

Wiltshire Council Planning Consultation Response

ECOLOGY

Officer name:	Jenna Buss
Date:	19/01/2026
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
- Proposed Landscaping Plan 24115-8 A. May 2025. Brimble Lea
- Nutrient Neutrality Assessment. February 2025. WCI Nutrient Neutrality
- Wildlife Mitigation and Enhancement Plan. November 2025. Stark Ecology

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 the 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 Wildlife Mitigation and Enhancement Plan to include house sparrow nests and Vivara pro bat tubes which can be secured by condition.

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. The submitted lighting strategy (Proposed Landscaping Plan 24115-8. May 2025. Brimble Lea) should be secured by condition to ensure 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 Landscaping Plan' submitted provides details of a native hedgerow that will be planted around the boundary of the application site which is welcomed. This should be undertaken at the earliest opportunity and prior to occupation. The hedgerow must be retained and managed in perpetuity to ensure impacts upon the adjacent County Wildlife Site are minimised.

CONDITIONS:

1. The development will be carried out in strict accordance with the following documents:
 - Proposed Landscaping Plan 24115-8 A. May 2025. Brimble Lea
 - Wildlife Mitigation and Enhancement Plan. November 2025. Stark Ecology

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

2. Landscape Planting, as specified on the Proposed Landscaping Plan 24115-8 A. May 2025. Brimble Lea, will be undertaken the first planting season after occupation at the latest and will be retained in full and for the lifetime of the development in accordance with the approved details.

REASON: To ensure the long-term management of landscape and ecological features retained and created by the development, for the benefit of visual amenity and biodiversity for the lifetime of the scheme.

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 19/01/2026
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