

Wiltshire Council Planning Consultation Response

ECOLOGY

Officer name:	Abi Gazzard
Date:	29/01/2026
Application number:	PL/2025/09066
Proposal:	Erection of one replacement dwelling, demolition of garage, new vehicular access, and associated landscaping
Site address:	Brambles, 102 Lye Green, Upper Westwood, Bradford On Avon, BA15 2DT
Case officer:	Julie Mitchell

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:

- Preliminary Ecology Appraisal, Seasons Ecology, August 2025
- Bat Survey, Crossman Associates, October 2025
- Arboricultural Method Statement & Tree Protection Plan, October 2025
- Site Plan Rev A, James Armitage Architects & Urban Designers, revised January 2026
- Design & Access Statement, James Armitage Architects & Urban Designers, October 2025

The site comprises a bungalow proposed for demolition and replacement with a two-storey dwelling. The proposed dwelling will be sited largely on the existing building's footprint, with hardstanding extended into some parts of the garden to accommodate a patio and parking.

COMMENTS:

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

The site lies within a multiple parcel and core roost buffers for Lesser Horseshoe and Greater Horseshoe bats associated with the Bath and Bradford-on-Avon Bats SAC. It therefore may have the potential to result in significant adverse impact on the special features of that site. Appropriate Assessment (AA) under Section 63 of the Habitats Regulations 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.

This application does not propose the removal of any bat roosts or significant bat foraging or commuting habitat – minor areas of modified grassland (within a garden) will be removed to accommodate a parking area, but otherwise, the new dwelling largely falls within the existing dwelling's footprint. The bat emergence survey did not record any activity of qualifying bat

species within the garden. Further, minimal new lighting is proposed (see comments below) and will be positioned to avoid illuminating the surrounding habitats.

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, 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

Owing to suitable gaps in the roofline, mortar and soffit boxes, the bungalow was assessed as having some potential to host roosting bats, albeit low. Accordingly, a dusk emergence survey was undertaken in August 2025. No bats were recorded emerging from the building. Relatively common species were recorded foraging in the garden, as well as a single Greater Horseshoe bat (not seen).

Although it is considered unlikely that the building hosts roosting bats, the report makes suitable precautionary recommendations for the dismantling of the roof and soffits, as well as sensitive lighting design. The Design and Access Statement confirms that lighting is planned only for the entrance doors, to be motion-sensitive on a short timer, and with a warmer colour temperature.

Adherence to these recommendations should be secured via a condition.

The garden provides some suitable bat foraging habitat which, as per the bat survey, was used by a number of common species. However, only minor areas of modified grassland will be lost to accommodate this development (e.g., ~80m² for the parking area, as measured from the Site Plan), and it is noted that a number of new trees and planting beds are proposed, which would help to mitigate for this loss. Further, in line with the NPPF and CP50, the Design and Access statement notes that a bat box, swift boxes, and reptile hibernaculum will be installed. **The locations and specifications of these enhancements should be secured through a planning condition.**

The site includes habitats that could be used by nesting birds. The adults, young, eggs and nests of all species of birds are protected by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) while they are breeding. Please be advised that works should not take place that will harm nesting birds (such as vegetation clearance or building demolition) from March to August inclusive. 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.

Biodiversity Net Gain

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 it 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)

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.

CONDITIONS:

1. Compliance with submitted documents

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

- Section 6 of the Preliminary Ecology Appraisal, Seasons Ecology, August 2025
- Bat Survey, Crossman Associates, October 2025
- Design & Access Statement, James Armitage Architects & Urban Designers, 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 wildlife-friendly plantings, nesting opportunities for birds and roosting opportunities for 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 – Artificial Lighting

The habitat within the proposed development site and the surrounding area is suitable for roosting, foraging and commuting bats. An increase in artificial lux levels can deter bats which could result in roost abandonment and/or the severance of key foraging areas. This will likely result in a significant negative impact upon the health of bat populations across the region. Artificial light at night can have a substantial adverse effect on biodiversity. Any new lighting should be for the purposes for safe access and security and be in accordance with the appropriate Environmental Zone standards set out by the Institute of Lighting Engineers in their publication GN01:2021, 'Guidance for the Reduction of Obtrusive Light' (ILP, 2021), and Guidance note GN08-18 "Bats and artificial lighting in the UK", issued by the Bat Conservation Trust and Institution of Lighting Professionals.

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

Ecologist	Date
Abi Gazzard	29/01/2026