Wiltshire Council Planning Consultation Response

ECOLOGY

Officer name:	Rachel Whyte
Date:	15/02/2024
Application number:	PL/2023/11145
Proposal:	Partial conversion and partial demolition of barn to create 1 residential dwelling (Use Class C3), outbuilding, landscaping and associated works.
Site address:	Barn at Littlecott Farm, Enford, Pewsey, SN9 6AN
Case officer:	Hayley Clark

Recommendations:

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

Further Information Required:

	Issue	Policy/Legislative Compliance	Date Information Requested & Further Information Required	Satisfactorily Addressed (Document & Date)
1.	River Avon SAC	Hab. Regs, CP 69	**15/02/2024** - Nutrient Mitigation Strategy.	**NO**
2.	Bats	WCA 1981, Hab. Regs.	**15/02/2024** – Clarification on hibernation potential.	**NO**
3.			**15/02/2024** – Impact assessment and mitigation strategy for confirmed roosts in the locality.	**NO**
4.	Ecological mitigation	CP 50, WCA 1981, NPPF 2023, Hab. Regs.	**15/02/2024** – Ecological Mitigation to be shown on site plans.	**NO**
5.	Biodiversity no net loss/ enhancement	CP 50, NPPF 2023	**15/02/2024** - Proposed plans to show areas of vegetation to be removed alongside proposed landscaping.	**NO**

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.

The application is supported by a Preliminary Ecological Assessment and Bat Survey and Assessment by Ellendale Environmental.

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. Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) under Section 63 of the Habitats Regulations must be carried out by the relevant Competent Authority (the LPA) to determine the potential significant effects and the suitability of any measures proposed to avoid or mitigate those effects. Insufficient information has so far been submitted to enable the HRA to be undertaken, which must be completed prior to the application being determined.

This application is considered to be non-planned development and must therefore follow guidance published by Natural England and use the River Avon nutrient calculator to calculate the phosphorus budget. Information on calculating the phosphorus budget can be found here: https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/planning-bio-phosphorous-nitrogen-mitigation

Where mitigation is required, a bespoke scheme must be agreed by Natural England in the first instance. We advise that developers contact Natural England through their charged advice service https://www.gov.uk/guidance/developers-get-environmental-advice-on-your-planning-proposals. Natural England has set out guidance on the type of phosphorus removal measures that are appropriate as mitigation such as permanent removal of agricultural land or creation of wetlands.

The application must submit their own mitigation strategy showing that the development will achieve nutrient neutrality, together with a letter from NE demonstrating that the strategy and development proposals submitted for planning have been reviewed by them and found to be compliant with the Habitats Regulations.

The Council, as competent authority needs to have certainty that the development proposals will not have an adverse effect on the integrity of the European site. Currently the application does not include detailed proposals to mitigate the impacts of these increases in phosphorus and consequently, without such detailed proposals, the Council as a competent authority cannot conclude that there would be no adverse effect on the integrity of this European site as a result of the development.

Salisbury Plain

This application lies within the 6.4 km buffer zone of the Salisbury Plain Special Protection Area 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 adverse effects on site integrity for development within 6.4km 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.

Further Information Required

1. River Avon – Nutrient Mitigation Strategy

   The application must submit their own mitigation strategy showing the development will achieve nutrient neutrality, together with a letter from NE demonstrating that the strategy and development proposals submitted for planning have been reviewed by them and found to be compliant with the Habitats Regulations.

2. Bats – Hibernation Potential

   A tunnel is present underneath the building which is deemed suitable for roosting bats. Further information and justification is required on the potential of this tunnel for use by hibernating bats. The response should be supported by sufficient evidence.

3. Bats – Confirmed Roosts

   The surveys have identified a roost in a nearby barn however it is not clear how close this barn is to the barn proposed for conversion. Further information is required to demonstrate that the proposals will not impact on confirmed roosts in the vicinity. If this is not possible a suitable mitigation strategy will be required.

4. Ecological Mitigation

   Details of ecological features (i.e., bat and bird boxes) must be shown on elevations drawings. The dimensions of the permanent provision for barn owl, including the access point, must also be shown. Features must seek to benefit a target species/s or group/s and demonstrate viability in terms of position on building, location and clustering in accordance with relevant guidance.

5. Biodiversity No Net Loss/Enhancement

   Proposed plans to show areas of vegetation to be removed alongside proposed landscaping.

Final sign off – all matters addressed:

Ecologist	Date