Wiltshire Council Planning Consultation Response

ECOLOGY

Officer name:	Rachel Whyte
Date:	04/01/2024
Application number:	PL/2023/05074
Proposal:	Minor alterations to existing outbuildings in the south-east corner of the garden, refurbished wall and roof sheeting, two buildings to have new roof sheeting.
Site address:	Box Cottage, 34 Whistley Road, Potterne, Devizes, SN10 5QY
Case officer:	Steve Tapscott

Recommendations:

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

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 undertaken by Seasons Ecology at an appropriate time of year, following best practice guidelines for survey methodology. I am satisfied that a suitable level of survey has been conducted to properly inform this application.

The ecology report makes a series of recommendations in Section 6 for precautionary measures to be implemented as part of the development to ensure that protected species are not adversely impacted by the works. These include a pre-works inspection and provision of features for birds and bats to provide an enhancement for biodiversity.

CONDITIONS:

1. The development will be carried out in strict accordance with the following documents:
    - Section 6 of Preliminary Bat roost Assessment. Report ref: SEB2785_01. September 2023. Seasons Ecology.

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

2. Features for bats and birds will be incorporated into the development in accordance with:
    - Section 6 of Preliminary Bat roost Assessment. Report ref: SEB2785_01. September 2023. Seasons Ecology.
    - Bat and Bird Box Information. November 2023. Anna Hammond Architect.

- Site Block Plan – Proposed. Drawing no: 34-L-03. Rev. C. Anna Hammond Architect.
- Existing Side Elevations. Drawing no: 34-E-02. Rev. D. Anna Hammond Architect.
- Proposed Outbuildings Elevations. Drawing no: 34-E-23. Rev. F. Anna Hammond Architect.
- Proposed Outbuildings Elevations. Drawing no: 34-E-22. Rev. E. Anna Hammond Architect.

The installation of these features will be supervised by a professional ecologist. These features will continue to be available for the target species for the lifetime of the development.

REASON: To provide an enhancement for biodiversity.

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

There is 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 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 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.

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

Final sign off – all matters addressed:

Ecologist **Rachel Whyte**	Date **04/01/2024**