Wiltshire Council Planning Consultation Response

ECOLOGY

Officer name:	Rachel Whyte
Date:	15/01/2024
Application number:	PL/2023/09197
Proposal:	Change of use of agricultural land to residential to provide additional private amenity space to Farrier House, including formation of pond for ecological benefits.
Site address:	Farrier House, Sunton, Collingbourne Ducis, Marlborough, Wilts, SN8 3DY
Case officer:	Georgina Wright

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.

The application is within the Hampshire Avon River Catchment Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and the Salisbury Plain Special Protection Area (SPA) visitor catchment. Due to the nature of the proposals however no impact to either site is anticipated, and no further assessment is required under Regulation 63 of Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended).

The River Bourne occurs along the eastern site boundary. The river is listed as a priority habitat and must be protected during the proposed works. A condition to secure the production of a Construction Method Statement has been recommended. There should be no increase in artificial lighting along this river corridor during construction or operation.

The creation of a pond for ecological benefit is welcomed, it is expected that such a pond will not be stocked with fish. The proposals also include new native hedgerow, tree planting, and planting of bulbs and pond plants, which are likely to bring ecological benefits. A Habitat Creation and Management Plan is required to secure the enhancements. This document should include details of how the pond will be planted and managed, this must include the use of species which are known to be non-invasive in the wild, though the use of native species only is preferred. The plan must also state that the pond will not be stocked with fish due to the risk of fish escape into the nearby River Bourne during high water levels. There is some variation in the proposed landscaping between the landscape proposals and proposed site plan, this can be clarified in the Habitat Creation and Management Plan. It is recommended that the Habitat Creation and Management Plan is secured via condition, if not provided prior to determination.

CONDITIONS:

1. The development will be carried out in strict accordance with the following documents:
    - Site Plan. Drawing no: 191015-20. Rev B. January 2022. Fowler Architecture & Planning.
    - Farrier Cottage – Landscape Proposals. Drawing no: ACLA/BTU 02. ACLA Ltd.

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

2. No development shall commence on site (including any vegetation removal or demolition), until a Construction Method Statement has been submitted to, and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Construction Method statement shall include measures for the protection of the natural environment, including how pollution of the watercourse will be prevented during construction works and how artificial lighting on site will be managed. Development shall be carried out in strict accordance with the approved Construction Method Statement.

    REASON: To ensure the development avoids causing harm to sensitive ecological features.

3. No development shall commence on site (including any vegetation removal or demolition), until a Habitat Creation and Management Plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. These details shall include:

    i. Details of how the proposed pond will be created, planted and managed for the benefit of biodiversity. This should include restrictions on the introduction of fish and invasive plant species.
    ii. Details of how the proposed hedgerow, trees and bulbs will be planted and managed to ensure successful establishment and benefit for biodiversity. This should include a marked plan showing the locations and extents of each feature.

    The Habitat Creation and Management Plan shall be implemented in full and for the lifetime of the development in accordance with the approved details.

    REASON: To avoid adverse impacts on biodiversity.

4. 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:

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.

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	Date
Rachel Whyte	**15/01/2024**