

Wiltshire Council Planning Consultation Response

ECOLOGY

Officer name:	Rachel Whyte
Date:	07/05/2025
Application number:	PL/2025/01783
Proposal:	Establishment of stables, paddocks and area to exercise horses. Area for personal not commercial use.
Site address:	Plot 2-3, Newton Lane, Whiteparish, SP5 2QQ
Case officer:	Amy Houldsworth

Recommendations:

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

Further Information Required:

	Issue	Policy/Legislative Compliance	Date Information Requested & Further Information Required	Satisfactorily Addressed (Document & Date)
1.	River Test - HRA	Habs regs.	07/05/2025 – Confirmation of whether the proposals will result in intensification of equestrian use.	NO
2.	Biodiversity Net Gain	Town and Country Planning Act 1990	07/05/2025 – Confirmation of whether or not the proposals are retrospective	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 all 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 Appraisal (V1) and Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment (V2) by Arbtech.

The ecology reports indicate that the proposals have largely already been carried out. Nevertheless, the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (V1) identifies the sensitive ecological features relevant to the site and makes a series of recommendations to ensure that sensitive ecological features are not adversely impacted by the works.

Core Policy 50 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy requires all development to demonstrate no net loss of local biodiversity resource and to secure the integrity of local ecological networks. Core Policy 50 also requires development to seek opportunities to enhance biodiversity, whilst the NPPF encourages applications to deliver measurable net gains (para 193d).

The submitted information demonstrates that the development will not result in a net loss of local biodiversity resource and gains are likely from the enhancement measures detailed in the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (V1) which include:

- One bird box.
- Planting fruit bearing trees and enhancing grassland to create a species-rich sward.
- Creation of brash piles.

The proposals do not appear to have incorporated these recommendations and a condition has been recommended to secure ecological enhancements.

Habitat Regulations Assessment

River Test Catchment

WCS policy CP50 (Biodiversity and Geodiversity) and the NPPF requires the Local Planning Authority to ensure protection of important habitats and species in relation to development and seeks enhancement for the benefit of biodiversity through the planning system. Whilst the application site is not adjacent to any rivers or in any respective flood zones, it is situated within the River Test catchment which drains into the Solent. This region is protected by a number of international designations including the Solent Maritime Special Area of Conservation (SAC), Chichester and Langstone Harbours Special Protection Area (SPA) and Ramsar site, Portsmouth Harbour SPA and Ramsar site, Solent and Southampton Water SPA and Ramsar site; as well as the nationally designated Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) that underpin these international designations.

It is unclear whether the proposals will facilitate additional horses on the site (i.e., intensification of use) or if the number of horses will stay the same and the application just seeks to formalise facilities for the existing horses. Confirmation of this is required.

New Forest 13.8km Zone of Influence

The proposed development site lies within the 13.8km zone of influence for the New Forest internationally protected sites, which comprises the New Forest SPA, New Forest SAC and New Forest Ramsar site. Many of the special features of the New Forest protected sites afforded protection are vulnerable to adverse effects associated with an increase in recreation as demonstrated in Natural England's supplementary advice issued for the SPA on 19 March 2019 and for the SAC on 18 March 2019.

The proposals will not result in an increase in overnight accommodation and therefore no associated increase in recreational pressure is anticipated. No other mechanism for adverse effect on the New Forest designated sites has been identified and Appropriate Assessment under Regulation 63 Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) is not required.

Biodiversity Net Gain

From 12 February 2024 Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) became mandatory under Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as inserted by Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021). Biodiversity net gain information has been submitted however there is evidence that the

works on site have been carried out and the application is retrospective, confirmation of this is required.

Draft CONDITIONS:

1. **Prior to commencement/Within two months of this permission** an Ecological Enhancement Plan will be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The plan will include the locations of new features for wildlife and the extent and species composition of the habitat creation proposed in the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (V1) and Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment (V2) by Arbtech.

The Ecological Enhancement Plan will be implemented in full and habitats will be managed for the benefit of biodiversity for the lifetime of the development.

REASON: To provide enhancement for biodiversity.

Final sign off – all matters addressed:

Ecologist	Date
-----------	------