Wiltshire Council Planning Consultation Response

ECOLOGY

Officer name:	Rachel Whyte
Date:	14/11/2023 05/12/2023
Application number:	PL/2023/08166
Proposal:	Extension and alteration works including replacement of the former single storey extension at the rear with a new 2-storey rear extension and a single storey orangery which allows for the ground and first floor layouts to be replanned and modernised. The existing garage is to be replaced and repositioned further away from the house, and a new greenhouse is to be erected in the garden.
Site address:	Hartwood House, Woodborough, Pewsey, SN9 5PN
Case officer:	Helena Carney

Recommendations:

	No comment
	Support
	No objection
X	Condition (no objection subject to conditions)
	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.	**14/11/2023** - Update Bat Mitigation Plan.	**YES 05/12/2023** - Proposed Bat Mitigation. Ref: 544 053A. Absolute Architecture.
2.			**14/11/2023** - Update elevations to include bat access point and bat box.	**YES 05/12/2023** - Proposed Elevations. Ref: 544 060B. Absolute Architecture.

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.

Ecological survey of the site was carried out by Ecology by Design Ltd 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.

Bat droppings belonging to brown long-eared, serotine and Natterer's bat were found in the loft void of Hartwood House. It is understood that access to the roost is no longer available for bats. The recommendation to create a dedicated space for bats in the loft and reinstate the access is therefore welcomed. Some additional information is required to secure these recommendations.

The ecology report recommends the provision of one bat box as an ecological enhancement. This would be in accordance with Core Policy 50.

Further Information Required:

1. Update Bat Mitigation Plan to include dimensions of the bat loft and bat access point.

   The bat loft should be of sufficient size for use by the target species. The mitigation plan should include details of any other features to be installed in the bat loft to provide additional opportunities for roosting bats. Information on the number, location and dimensions of access points should also be shown on the plan.

2. Update elevations to include bat access point and bat box.

   Bat access points and the proposed bat box should also be shown on the elevations drawing.

Salisbury Plain

This application lies within the 6.4 km buffer zone of the Salisbury Plain Special Protection Area (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.

River Avon

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 constitute the extension of an existing dwelling and there will be no increase in occupancy that there is no mechanism for adverse effect and operational impacts would be de-minimis.

CONDITIONS:

1. The development will be carried out in strict accordance with the following documents:
    - Proposed Bat Mitigation. Ref: 544 053A. Absolute Architecture.
    - Proposed Elevations. Ref: 544 060B. Absolute Architecture.
    - Bat Report. V2.0. 16th November 2023. Ecology by Design Ltd.

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

2. Bat roosts and bat access points will be incorporated into the development in accordance with Proposed Bat Mitigation (Rev A. 20th October 2023). The installation of these bat roosts and access features will be supervised by a professional ecologist and this part of the condition will be discharged when photographic evidence of installed features have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. These bat roosts and access points will continue to be available for bats for the lifetime of the development.

    REASON: To mitigate for impacts to bats arising from the development.

3. No new external artificial lighting shall be installed at the site unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority.

    REASON: In the interests of conserving biodiversity.

INFORMATIVES:

Bats

Evidence of roosting bats was identified in the loft of Hartwood House. Bat roosts are protected all times by the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) 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 fresh 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 through the internet.

Artificial Light

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 at night", issued by the Bat Conservation Trust and Institution of Lighting Professionals.

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 **05/12/2023**