

Wiltshire Council Planning Consultation Response

ECOLOGY

Officer name:	Jenna Buss
Date:	11/12/2025
Application number:	PL/2025/05596
Proposal:	Creation of a wetland including ponds, scrapes and ditches
Site address:	Land at Stockham Marsh near Foxham, Wiltshire
Case officer:	Iosbella Wise

Recommendations:

	No Comment
	Support
	No objection
x	Condition (no objection subject to conditions)
	Objection - further information required
	Objection in principle
	HRA 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. June 2025. Environment Bank
- Feasibility Report. September 2024. Hydro Morph
- Development Plan WILT18-PAP-P02. June 2025. Environment Bank

Biodiversity Net Gain

This application appears to be for the purposes of securing a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Habitat Bank. However, the term 'Habitat Bank' is not stated within the application title, though it is referenced in the BNG section of the form when justifying exemption. It is therefore our understanding that this application is solely for the purposes of providing a Habitat Bank and any permissions granted must therefore secure its use for that purpose.

Accordingly, we acknowledge that this application is exempt from BNG due to its intended role as a Habitat Bank. Please note that this permission does not confirm or secure the biodiversity metric, proposed net gain provision or seek to secure the required legal obligations of registering a Habitat Bank as a gain site. Our comments relate to the act of creating the ponds only.

Protected and Notable Species

The PEA submitted in support of this proposal includes an assessment of the site at Stockham Marsh. The current land use comprises of 67.80ha of arable land bordered by hedgerows with the Cade Burna running through the centre of the site. The proposal will include the creation of

12 ponds, 2 ditches and a culvert to increase the biodiversity interest on site providing a Habitat Bank. No impacts are anticipated to the hedgerows on site which will be retained as well as the Cade Burna running through the site.

This application lies upstream from the Kellaways-West Tytherton River Avon SSSI. Works to create the ponds have potential to impact this SSSI through indirect impacts to the Cade Burna. To this end, pollution prevention measures must be provided in the form of a Construction Environment Management Plan (CEMP) to ensure these features are protected during the landscaping works. This could be secured by condition.

A pond is present on site, eDNA surveys undertaken in 2023 returned a negative result for GCN. Although a proportion of the habitats present on site would be suitable to support GCN, the proposed works will be situated largely within the arable and grass ley fields which offer limited potential for amphibians. Due to the lack of records and negative eDNA result, impacts to GCN are considered negligible and are therefore scoped out of this application.

CONDITIONS:

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

- Development Plan WILT18-PAP-P02. June 2025. Environment Bank

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

2. The permitted development is for the purpose of creating a Biodiversity Net Gain Habitat Bank only.

REASON: For the avoidance of doubt and for the protection of biodiversity

3. Prior to the commencement of works, including demolition, ground works/excavation, site clearance, vegetation clearance and boundary treatment works, a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) shall be submitted to the local planning authority for approval in writing. The Plan shall provide details of the avoidance, mitigation and protective measures to be implemented before and during the construction phase, including but not necessarily limited to, the following:

- Identification of ecological protection areas/buffer zones and tree root protection areas and details of physical means of protection, e.g. exclusion fencing
- Working method statements for protected/priority species, such as nesting birds and reptiles.
- Mitigation strategies already agreed with the local planning authority prior to determination, such as for great crested newts, dormice or bats; this should comprise the pre-construction/construction related elements of strategies only.
- Pollution prevention measures to be included and adhered to for the protection of the watercourses on site.
- Work schedules for activities with specific timing requirements in order to avoid/reduce potential harm to ecological receptors; including details of when a licensed ecologist and/or ecological clerk of works (ECoW) shall be present on site.
- Key personnel, responsibilities and contact details (including Site Manager and ecologist/ECoW).

Development shall be carried out in strict accordance with the approved CEMP.

REASON: To ensure adequate protection and mitigation for ecological receptors prior to and during construction, and that works are undertaken in line with current best practice and industry standards and are supervised by a suitably licensed and competent professional ecological consultant where applicable.

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 11/12/2025
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