

Wiltshire Council Planning Consultation Response

ECOLOGY

Officer name:	Jenna Buss
Date:	09/09/2025
Application number:	PL/2025/01833
Proposal:	Erection of a replacement dwelling and detached outbuilding
Site address:	The White Cottage, Miles Common, Semley, Shaftesbury, SP7 9JX
Case officer:	Hayley Clark

Recommendations:

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

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 following submitted documentation was reviewed to inform this response:

- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Bat Survey report. July 2025. Stark Ecology
- Nutrient Neutrality Assessment. February 2025. WCI Nutrient Neutrality
- Proposed Site Plan. January 2025. Brimble Lea
- Planning Statement. February 2025. Brimble Lea

Protected and Notable Species/Habitats

We note the proposals to demolish the existing buildings and erect a new residential building and outbuilding on the site. The ecological survey submitted by Stark ecology highlights the works carried out prior to survey being undertaken. Degradation at site prevents thorough assessment of the impacts on ecology, it therefore cannot be concluded that no protected or notable species were impacted during the habitat clearance works.

It is noted that no evidence of roosting bats was identified during the emergence surveys, however evidence of nesting birds was found and use of the wider site by light sensitive bats was noted. We welcome the proposals outlined within the ecology report to include house martin nests and Vivara pro bat tubes which can be secured by condition through the inclusion of a Wildlife Mitigation and Enhancement Plan. In addition, the proposal to provide a hibernacula is also welcomed and should also be included on the WEMP

Semley Common County Wildlife Site

Semley Common County Wildlife Site sits directly adjacent to the proposed development. Although this was highlighted within the ecology report, no assessment of the impacts on this site were made.

We do however, welcome the proposals to reduce impacts of lighting on the surrounding habitats. Due to the presence of the CWS and light sensitive bat species, dark foraging and commuting routes must be retained and the CWS remain unlit. A lighting strategy should be secured by condition and demonstrate the retention of dark foraging and commuting routes for bats and ensure no light spill onto the adjacent CWS.

Habitat Regulations Assessment: River Avon Special Area of Conservation (SAC) Hampshire Catchment

This development falls within the catchment of the River Avon SAC and has potential to cause adverse effects alone or in combination with other developments through discharge of phosphorus in wastewater.

A test of likely significance has been carried out by the relevant Competent Authority (Wiltshire Council) as required by Regulation 63 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). This concluded that given the 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 subsequently the application is screened out of Appropriate Assessment**

BNG

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). Based on the information available the biodiversity gain planning condition is not considered to apply to this application as the application is for self and Custom Build Development, meaning development which:

- consists of no more than 9 dwellings;
- is carried out on a site which has an area no larger than 0.5 hectares; and
- consists exclusively of dwellings which are self-build or custom housebuilding (as defined in section 1(A1) of the Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015).

CP50 No Net Loss

Core Policy 50 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy requires all development to demonstrate no net loss of biodiversity and to seek opportunities to enhance biodiversity. The NPPF also encourages applications to deliver measurable net gains (para 193d).

The proposed site plan suggests a hedgerow will be planted adjacent to the eastern edge of the CWS. We would advise that the WMEP demonstrates how the CWS will be buffered and protected from development by inclusion of tree and shrub planting of native species on the eastern and southern boundaries. This will also compensate for the loss of habitats on site and ensure no net loss of biodiversity .

CONDITIONS:

1. 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 submitted details will demonstrate how the proposed lighting will impact on bat habitat compared to the existing situation.

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: To avoid illumination of habitat used by bats.

2. Prior to occupation, details of a Wildlife Mitigation and Enhancement Plan must be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. These details shall include:
 - (i) Number, design and locations of bat roost and nesting opportunities for birds and bats
 - (ii) Details of design and location of the reptile hibernacula
 - (iii) Location and species composition of the landscaped and buffer planting between the site and CWS boundary

REASON: To avoid adverse impacts on biodiversity

INFORMATIVES:

Nesting Birds

All British birds, their nests and eggs are protected under Section 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 while birds are nesting, building nests and sitting on eggs. The applicant is advised to check any structure or vegetation capable of supporting breeding birds and delay removing or altering such features until after young birds have fledged. Damage to extensive areas that could contain nests/breeding birds should be undertaken outside the breeding season. This season is usually taken to be the period between 1st March and 31st August but some species are known to breed outside these limits.

Final sign off – all matters addressed:

Ecologist Jenna Buss	Date 09/09/2025
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