

Wiltshire Council Planning Consultation Response

ECOLOGY

Officer name:	Jenna Buss
Date:	04/02/2026
Application number:	PL/2025/09716
Proposal:	Erection of a single self build dwelling
Site address:	Sewage Works, Upper South Wraxall, BA15 2SB
Case officer:	Steven Vellance

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:

- Site Plan D1913.6c. December 2022. Border Oak
- Existing Site Plan 16179/22. Sitech Surveying Services
- Ecological Appraisal. October 2025. Cotswold Environmental

Protected and Notable Species/Habitats

The proposal is for the construction of a new dwelling on the site of an old sewage treatment plant. The site consists of sparsely vegetated land with a small parcel of modified grassland. From the updated Ecological Appraisal it is recorded that some vegetation clearance has been undertaken since the 2022 surveys. The extent of this habitat management is unclear but does not appear to have significantly altered the site.

GCN

During the 2022 surveys, eDNA samples were taken from the water filled pit on site which returned negative results for GCN. The next closest pond to site was dry at the time of survey and GCN were therefore considered absent from site. Access to the water filled pit was not possible during the updated survey due to the piled arboricultural arisings which was assessed by the ecologist, to reduce the potential value of the pit to amphibians. The conditions of the site since the 2022 surveys are considered to have not changed and the site is not assessed as suitable to support GCN. Reasonable avoidance measures were included within the Ecology Appraisal which is welcomed and should planning permission be granted, in the unlikely event

that GCN are encountered, all works must cease and a licence from NE sought prior to works continuing.

Bats

Whilst the surrounding landscape is assessed as conducive to supporting bat populations, the site itself has limited habitat to support roosting and foraging bats. Automated monitoring recorded a number of species including Annex II bat species likely linked to the adjacent Bath and Bradford on Avon Bat SAC. Common pipistrelle use was the dominant species recorded on site and a number of enhancements are included within the ecology report to include integrated and stand alone bat boxes which are welcomed and should be secured by condition.

The site continues to function as a low value foraging area of limited significance to the local bat assemblage and the proposal, with the enhancement measures included within the ecology report, are unlikely to impact upon this. Careful consideration to external lighting which should 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 GN08/23 "Bats and artificial lighting at night", issued by the Bat Conservation Trust and Institution of Lighting Professionals should be implemented on site.

Bath and Bradford on Avon Special Area of Conservation Bat SAC

The application site is located within a consultation zone for bats associated with the Bath & Bradford on Avon Bats Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and therefore has potential to result in significant adverse impact on the special features of that site. Two registrations of lesser horseshoe were recorded during the 2025 surveys. These recordings are assessed as representing transient commuting activity and not indicative of core foraging habitat and key commuting routes. Low level use by species associated with the SAC combined with the habitat types present on site and the nature of the proposals concludes that the application should be screened out of Appropriate Assessment.

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).

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. Prior to the commencement of any works, including vegetation removal and demolition, details of the number, design and locations of opportunities for bats and birds (e.g. bat and bird boxes) 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.

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

- Section 4 Biodiversity Enhancement and Section 5 Reasonable Avoidance Measures of the Ecological Appraisal. October 2025. Cotswold Environmental

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

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.

GCN

There is a residual risk that great crested newts / reptiles could occur on the application site. These species are legally protected and planning permission does not provide a defence against prosecution. In order to minimise the risk of these species occurring on the site, the developer is advised to clear vegetation during the winter, remove all waste arising from such clearance and maintain vegetation as short as possible in line with the recommendations made in (insert details of ecological report). If these species are found during the works, the applicant is advised to stop work and follow advice from an independent ecologist or the Council Landscape and Design Team (ecologyconsultations@wiltshire.gov.uk) /

Final sign off – all matters addressed:

Ecologist Jenna Buss	Date 05/02/2026
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