Wiltshire Council Planning Consultation Response

ECOLOGY

Officer name:	Elizabeth Burrows
Date:	14/05/2024
Application number:	PL/2023/09633
Proposal:	Internal and external modifications and extension to existing ancillary residential building (former Coach House) to improve accommodation and create swimming pool, with associated works.
Site address:	The Coach House, Hisomley Farmhouse, Hisomley, Dilton Marsh, Wilts, BA13 4DD
Case officer:	Gen Collins

Recommendations:

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

Matters Considered:

- Bat Survey Report. The Coach House, Hisomley, Farmhouse, Hisomley, Wiltshire. (Stark Ecology, July 2022).
- Planning and Listed Building Application September 2022. Outbuilding, Hisolmley Farmhouse, Wiltshire. Design Access and Heritage Statement. Conversion, retrofit and extension. (Mark Ellerby Architects, September 2023).
- Site Layout and Location Plan. Drawing Number: 2022-150SK01. (Mark Ellerby Architects, 2022/10/2018)

Surveys confirm gaps under the roof of the building are used by individual whiskered bat/s for roosting. As stated in the submitted reports any work to replace the roof of The Coach House will result in disturbance and modification of this bat roost and the existing access to the roost will be lost. **A European Protected Species (EPS) bat Mitigation Licence will need to be obtained for the lawful construction of this development. In terms of ecology sufficient information has been provided to ensure that favourable conservation status of (whiskered bat) can be maintained should the application be approved.**

Mitigation as recommended in the Discussion and Conclusions section of the Bat Survey report and section 2.6 Ecology – Design of the Design Access and Heritage Statement including, but not exclusively, adherence to sensitive construction working methodologies and installation of bat boxes on the east or west gable ends of the building will be required. Installation of swift eaves boxes as recommended in the Design Access and Heritage Statement and enhancement of the retained hedge with native species as shown on the Proposed Site Layout are likely to result in biodiversity benefits and are welcomed.

Habitat Regulations Assessment

The application site is within consultation zones for bats associated with the Bath & Bradford on Avon Bats Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and recreational impacts on Salisbury Plain SPA. 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 (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019. This concluded that given the minor scale and nature of the development there is no mechanism for adverse effect. **The HRA has concluded that the application is not likely to have significant impacts on the SAC and Appropriate Assessment is not required.**

CONDITIONS:
The following, or similarly worded, conditions are recommended.

Compliance with submitted documents

The development will be carried out in strict accordance with the following documents:

- Mitigation as recommended in the Discussion and Conclusions Bat Survey Report. The Coach House, Hisomley, Farmhouse, Hisomley, Wilthire. (Stark Ecology, July 2022).
- Enahncement as detailed in section 2.6 Ecology – Design of the Design Access and Heritage Statement (Mark Ellerby Architects, September 2023).

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

Informative:

For applications where a bat roost is impacted and an EPSL is required.

The roof of the Coach House, Hisomley Farmhouse is used as a bat roost. Under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), it is an offence to harm or disturb bats or damage or destroy their roosts. Planning permission for development does not provide a defence against prosecution under this legislation. The applicant is advised that a European Protected Species Licence will be required before any work is undertaken to implement this planning permission. Future conversion of the roof space to living accommodation or replacing the roof could also breach this legislation and advice should be obtained from a professional bat ecologist before proceeding with work of this nature.

Final sign off – all matters addressed:

Ecologist	Date
Elizabeth Burrows	14/05/2024