Wiltshire Council Planning Consultation Response

ECOLOGY

Officer name:	Max Hemmings
Date:	13/09/2023
Application number:	PL/2023/06504
Proposal:	Construction of an agricultural building and stable block
Site address:	Braydon Brook Farm, Eastcourt, Malmesbury, SN16 9HP
Case officer:	Hilary Baldwin

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	Ecological Impact Assessment (EcIA) required	CP50, CP52, NPPF	**13/09/2023** An Ecological Assessment has not been submitted in support of this application. Insufficient information to determine potential impacts on habitats and protected/ notable species has been provided.	**NO**
2	No Net Loss/Biodiversity Net Gain	CP50, NPPF	**13/09/2023** Submission of the condition assessment sheets used in the site assessment, together with the unlocked Biodiversity Metric spreadsheet used to calculate no net loss, and where appropriate BNG, accompanied by maps referencing the current measured habitats within the site and those proposed for mitigation or for BNG.	**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 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 proposed development is located in an area of potentially high ecological interest and within an existing green corridor of established woodland. Further information is required to determine the site's importance for biodiversity along with the suitable avoidance and mitigation measures.

Proposed developments should follow the mitigation hierarchy as described in Paragraph 180 of the National Planning Policy Framework and seek to avoid impacts to biodiversity in the first instance before mitigation and compensation can be considered. The below information requests should help determine if impacts can be avoided by alternative siting.

1. **Ecological Impact Assessment (EcIA) required**

Sufficient survey effort completed by a suitably qualified ecologist following best practice guidelines is required to determine the potential ecological impacts from the construction and operational phase of the proposed development.

The impact assessment should include but not be limited to the anticipated increase in noise and light disturbance caused from the proposed development in addition to the habitat loss from the proposed siting of the infrastructure. This impact assessment needs to include the appropriate avoidance and mitigation measures to ensure the area and the green corridor remains functional for biodiversity.

The location and specification of any proposed mitigation measures should be detailed in the proposed site and elevation plans.

2. **No Net Loss/Biodiversity Net Gain**

Core Policy 50 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy requires all development to demonstrate no net loss of biodiversity and for major applications the expectation is that development will deliver a net gain. The NPPF also encourages applications to deliver measurable net gains (para 174 d) and the government has signalled its intention to bring forward legislation to require development to deliver 10% net biodiversity gain. Natural England has now prepared version 4.0 of the Biodiversity Metric that includes a small site metric Beta version. At the current time therefore, the Council expects all applications to demonstrate no net loss of biodiversity and where appropriate to deliver a net gain.

The unlocked Biodiversity Metric calculation spreadsheet should be supported by the condition assessment sheets and maps showing the specific areas of land identified in each row of the calculation tool for the baseline and operational phase of development.

A S106 agreement is required if the applicant wishes to include areas outside of the planning application's red line boundary as part of their off-site mitigation.

Evidence of no net loss of biodiversity has not been submitted and measures to deliver net gain are not proposed. The issue of no net loss must be addressed prior to determination of this application.

In carrying out its statutory function, the LPA must be reasonably sure that the proposal will not result in significant adverse effects on protected habitats or species. The information outlined above must therefore be submitted and reviewed by the LPA's ecology team prior to determination of the application.

CONDITIONS: to be finalised when all information detailed above has been submitted and approved.

Final sign off – all matters addressed:

Ecologist	Date