Wiltshire Council Planning Consultation Response

ECOLOGY

Officer name:	Rachel Whyte
Date:	07/09/2023
Application number:	PL/2023/06824
Proposal:	Change of use of 1 barn to a dwelling.
Site address:	Coach Road Farm, Coach Road, Westbury, BA13 4LU
Case officer:	Steven Vellance

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.	**07/09/2023** – Confirmation on the suitability of all buildings on the site to support roosting bats.	
2.			**07/09/2023** – Mitigation and enhancement strategy.	

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.

<u>Trowbridge Bat Mitigation Strategy (TBMS)</u>

The application site is located with the 'grey hatched' recreational zone of the TBMS. This is an area within a zone of influence within which new residential development is likely to result in increased recreational use of the woodland bat sites. New residential development proposals within this zone will be expected to contribute towards the delivery of mitigation to address strategic recreational pressure. Such mitigation will be paid for through Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). Developers will not pay directly for strategic recreational mitigation. Funding will instead be calculated annually from the number of housing completions and taken from the CIL receipts at the following rate: For residential development, £641.48 per dwelling.

Salisbury Plain

This application lies within the 6.4 km buffer zone of the Salisbury Plain SPA and in light of the HRA for the Wiltshire Core Strategy and the HRA for the Wiltshire Housing Site Allocations Plan it is screened into Appropriate Assessment due to the potential impact of recreational pressure on stone curlew in combination with other plans and projects. In April 2023 Natural England (NE) confirmed that the 2018 Appropriate Assessment for Salisbury Plain continues to be supported by NE. That Appropriate Assessment reached a conclusion of no likely significant effect on the conservation objectives of the SPA, for development within 6.4 km of the SPA boundary provided that the mitigation scheme continues to be implemented. Annual stone curlew monitoring and protection measures continue to be secured by the Council.

Bath & Bradford on Avon Special Area of Conservation (SAC)

The application site is located within a consultation zone for bats associated with the Bath & Bradford on Avon Bats SAC and therefore has potential to result in significant adverse impact on the special features of that site. Insufficient information has so far been submitted to enable the HRA to be undertaken.

A lesser horseshoe night roost has previously been recorded in the barn proposed for conversion (record held by Wiltshire & Swindon Biological Records Centre), this was raised by the LPA ecologist in relation to a 2022 application (PL/2022/08200). The ecologist involved in application PL/2022/08200 carried out an internal inspection of other buildings on the site but did not carry out detailed bat surveys as impacts to these building were not anticipated.

The ecology report submitted in support of the current application confirms the suitability of the barn for night roosting horseshoe bats and surveys reported passes by lesser and greater horseshoe which shows they are using the site. It can therefore be assumed that the barn is still an occasionally used night roost for Annex II bat species associated with the Bath & Bradford on Avon Bats SAC.

An assessment of other buildings on the site has not been provided. If other buildings in the vicinity of the barn are used by roosting bats then these roosts could be impacted by the construction and operation of the proposals.

Further Information Required:

1. Confirmation on the suitability of all buildings on the site to support roosting bats given the proximity of these structures to the barn and the use of the site by bats. The response should be supported by sufficient evidence.
2. Mitigation strategy for bats and measures to enhance the site for biodiversity. Mitigation and enhancement measures must be shown in sufficient detail on an enforceable plan.

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

Final sign off – all matters addressed:

Ecologist	Date