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2nd February 2026

RE: Preliminary Ecological Appraisal at Braemar Lodge Care Home, Salisbury

This letter report serves the purpose of providing the results of the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) carried out at Braemar Lodge Care Home, 18-20 Stratford Road, Salisbury SP1 3JH. Ecosupport Ltd was commissioned by Colten Care to undertake a Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) of the proposed building expansion, following recent refurbishment and extension works at Braemar Lodge Care Home. This letter details the results of the PEA survey.

Brief

The site comprises of a care home at 18-20 Stratford Road, Salisbury SP1 3JH (centred on OS grid reference SU 14071 31292) (**Fig 1**). The site is bound to the north and south by residential properties and associated gardens, to the east by roads, and to the west by athletic track. The wider surrounding environ is the urban expanse of Salisbury and the Avon Valley Nature Reserve.

Figure 1. Approximate redline boundary of the boundary (Wider boundary in blueline and the impacted area in redline) (Google Maps, 2026).



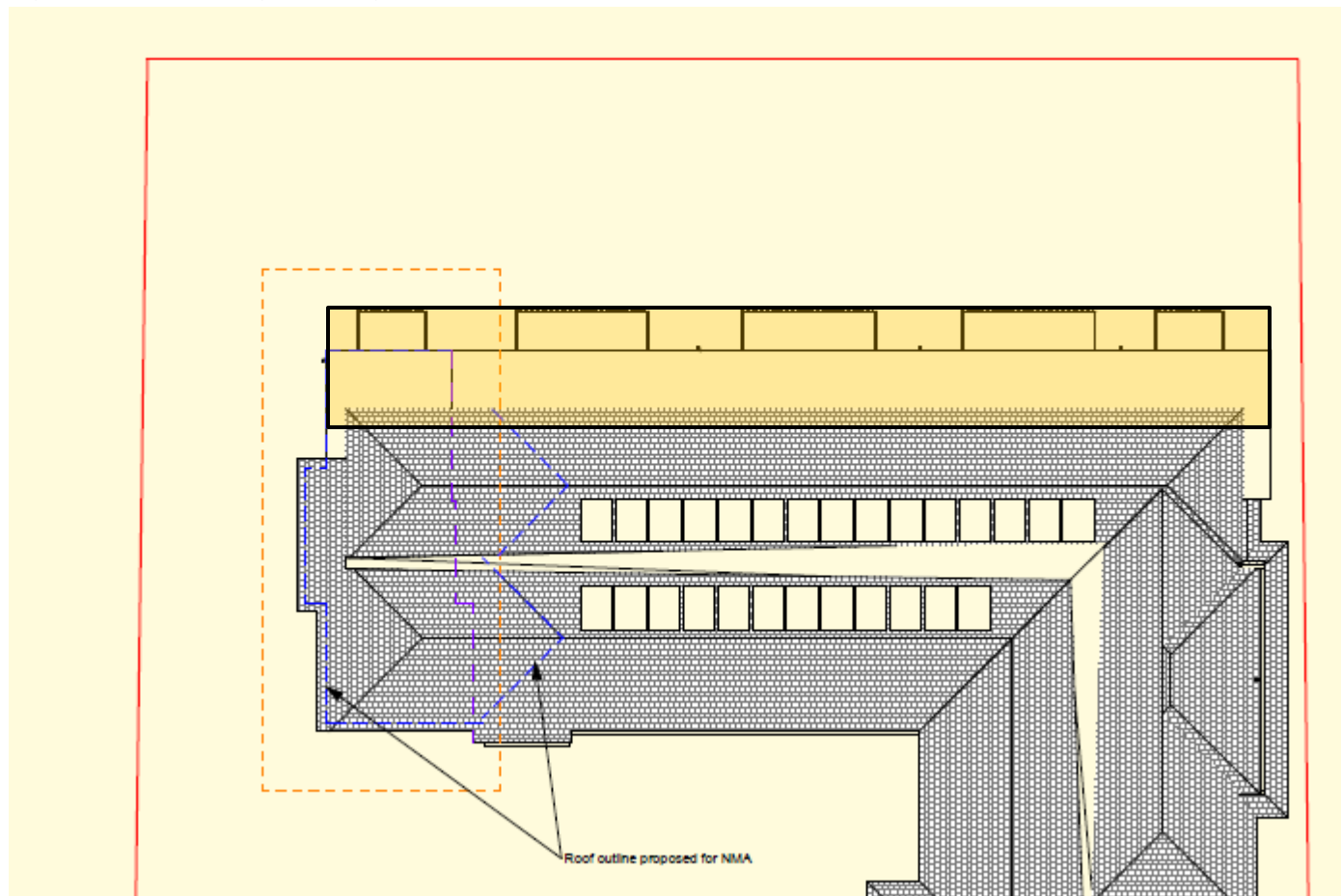
Proposals

It is understood that the proposals entail the continuation of the refurbishment of the care home by expanding the south-western wing over an existing hard-standing.

History

The proposal '*Phased comprehensive development to provide two Class C2 care facilities. Phase 1 - Demolition of the existing Stratford Court Class C2 care home and the erection of a new replacement C2 care facility with associated access and landscaping works. Phase 2 - Upgrade and refurbishment of the existing C2 Braemar Lodge care home with associated access and landscaping works.*' under the planning reference 19/05965/FUL was recently finished in October 2025. The final area of the Phase 2 was the extension of the southern wing (**Fig 2**) which impacted the loft area which will be further expanded under the current proposal.

Figure 2. View of the southern wing that was recently expanded (highlighted in yellow) and the southern end that will be further expanded (dotted red) (provided by WLA Williams Lester).



Methodology

Desk Study

A search for Designated Sites and European Protected Species Licences (EPSL) within 1km of the site was undertaken using freely available online resources.

Any ponds located within 250m of the proposed development were searched for using Ordnance Survey maps and available aerial images.

Field Survey

Habitats

A site walkover was carried out by Katalin Balazs BSc (Hons) MSc ACIEEM on the 28th January 2026 during suitable weather conditions to assess the site for ecological impacts and constraints that may arise as part of the proposed

development. Habitats on site pre-development were identified in accordance with the categories specified for a UK Habitats survey, using Habitat Definitions Version 2.0 (UKHab Ltd., 2023).

Badgers

During the walkover the site was thoroughly searched for evidence of use by Badgers (*Meles meles*), with the specific aim of identifying the presence and location of any setts. In accordance with the *Badgers and Development: A Guide to Best Practice and Licensing* (Natural England, 2011) guidance, the survey accounted for 30m from the site's boundary (observed where possible i.e., does not conflict with private dwellings). Evidence of Badgers could include latrines, dung pits, feeding remains and foraging evidence, trails and setts.

Bats

A preliminary roost assessment of the building on site was undertaken on the 28th January 2026 by Katalin Balazs BSc (Hons) MSc ACIEEM (under personal Level 1 Bat Licence). This followed BCT (Collins (ed) 2023) best practice survey guidelines searching for any PRFs / evidence of bat occupation and assigning a roost potential assessment as outlined in **Table 1** below.

Table 1. Guidelines for assessing the potential suitability of a built structure for roosting bats (reproduced from BCT (Collins (ed) 2023).

Suitability	Description of Roosting Habitats
Negligible	No obvious habitat features on site likely to be used by roosting bats; however, a small element of uncertainty remains as bats can use small and apparently unsuitable features on occasion.
Low	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by individual bats opportunistically at any time of the year. However, these potential roost sites do not provide enough space, shelter, protection, appropriate conditions ² and/or suitable surrounding habitat to be used on a regular basis or by larger numbers of bats (i.e., unlikely to be suitable for maternity and not a classic cool/stable hibernation site, but could be used by individual hibernating bats ³).
Moderate	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by bats due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions ² and surrounding habitat but unlikely to support a roost of high conservation status (with respect to roost type only, such as maternity and hibernation – the categorisation described in this table is made irrespective of species conservation status, which is established after presence is confirmed).
High	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that are obviously suitable for use by larger numbers of bats on a more regular basis and potentially for longer periods of time due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions ² and surrounding habitat. These structures have the potential to support high conservation status roosts, e.g., maternity or classic cool/stable hibernation site.

2 For example, in terms of temperature, humidity, height above ground level, light levels or levels of disturbance.

3 Evidence from the Netherlands shows mass swarming events of common pipistrelle bats in the autumn followed by mass hibernation in a diverse range of building types in urban environments (Korsten et al., 2016 and Jansen et al., 2022). Common pipistrelle swarming has been observed in the UK (Bell, 2022 and Tomlinson, 2020) and winter hibernation of numbers of this species has been detected at Seaton Delaval Hall in Northumberland (National Trust, 2018). This phenomenon requires some research in the UK, but ecologists should be aware

of the potential for larger numbers of this species to be present during the autumn and winter in prominent buildings in the landscape, urban or otherwise.

Limitations

There were not considered to be any limitations to the site assessment, with all areas of the building accessible as well.

Ecological Baseline

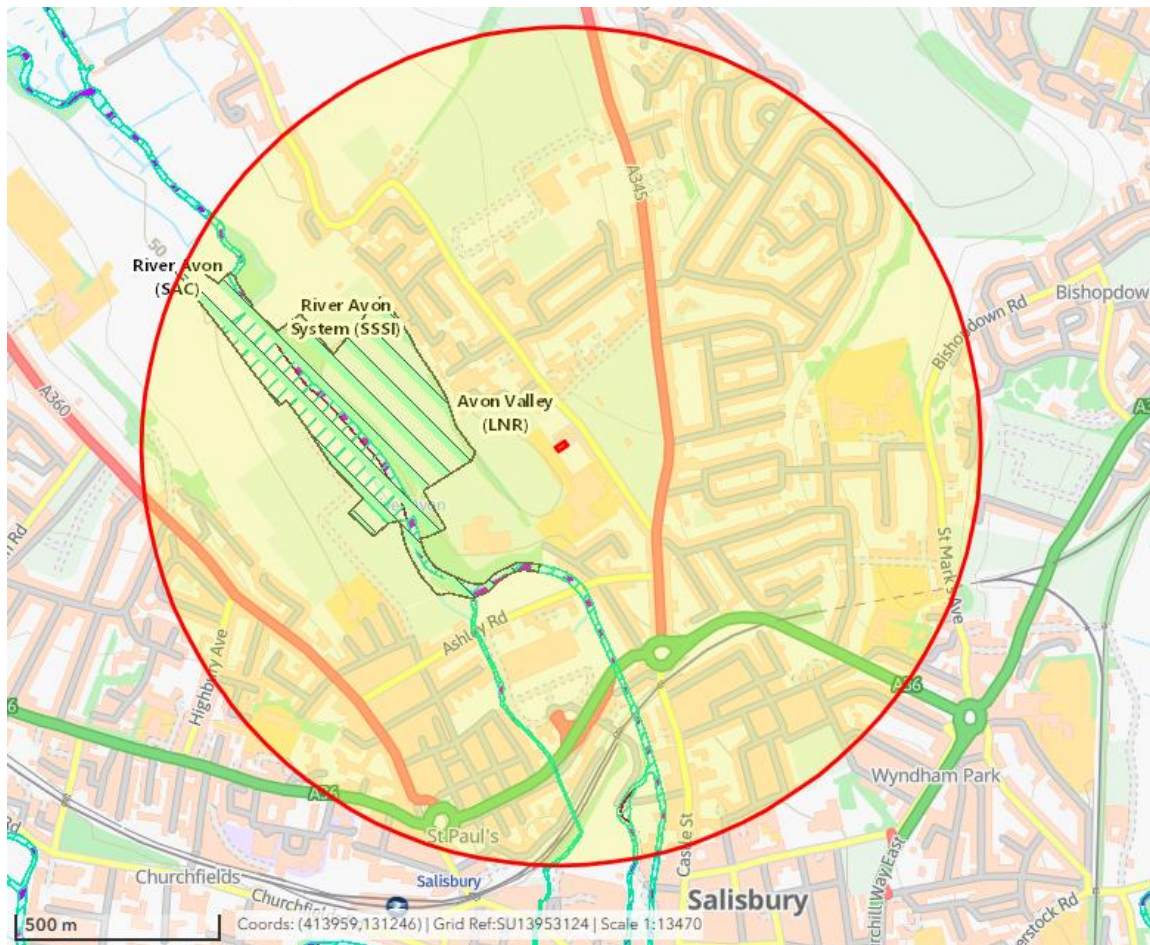
Desk Study

Designated Sites

Using freely available resources, the following designated site (**Fig 3**) were identified within 1km of the site:

- River Avon Special Areas of Conservation (located approximately at 383m west)
- River Avon System Sites of Special Scientific Interest (located approximately at 383m west)
- Avon Valley Local Nature Reserves (located approximately at 200m west)

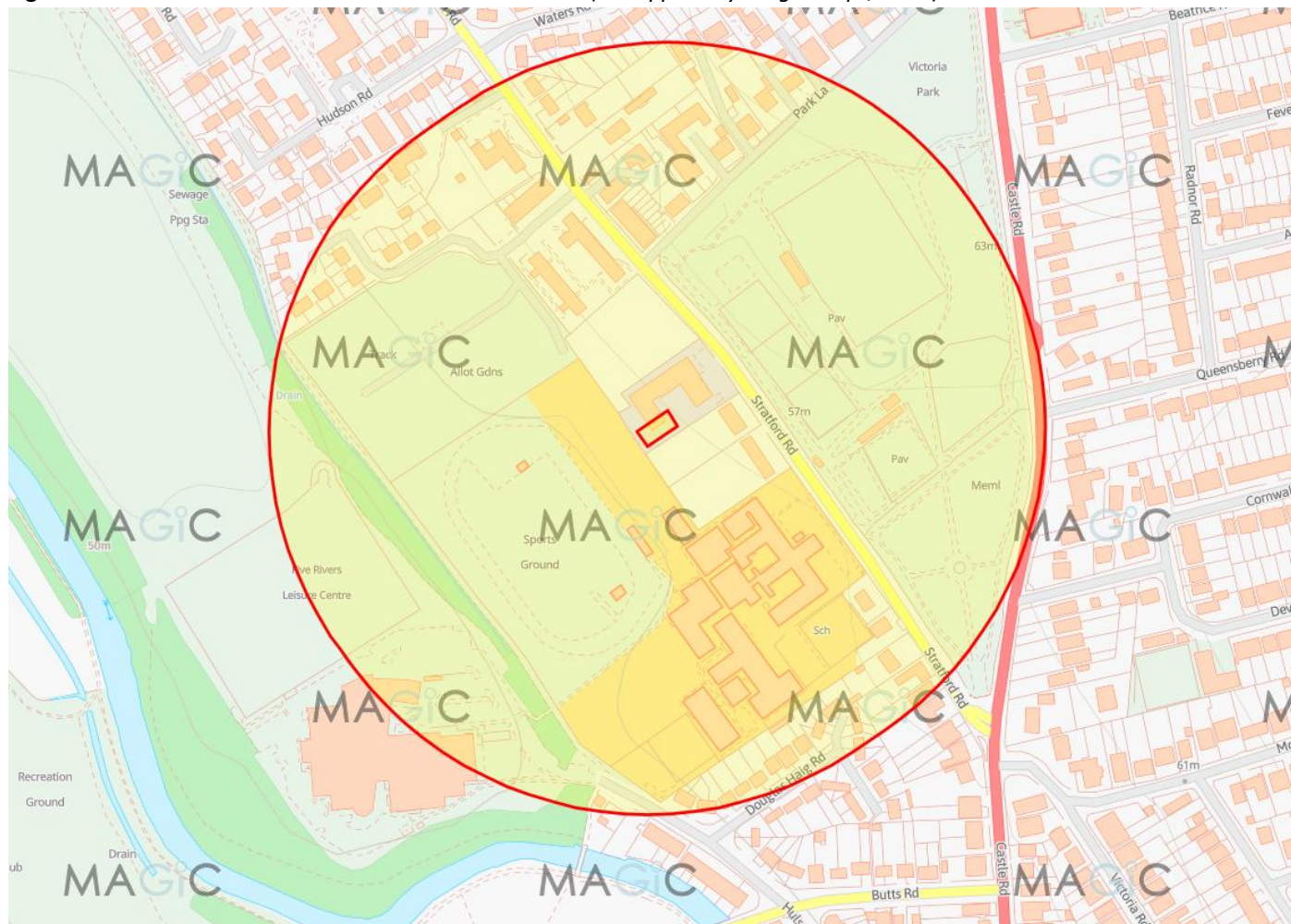
Figure 3. View of the designated sites within 1km of the site (as supplied by Magic Maps, 2026).



Waterbodies

Using freely available online resources, no waterbodies were identified within 250m of the site (**Fig 4**).

Figure 4. View of the waterbodies within 250m of the site *(As supplied by Magic Maps, 2026)*.



Protected Species

Using freely available resources, no EPSL were identified within 1km of the site. However, the closest bat EPSL is located approximately 1156m southwest of the site.

The River Avon Sac and SSSI is also approximately 383m West of the site but does not support breeding population of any bat species.

Habitats

The vegetation within the site has been described below using the UK Habs Habitat Definitions Version 2.0 (UKHab Ltd., 2023). The vegetation was recently planted under the previous planning (19/05965/FUL).

The vegetation surrounding the area that will be impacted by the new proposals were newly planted ornamentals (**Fig 5**). Beyond the ornamentals, there was a footpath and a line of trees to the south and modified grassland to the west, which will not be impacted (**Fig 5a&b**). The direct footprint of the new extension is restricted to an area of existing timber decking (**Fig 6**).

Figure 5.a. View of the southern area that will not be impacted by the proposed extension (taken January 2026).



Figure 5.b. View of the western area that will not be impacted by the proposed extension (taken January 2026).



Figure 6. View of the deck which shows the blueprint of the proposed extension (taken January 2026).



Bats

Preliminary Roost Assessment

Braemar Lodge Care Home was surveyed for its potential to support roosting bats. The care home was a three-story brick building with a slate roof. The slates were well-sealed, with no visible gaps, lifted sections, or missing mortar on the ridge tiles. Similarly, the eaves are tightly fitted with no gaps between the wall and the soffit. Internally, the loft space is well-insulated and remains completely light-tight. No evidence of bats was identified within the internals of the building in the form of feeding remains or droppings. (Fig. 7).

The proposed extension will involve works to a loft void that was recently subject to similar renovations which ended in October 2025; no evidence of bats was recorded during the previous project phase. Furthermore, the development will not result in the loss of any natural habitats, as the building's footprint is restricted to an area of existing timber decking (Fig 6).

Based on the findings above, the care home's roof and internal loft space lack any suitable Potential Roosting Features (PRFs) for bats. This assessment is further supported by historical data: no bats were recorded during previous works on the same loft area, nor were any emerged during the nocturnal surveys conducted prior to that phase. Consequently, the building is assessed as having ***negligible potential*** to support roosting bats, and no further surveys are required.

Figure 7. View of the southern elevation proposed for extension (taken January 2026).



Negligible Potential

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Protected Species

Using the freely available resources, the following records were found:

- 1 record of slow worm at 800m north,
- 1 record of common frog at 980m west,
- 2 records of palmate newt at 980m west,
- 65 records of hedgehog with the closest at 50m north.

The surroundings of the site were recently disturbed and replanted with new habitat (e.g. ornamental shrub, modified grassland and trees). Additionally, during the walkover, no Badger setts or evidence were noted on site. Taking all of the above in consideration and the physical barriers created by roads, the site is considered to be of **negligible potential** for protected species.

LIKELY ECOLOGICAL IMPACTS IN ABSENCE OF MITIGATION

Site Preparation and Construction

Impacts to Habitats

The proposed development will involve the loss of wooden deck considered to be of no value of significance. Therefore, in the absence of mitigation, the loss of habitat would have **a minor adverse impact** to habitats of **site** value.

Impacts to wildlife -Bats

The proposed works involve the extension to the south of the western wing of the care home. No PRFs were noted externally or internally and no bat droppings within the loft space. Additionally, no bats were recorded emerging during the bat surveys or within the impacted loft when previous works were carried out. Therefore, it is considered that the works would have a **no impact** at the **local level** of significance.

NB Should bats be found to be roosting during the works, Phase II bat surveys will be required along with mitigation measures to reduce potential impacts, and mitigation/compensation features may be required. It may be necessary to apply for a European Protected Species licence for works to proceed if bats are using the building.

Impacts to designated sites

Despite falling within the zone of influence for both the SAC and SSSI, the proposed works will not have any changes to the current lighting levels that are already present and in use, and thus is likely to have a neutral impact to the SAC and SSSI with no changes in the current use.

Site Operation

Impacts to Nocturnal Wildlife

The development will not result in an increase in lighting within the general area from external lighting associated with the development due to the pre-existing wing of the care home. An increase in lighting can affect the behaviour, particularly foraging, of nocturnal wildlife such as Badgers and bats. In conclusion, ***no impact is possible*** at a likely ***local level***.

Recommendations and Enhancements

Protection of Retained Habitats

The existing line of trees will be retained and will be protected from damage during the works. They will be fenced using Heras fencing or similar to prevent damage from machinery. This will also protect any species that may inhabit the trees such as nesting birds, should they be present.

Bats

Sensitive lighting during construction

In order to avoid any disturbance to bats (and other potential nocturnal wildlife) construction works should be limited to daylight hours and should not be undertaken 30 minutes prior to dusk through to dawn. All lighting should be sensitive to the use of the site by nocturnal wildlife, for example by including low-level downward-facing / hooded lights that are sensor-operated where possible.

Enhancement

To act as biodiversity enhancement, one bat brick will be incorporated into the new extension. The Ibstock bat brick 'B' (Fig 6) is considered suitable, which can be integrated within the external brick work. These features are entirely self-contained and available in a variety of different colours to match different construction materials. They should ideally be placed on an elevation which will benefit from some degree of sunlight exposure (south elevation recommended) and be located away from windows or sources of artificial light.

Figure 6. Ibstock bat brick 'B' to be integrated into the new building



CONCLUSION

This letter report details the results of the PEA carried out at Braemar Lodge Care Home, Salisbury. The building has been assessed as having ***negligible potential*** for bats, due to the lack of roosting features within the property. Additionally, no other impacts were identified regarding designated sites or protected species. No further surveys are required however, the installation of one enhancement feature for bats is proposed.

Kind regards,

Katalin Balazs BSc (Hons) MSc ACIEEM

Project Ecologist

References

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HMSO (2000) The Countryside and Rights of Way Act. HMSO, London.

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ILP / BCT (2023) *Guidance Note 08/23: Bats and Artificial Lighting at Night*.

JNCC (2010) Handbook for Phase 1 Habitat Survey. Joint Nature Conservation Committee, Peterborough.

Ministry of Housing Communities & Local Government (2019) National Planning Policy Framework. HMSO, London
Natural England, 2011 Badgers and Development: A Guide to Best Practice and Licensing

UKHab Ltd. (2023). UK Habitat Classification – Habitat Definitions Version 2.0 (July 2023).

Wiltshire Council (2015) Wiltshire Core Strategy available online
from: <http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/adopted-local-plan-jan16-low-res.pdf>

Appendix 1

LEGISLATION

The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations (2019)

This instrument makes changes to the three existing instruments which transpose the Habitats and Wild Birds Directives so that they continue to work (are operable) upon the UK's exit from the European Union (EU). These include The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 and The Conservation of Offshore Marine Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. This instrument also amends section 27 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 to ensure existing protections continue.

The intention is to ensure habitat and species protection and standards as set out under the Nature Directives are implemented in the same way or an equivalent way when the UK exits the EU.

This transposes the EU Habitats Directive (Council Directive 92/43/EEC) into UK domestic law. It provides protection for sites and species deemed to be of conservation importance across Europe. It is an offence to deliberately capture, kill or injure species listed in Schedule 2 or to damage or destroy their breeding sites or shelter. It is also illegal to deliberately disturb these species in such a way that is likely to significantly impact on the local distribution or abundance or affect their ability to survive, breed and rear or nurture their young.

In order for activities that would be likely to result in a breach of species protection under the regulations to legally take place, a European Protected Species (EPS) licence must first be obtained from Natural England.

The Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) (as amended)

This is the primary piece of legislation by which biodiversity is protected within the UK. Protected fauna and flora are listed under Schedules 1, 5 and 8 of the Act. They include all species of bats, making it an offence to intentionally or recklessly disturb any bat whilst it is occupying a roost or to intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to a bat roost. Similarly, this Act makes it an offence to kill or injure any species of British reptiles and also makes it an offence to intentionally kill, injure or take any wild bird or to take, damage or destroy their eggs and nests (whilst in use or being built).

The Wildlife & Countryside Act (1981) states that it is an offence to 'plant or otherwise cause to grow in the wild' any plant listed in Schedule 9 part II of the Act. This list over 30 plants including Japanese Knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*), Giant Hogweed (*Heracleum mantegazzianum*) and Parrots Feather (*Myriophyllum aquaticum*).

The Countryside and Rights of Way Act (2000)

This Act strengthens the Wildlife & Countryside Act by the addition of "reckless" offences in certain circumstances, such as where there is the likelihood of protected species being present. The Act places a duty on Government Ministers and Departments to conserve biological diversity and provides police with stronger powers relating to wildlife crimes.

Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006)

The Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 requires that public bodies have due regard to the conservation of biodiversity. This means that Planning authorities must consider biodiversity when planning or undertaking activities. Section 41 of the Act lists species found in England which were identified as requiring action under the UK Biodiversity Action Plan and which continue to be regarded as conservation priorities under the *UK Post – 2010 Biodiversity Framework*.

Protection of Badgers Act

The Protection of Badgers Act (1992) relates to the welfare of Badgers (*Meles meles*) as opposed to nature conservation considerations. The Act prevents:

- The wilful killing, injury, ill treatment or taking of Badgers and / or
- Interference with a Badger sett
- Damaging or destroying all or part of a sett
- Causing a dog to enter a set and
- Disturbing a Badger while it is occupying a sett

Provisions are included within the Act to allow for the lawful licensing of certain activities that would otherwise constitute an offence under the Act.

PLANNING POLICY

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2023

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2023) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. It provides a framework within which locally-prepared plans for housing and other development can be produced.

Chapter 15 'Conserving and enhancing the natural environment' states that planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing sites of biodiversity, the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services, minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity.

The NPPF states that plans should distinguish between the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites and that the scale and extent of development within all these designated areas should be limited, while development within their setting should be sensitively located and designed to avoid or minimise adverse impacts on the designated areas.

To protect and enhance biodiversity plans should:

identify, map and safeguard components of local wildlife-rich habitats and wider ecological networks, including the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity, wildlife corridors and stepping stones that connect them and areas identified by national and local partnerships for habitat management, enhancement, restoration or creation;

and promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species and identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity.

The NPPF states determining planning applications, local planning authorities should apply the following principles:

- a) if significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused;
- b) development on land within or outside a SSSI, and which is likely to have an adverse effect on it (either individually or in combination with other developments), should not normally be permitted. The only exception is where the benefits of the development in the location proposed clearly outweigh both its likely impact on the features of the site that make it of special scientific interest, and any broader impacts on the national network of SSSI;
- c) development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists;
- d) development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around developments should be integrated as part of their design, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity or enhance public access to nature where this is appropriate.

Local – Wiltshire Council

On a local scale, the site falls within the jurisdiction of Wiltshire Council. Core Policy 50 (Biodiversity and geodiversity) of the Wiltshire Core Strategy is divided into three main sections:

Protection:

Development proposals must demonstrate how they protect features of nature conservation value as part of the design rationale. There is an expectation that such features shall be retained, buffered, and managed favourably in order to maintain their ecological value, connectivity and functionality in the long-term. Where it has been demonstrated that such features cannot be retained, removal or damage shall only be acceptable in circumstances where the anticipated ecological impacts have been mitigated as far as possible and appropriate compensatory measures can be secured to ensure no net loss of the local biodiversity resource, and secure the integrity of local ecological networks and provision of ecosystem services.

All development proposals shall incorporate appropriate measures to avoid and reduce disturbance of sensitive wildlife species and habitats throughout the lifetime of the development. Any development potentially affecting a

Natura 2000 site must provide avoidance measures in accordance with the strategic plans or guidance set out in published guidance (for example The Stone Curlew Management Strategy – applicable to residential development within distances up to 15km of Salisbury Plain - Wiltshire Bats SAC Planning Guidance – applicable to all development types in the areas within and surrounding Bradford on Avon, Box, Colerne, Corsham, Trowbridge, Westbury, Fonthill and Chilmark - and River Avon Planning Guidance – applicable to any new development in proximity to the Salisbury Avon, or major development within the wider catchment) where possible, otherwise bespoke measures must be provided to demonstrate that the proposals would have no adverse effect upon the Natura 2000 network. Any development that would have an adverse effect on the integrity of a European nature conservation site will not be in accordance with the Core Strategy.

Biodiversity Enhancement:

All development should seek opportunities to enhance biodiversity. Major development in particular must include measures to deliver biodiversity gains through opportunities to restore, enhance and create valuable habitats, ecological networks and ecosystem services. Such enhancement measures will contribute to the objectives and targets of the Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) or River Basin/ Catchment Management Plan, particularly through landscape scale projects, and be relevant to the local landscape character. Local sites Sustainable development will avoid direct and indirect impacts upon local sites through sensitive site location and layout, and by maintaining sufficient buffers and ecological connectivity with the wider environment. Damage or disturbance to local sites will generally be unacceptable, other than in exceptional circumstances where it has been demonstrated that such impacts:

- i. cannot reasonably be avoided;
- ii. are reduced as far as possible;
- iii. are outweighed by other planning considerations in the public interest;
- iv. where appropriate compensation measures can be secured through planning obligations or agreements.

Development proposals affecting local sites must make a reasonable contribution to their favourable management in the long-term.

A further policy, Policy 69, within the core strategy provides protection for the River Avon SAC. In order to avoid and reduce potential environmental effects on the River Avon SAC, development will need to incorporate measures during construction and operation to avoid and prevent pollution and mitigate potential disturbance effects; appropriate measures may include consideration of suitable buffer zones along watercourses, habitat enhancements and river access management measures. All development within 20m of the river banks should submit a construction management plan to the local planning authority to ensure measures proposed during construction are satisfactory. Where additional sewage discharges to a STW cannot be accommodated without measures to offset phosphate loading, development will be required to undertake proportionate measures (which may include contributions towards those measures identified in the Nutrient Management Plan) to demonstrate that the proposals would have no adverse effects upon the SAC.