Wiltshire Council Planning Consultation Response

ECOLOGY

Officer name:	Rachel Whyte
Date:	08/11/2023
Application number:	PL/2023/05064
Proposal:	Erection of a new gym building and briefing tent with associated landscaping and demolition of existing briefing facility (5 year time limited)
Site address:	Knook Camp, Camp Road, Knook, Warminster, Wilts
Case officer:	Becky Jones

Recommendations:

	No comment
	Support
	No objection
X	Condition (no objection subject to conditions)
	Objection - further information required
	Objection in principle
X	HRA completed – screened out of AA (consultation with NE not 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.

Ecological survey of the site was carried out by LC Ecological Services at a suitable time of year and following industry guidelines. I consider that the level of survey has been thorough and appropriate to both the nature of the site and the scale of the development. I am satisfied that there is sufficient information to be able to make a judgement as to whether protected habitats and/or species are likely to be adversely impacted by the proposed development and that no further survey is required in relation to the current application.

The ecological survey found that the habitats within the site are of generally low importance for conservation and impacts to ecology are expected to be limited to a temporary loss of semi-improved grassland habitat. The report includes a recommendation to plant semi-improved grassland species elsewhere on site as compensation, this would be in accordance with Core Policy 50.

A sensitive lighting scheme has been submitted due to the site's location within the Cranbourne Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Lighting schemes within the AONB should comply with the Institute of Lighting Engineers Environmental Zone E0. Compliance with this lighting scheme would also ensure habitats on and near the site remain accessible for nocturnal wildlife e.g., bats.

Habitat Regulations Assessment

River Avon Catchment

This development falls within the catchment of the River Avon Special Area of Conservation (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 will not result in an increase in overnight accommodation that there is no mechanism for adverse effect and operational impacts would be de-minimis.

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. The development will be carried out in strict accordance with the following documents:
    - RE: Ecological Appraisal of Knook Camp, Camp Road, Warminster, BA12 0JB. LC Ecological Services. 6th December 2022.

    REASON: For the avoidance of doubt and for the protection, mitigation and enhancement of biodiversity.

    Note to case officer: should the application be successful, please include a condition regarding the lighting scheme and compliance with the Institute of Lighting Engineers Environmental Zone E0 in the interests of conserving biodiversity, notably bats/nocturnal wildlife.

INFORMATIVES:

Protected Species General

The applicant should note that under the terms of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and the Habitats Regulations 2017 (as amended) it is an offence to disturb or harm any protected species including for example, breeding birds and reptiles. The protection offered to some species such as bats, extends beyond the individual animals to the places they use for shelter or resting. Please note that this consent does not override the statutory protection afforded to any such species. In the event that your proposals could potentially affect a protected species you should seek the advice of a suitably qualified and experienced ecologist and consider the need for a licence from Natural England prior to commencing works. Please see Natural England's website for further information on protected species.

Final sign off – all matters addressed:

Ecologist **Rachel Whyte**	Date **08/11/2023**