Wiltshire Council Planning Consultation Response

ECOLOGY

Officer name:	Max Hemmings
Date:	29/05/2024
Application number:	PL/2023/08639
Proposal:	Change of use of existing public house (Sui Generis) to two x four bedroom and one x two bedroom dwellings (Use Class C3), erection of a four bedroom detached dwellings (Use Class C3), including demolition of existing outbuilding and single storey extension, utilising the existing access off Audley Road, with associated parking and hard and soft landscaping.
Site address:	Sir Audley Arms, Audley Road, Chippenham, SN14 0DY
Case officer:	Rose Fox

Recommendations:

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

The Ecology reports submitted to this application are welcomed. The reports confirm the likely absence of roosting bats.

It should be noted that comments below are reliant on the accuracy and completeness of the submitted reports (EcIA and BNG metric calculation), and we do not take any responsibility for incorrect data or interpretation made by the authors.

The ecology report recommends enhancements for the site, however no biodiversity enhancement features are included in the proposed elevations and plans. Therefore, we request a Biodiversity Enhancement Plan is conditioned. The plan should detail the number, locations and specifications of the biodiversity enhancement features such as but not limited to the bat and bird boxes and hedgehog highways in property fences. The features should be created at the ratio of at least 1:1 feature to residential unit in accordance with best practice guidelines. The 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. The feature specifications and positioning should seek to increase the likelihood of uptake by their target species. This will likely result in some properties hosting clusters of features (such as swift bricks) compared to other proposed properties in less favourable areas for biodiversity.

We support the Arboricultural Officer's request for compliance to the Arboricultural Method Statement dated 17th October 2023 and Landscape officer's requested conditions which are copied below for ease of reference.

To reduce the number of documents to review at discharge of condition it would greatly preferred if the proposed biodiversity enhancement features are included in the requested Landscape Plan.

CONDITIONS:

1. **Lighting**

No external light fixture or fitting will be installed within the application site unless details of existing and proposed new lighting have been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority in writing.

The plans will be in accordance with the appropriate Environmental Zone standards set out by the Institution of Lighting Professionals (ILP) Guidance Notes on the Avoidance of Obtrusive Light (GN 01/2021) and Guidance note GN08/23 “Bats and artificial lighting at night”, issued by the Bat Conservation Trust and Institution of Lighting Professionals.

REASON: In the interests of conserving biodiversity.

2. **Biodiversity Enhancement Plan**

Prior to the commencement of the development, including vegetation removal and demolition, a Biodiversity Mitigation and Enhancement Plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The plan should include but not be limited to the location and specification of bird and bat boxes to be installed. The approved details shall be implemented before occupation of the final works.

The installation of these features detailed with in the plan will be supervised by a professional ecologist. These features will continue to be available for wildlife for the lifetime of the development.

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

3. **Landscaping Plan**

No development shall commence on site until a detailed scheme of hard and soft landscaping has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, the details of which shall include:

- location and current canopy spread of all existing trees and hedgerows on the land;
- full details of any trees and hedgerows to be retained, together with measures for their protection in the course of development;
- a detailed planting plan and specification showing all plant species, supply and planting sizes, and planting densities along with means of temporary support;
- finished levels and contours;
- means of enclosure;
- car park layouts;
- other vehicle and pedestrian access and circulation areas;
- all hard and soft surfacing materials;
- minor artefacts and structures (e.g. furniture, play equipment, refuse and other storage units, signs, lighting etc);
- proposed and existing functional services above and below ground (e.g. drainage, power, communications, cables, pipelines etc indicating lines, manholes, supports etc);

- retained historic landscape features and proposed restoration, where relevant.

REASON: The application contained insufficient information to enable this matter to be considered prior to granting planning permission and the matter is required to be agreed with the Local Planning Authority before development commences in order that the development is undertaken in an acceptable manner, to ensure a satisfactory landscaped setting for the development and the protection of existing important landscape features.

4. Landscaping Creation and Maintenance

All soft landscaping comprised in the approved details of landscaping shall be carried out in the first planting and seeding season following the first occupation of the building(s) or the completion of the development whichever is the sooner; All shrubs, trees and hedge planting shall be maintained free from weeds and shall be protected from damage by vermin and stock. Any trees or plants which, within a period of five years, die, are removed, or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of a similar size and species, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority. All hard landscaping shall also be carried out in accordance with the approved details prior to the occupation of any part of the development or in accordance with a programme to be agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

REASON: To ensure a satisfactory landscaped setting for the development and the protection of existing important landscape features.

INFORMATIVES

The applicant should note that under the terms of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) and the Habitats Regulations (2017) 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 **Max Hemmings**	Date **29/05/2024**