

Wiltshire Council Planning Consultation Response

ECOLOGY

Officer name:	Abi Gazzard
Date:	08/12/2025
Application number:	PL/2025/08704
Proposal:	Double storey rear extension and internal alterations
Site address:	Nicholson House, 43c, Winsley, Bradford On Avon, BA15 2LE
Case officer:	Andrew Thomas

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:

- Design Statement, NVB Studio, October 2025
- Preliminary Roost Assessment, ACP, September 2025
- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, ACP, September 2025
- Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment, ACP, October 2025
- Statutory Biodiversity Metric, David Stanley, October 2025

The site comprises a detached dwelling where it is proposed to construct a large two-storey extension to the rear. The property is surrounded by trees/woodland, with a grassland field to the west and further buildings to the north, east and south.

COMMENTS:

Bath and Bradford-on-Avon Bats Special Area for Conservation (SAC)

The site is located within four core roost buffers (consultation zones) for Greater Horseshoe and Lesser Horseshoe bats, associated with the Bath and Bradford-on-Avon SAC. The current proposal therefore has potential to result in significant adverse impact on the special features of the Bath and Bradford-on-Avon SAC.

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 currently proposed development which does not propose removal of any significant vegetation, and does not propose any additional external lighting, there is no mechanism for adverse impact on the Conservation Objectives of the SAC, and the proposal can be screened out of Appropriate Assessment.

Protected species

There are numerous bat roost records within 200m of the site, including older (>10 years) records of Greater and Lesser Horseshoe bats. However, the site provides habitat of limited connectivity or value to foraging and commuting bats (mown amenity grassland and a small group of trees). The group of trees bordering the site (~30m in length) are disconnected from other linear commuting features by roads and street lighting, with the more favourable continuous habitat (hedgerow leading into a line of trees, grassland areas, woodland) on the other side of the road to the west and south. In any case, it appears that only 2 small trees are proposed for removal with the bordering trees to be retained, and no external lighting is proposed.

The building itself was assessed as having negligible potential for hosting roosting bats, and no further surveys are considered necessary. A precautionary working method is advised in the bat survey report; this should be adhered to.

In line with the NPPF and with CP50, gains for biodiversity relevant to local habitats and wildlife populations should form part of the proposed development. 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 (*Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment, ACP, October 2025; Statutory Biodiversity Metric, David Stanley, 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	1.40 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.

CONDITIONS:

1. Compliance with submitted documents

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

- Preliminary Roost Assessment, ACP, September 2025
- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, ACP, September 2025
- Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment, ACP, October 2025

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

2. 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 bats – 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.

INFORMATIVE – bats

There is a low risk that bats may occur at the development site. Many species of bat depend on buildings for roosting, with each having its own preferred type of roost. Most species roost in crevices such as under ridge tiles, behind roofing felt or in cavity walls and are therefore not often seen in the roof space. Bat roosts are protected all times by the Conservation of Habitats and Species 2017 (as amended) even when bats are temporarily absent because, being creatures of habit, they usually return to the same roost site every year. Planning permission for development does not provide a defence against prosecution under this legislation or substitute for the need to obtain a bat licence if an offence is likely. If bats or evidence of bats is found during the works, the applicant is advised to stop work and follow advice from an independent ecologist or the applicant is advised to follow the advice of a professional ecologist or to contact Natural England's Batline through the internet.

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

Ecologist Abi Gazzard	Date 08/12/2025
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