Wiltshire Council Planning Consultation Response

ECOLOGY

Officer name:	Jenna Buss
Date:	20/11/23
Application number:	PL/2023/07734
Proposal:	Strip tiles from roof and re-cover with natural slate
Site address:	2 SPIRE MEWS, EXETER STREET, SALISBURY, SP1 2AH
Case officer:	Andrew Minting

Recommendations:

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

Further Information Required:

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 following submitted documentation was reviewed to inform this response:

- Preliminary Roost Assessment. August 2023. Daniel Ahern

The plot is located in central Salisbury within the Hampshire River Avon Catchment and New Forest Sites Recreational Zone if Influence. The ecology survey undertaken identified negligible potential for the building to support bats and no further surveys were undertaken.

Although no evidence of protected species were identified during the survey, a number of bat records exist for the wider area. There remains a low risk that bats may occur at the development site. 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.

Hampshire River Avon Catchment

This development falls within the catchment of the River Avon SAC and has potential to cause adverse effects alone or in combination with other developments through discharge of phosphorus in wastewater. 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 Regulations 2017 (as amended). This concluded that as the proposals are for an existing dwelling, there is no mechanism for adverse effect and operational impacts would be de-minimis.

New Forest Protected Sites 13.8km Recreation Zone of Influence

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, there is no mechanism for adverse effect and operational impacts would be de-minimus. **The HRA has concluded that the application is not likely to have significant impacts on the SAC and Appropriate Assessment is not required.**

INFORMATIVES:

Nesting Birds

All British birds, their nests and eggs are protected under Section 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 while birds are nesting, building nests and sitting on eggs. The applicant is advised to check any structure or vegetation capable of supporting breeding birds and delay removing or altering such features until after young birds have fledged. Damage to extensive areas that could contain nests/breeding birds should be undertaken outside the breeding season. This season is usually taken to be the period between 1st March and 31st August but some species are known to breed outside these limits.

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 in the UK", issued by the Bat Conservation Trust and Institution of Lighting Professionals.

Final sign off – all matters addressed:

Ecologist	Date
Jenna Buss	20/11/2023