

Wiltshire Council Planning Consultation Response

ECOLOGY

Officer name:	Abi Gazzard
Date:	05/12/2025
Application number:	PL/2025/08654
Proposal:	Change of use of land from agricultural to caravan storage (use class B8), construction of hardstanding and erection of fencing
Site address:	The Gables, Brinkworth Road, Ballards Ash, Royal Wootton Bassett, SN4 8DT
Case officer:	Audrey Lo

Recommendations:

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

Thank you for consulting Ecology. I have reviewed the application and supporting documents against OS Maps, aerial photography of the site and surrounding area, together with GIS layers of statutory and non-statutory designated sites and existing records of protected species.

Information considered:

- Planning Statement, Raw Planning, October 2025
- Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment, Abricon, October 2025
- Statutory Biodiversity Metric, Summer Keeble-Carter, October 2025
- Post-development Habitats Plan, Abricon, October 2025

The site comprises an area of land adjacent to an existing caravan storage site where it is proposed to extend the storage area with further hardstanding and lighting.

COMMENTS:

Protected species and habitats

The site comprises a section of existing hardstanding as well as modified grassland. The nearest conservation site is Midgehall Copse, a County Wildlife Site 160m to the north, but it is isolated from the site by an intervening motorway. The site does not fall within any consultation zones for any European protected sites.

The nearest pond is mapped approximately 240m to the southwest and the surrounding areas may offer suitable terrestrial habitat for Great Crested Newts (GCN). However, the grassland on site is reported to comprise a short sward, with some parts heavily managed (as per the BNG letter). The habitats surrounding (e.g., hedgerow to the west), are likely to be of higher suitability for use by GCN. As such, the risk posed to GCN is considered to be minimal.

The proposed lighting is consistent with that already used (two security lights towards the centre of the storage area) and approved under previous planning permission for the existing caravan

storage. These lights are only triggered when activated, and thus will not be in constant use through the night. Given that the site is neighboured by major roads, including a motorway, as well as its current levels of light disturbance, two additional security lights are not considered likely to have any additional significant adverse impact on light-sensitive wildlife.

In line with the NPPF and with CP50, applications must ensure that no net loss of functional habitat for the benefit of wildlife in the local area will occur as a result of the proposed development. Further, gains for biodiversity, relevant to local habitats and wildlife populations, should form part of the proposed development. Given the local species records, the addition of, e.g., a hedgehog nest box or bird box within the wider site, would be welcomed. A condition requiring submission of details of biodiversity enhancements is recommended.

Biodiversity Net Gain

Under Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as inserted by Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021) this application is required to deliver 10% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG). The Biodiversity Gain Plan condition will automatically apply if approval is forthcoming.

Completed maps, condition assessment sheets and statutory metric calculation (*Statutory Biodiversity Metric, Summer Keeble-Carter, October 2025*) stating the baseline and predicted post-development biodiversity units of the site has been submitted.

Information in the completed on-site baseline habitat tabs is accepted as accurate based on the information submitted. The pre-development (baseline) situation is summarised below.

On-site pre-development (baseline) biodiversity value	0.57 Habitat units
	0.00 Hedgerow units
	0.00 Watercourse units
Are there any irreplaceable habitats on-site?	No
Has any habitat degradation of occurred?	No

Confirmation of how the development will achieve BNG is a post-determination matter however consideration should be given to how any proposed BNG will be secured.

The submitted metric indicates 0.63 biodiversity units are required to meet the 10% BNG requirement and that on-site BNG is not achievable. All land located outside the redline application boundary of the development site is considered off-site. All off-site biodiversity gains sites must be registered on the national biodiversity gains site register. Guidance on how to register a biodiversity gains site, and/or allocate off-site gains to your development (e.g., through the purchase of biodiversity units) can be found here: [Make off-site biodiversity gains as a developer - GOV.UK](#). In order for the Biodiversity Gain Plan condition to be discharged, all off-site gains must be shown on the Biodiversity Gain Plan as allocated to this development on the national biodiversity gains site register.

CONDITIONS:

1. Enhancements for Biodiversity

Prior to the commencement of any works, including vegetation removal and demolition, details of the number, design and locations of ecological enhancements – such as nest box(es) for birds

and hedgehogs – shall be submitted to the local authority for approval. The approved details shall be implemented before occupation of the final works.

REASON: To provide mitigation/enhancement for biodiversity.

Sign off by WC Ecologist will only be given once ALL outstanding information has been submitted and agreed sufficient.

Ecologist Abi Gazzard	Date 05/12/2025
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