the application being determined.

Further Information Required:

1. A lux contour plan for both the existing lighting levels and the proposed lighting levels must be submitted. There must be zero increase in light spill onto linear features such as walls or hedgerows. There must be less than 0.5 lux increase on adjacent habitat. The lux contour must be plotted at ground level and at a height of 2 metres, as this is the range in which Horseshoe bats tend to fly.

   Where a site is used by such a light-sensitive species, we need to be certain that habitat used by the bats will not be subject to light spill. A more appropriate lighting scheme could comprise directional lighting, a warm white light source (2700 Kelvin or lower), peak wavelength > 550nm and a time delay switch which can only be triggered between set times when the village hall is in use. Column height should be chosen carefully and in consultation with a lighting professional to minimise light spill (see Guidance note GN08-23 "Bats and artificial lighting at night").

Conditions to be imposed once the above issues have been addressed.

Final sign off – all matters addressed:

Ecologist	Date