

Wiltshire Council Planning Consultation Response

ECOLOGY

Officer name:	Jenna Buss
Date:	19/01/2026
Application number:	PL/2025/06175
Proposal:	Installation of an 18-metre high, 11kW horizontal axis wind turbine (HAWT). The wind turbine will be freestanding tower-mounted with two blades
Site address:	High Post Salt Store, High Post, Amesbury, SP4 6AS
Case officer:	Georgina Wright

Recommendations:

	No Comment
	Support
	No objection
	Condition (no objection subject to conditions)
	Objection - further information required
X	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:

- Location of Proposed Wind Turbine. September 2025. Wiltshire Council

Protected and Notable Species/Habitats

The proposal is for the installation of an 18m high 11kW turbine adjacent to the council salt store site near Amesbury. No supporting ecological information has been submitted in support of the application. However, we note that the blades will measure 12m making the total height closer to 24m.

Birds

The site is in close proximity to the Salisbury Plain Special Protection Area (SPA) 6.4km buffer zone. Under article 4.1 of the EC Directive 79/409 on the Conservation of Wild Birds, the qualifying features of the site include breeding populations of stone curlew *Burhinus oedipnemus*, Eurasian hobby *Falco subbuteo* and Common quail *Coturnix coturnix* together with non breeding populations of Hen harrier *Circus cyaneus*.

Stone curlew have been recorded adjacent to the site and may be affected by the proposed development. Records for skylark, linnet and swift (red list species of conservation concern) also occur in close proximity and these species could be severely impacted by the proposals. Wind turbines are known to cause disturbance to birds through severance of flight lines, displacement leading to habitat loss, and also pose a collision risk.

Due to the proximity to the protected site and the records for these protected species adjacent to the proposed turbine location an objection in principle is raised. Ecological information is required to assess the impacts of this proposal on the adjacent SPA and additional protected and notable bird species in the area. Please see guidance [Wild birds: surveys and monitoring for onshore wind farms - GOV.UK](#) which provides advice on the impact assessments necessary to determine effects of these structures on the bird species present. In addition, I would refer you to the following guidance [Evidence Base for Developer Contributions to Deliver Mitigation Measures for Development around Salisbury Plain SPA](#) which should be considered when submitting applications with potential impacts upon the SPA.

The application site is located adjacent to the statutorily designated Salisbury Plain Special Protection Area and therefore has potential to result in significant adverse impact on the special features of that site. Appropriate Assessment (AA) under Section 63 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) may be required. Insufficient information has so far been submitted to enable an assessment of the impacts upon the adjacent SPA. If an HRA is required, it must be carried out by the relevant Competent Authority (the LPA) to determine the potential significant effects and the suitability of any measures proposed to avoid or mitigate those effects.

Insufficient information has so far been submitted to enable the AA to be undertaken, which must be completed and the conclusion agreed with Natural England prior to the application being determined.

Bats

The proposed turbine is located south-west of the salt store buildings, adjacent to a mature hedgerow that connects to woodland to the east. This habitat network is likely to support foraging and commuting bats and may contain roosting features. Research indicates that bats are vulnerable to turbines through collision, barotrauma, habitat loss, and disruption of flight paths ([Onshore Wind - Threats to bats - Bat Conservation Trust](#)). No ecological assessment has been provided to evaluate these risks. Bats and their roosts are afforded stringent protection under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) and as such are a material consideration within the planning consultation process. Additional information in the form of bat roosting and activity surveys will be required. Where required, an assessment of the impacts upon bats will also be required.

Insufficient information has been provided to assess potential impacts on these protected species. In carrying out its statutory function, the LPA must be reasonably sure that the proposal will not result in significant adverse effects on protected habitats or species. The information included in the summary section below must therefore be submitted and reviewed by the LPA's ecology team prior to determination of the application.

Locally Designated Sites

High Post County Wildlife Site is located approximately 400m to the north-east of the site at the closest point. The site is designated as it supports areas of unimproved calcareous grassland. Given the distance from the site and the scale and nature of the development, it is not considered likely that the proposed works would directly impact the CWS.

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 development meets the following criteria and is therefore below the de minimis threshold, meaning the development:

- does not impact an onsite priority habitat (a habitat specified in a list published under section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006); and
- impacts less than 25 square metres of onsite habitat that has biodiversity value greater than zero and less than 5 metres in length of onsite linear habitat (as defined in the statutory metric).

Note to case officer: you should be satisfied that the proposals meet the above criteria and act accordingly. Further information will be required from the applicant prior to determination in the event the application is considered to be subject to mandatory biodiversity net gain

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

This development falls within the catchment of the River Avon SAC. Due to the nature of the proposals this application is not considered likely 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 .

In Summary

Insufficient information has been submitted in support of this proposal. Additional information as outlined below will be required prior to determination and should include;

- Bird surveys to assess the sites importance to support protected and notable bird species.
- Bat roost assessments of the adjacent trees and buildings.
- Bat activity surveys to assess the sites suitability to support foraging and commuting bats
- Impact assessment of the proposals on all protected and notable species and where appropriate any mitigation measures to minimise adverse effects
- Where appropriate, a shadow HRA to assess impacts on the adjacent SPA.

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.

River Avon Hampshire Catchment

Evidence of compliance to the Wiltshire Council River Avon Special Area of Conservation Mitigation Scheme means the certificate of allocation of credits and confirmation of financial contribution to the scheme.

An alternative mitigation package must be approved by the local planning authority and Natural England with evidence of allocation to the scheme.

Final sign off – all matters addressed:

Ecologist Jenna Buss	Date 19/01/2026
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