

Wiltshire Council Planning Consultation Response

ECOLOGY

Officer name:	Jessica Cracknell
Date:	13/02/2026
Application Number:	PL/2025/09377
Proposal:	Proposed replacement dwelling
Site Address:	The Cabin, Hyde Lane, Downton, Salisbury, SP5 3NE
Case Officer:	Georgina Wright

Recommendations:

☐	No Comment
☐	Support
☐	No objection
☒	Condition (no objection subject to conditions)
☐	Objection - further information required
☐	Objection in principle
☐	HRA.

Thank you for your consultation on the above application. I have reviewed the submitted documents against OS maps, aerial photographs of the site and surrounding area, together with GIS layers of statutory and non-statutory designated sites and existing records of protected species.

The following submitted documentation was reviewed to inform this response:

- Bat Emergence Survey Report. June 2025. Field View Ecology Ltd. Project Ref. ES/CD/24.02;
- Preliminary Ecological Assessment. 12 November 2025. Origin Arb Ltd. Report Ref. TC0306-1;
- Arboricultural Impact Assessment Survey. November 2025. Origin Arb Ltd;
- Proposed Site Plan. October 2025. Minutiae Architectural Designs. Drawing No. 2419/03/02/01. Rev. A;
- Proposed Plan – House. October 2025. Minutiae Architectural Designs. Drawing No. 2419/03/03/01;
- Proposed Elevations – House. October 2025. Minutiae Architectural Designs. Drawing No. 2419/03/05/01;
- Existing Site Plan. October 2025. Minutiae Architectural Designs. Drawing No. 2419/03/02/01;
- Existing Elevations – House. January 2025. Minutiae Architectural Designs. Drawing No. 2416/03/91/02.

New Forest Protected Sites

The proposed development site lies within the 13.8km zone of influence for the New Forest internationally protected sites, which comprises the New Forest SPA, New Forest SAC and New Forest Ramsar site. Therefore, the application is screened into appropriate assessment under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) on account of its potential to cause adverse effects on the New Forest protected sites through increased recreational pressure which may occur alone and in-combination with other plans and projects. Many of the special features of the New Forest protected sites afforded protection are vulnerable to adverse effects associated with an increase in recreation as demonstrated in Natural England's supplementary advice issued for the SPA on 19 March 2019 and for the SAC on 18 March 2019.

A test of likely significance has been carried out by the relevant Competent Authority (Wiltshire Council). This concluded that given the nature of the development and with no net increase in dwellings, there would be no recreational impact on the New Forest, therefore there is no mechanism for adverse effect. The Habitat

Regulation Assessment (HRA) has concluded that the application is not likely to have significant impacts on the New Forest SPA, New Forest SAC and New Forest Ramsar site and the proposal is screened out of Appropriate Assessment.

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

A test of likely significance has been conducted by the relevant Competent Authority (Wiltshire Council). This assessment determined that, due to the nature of the development, with no net increase in dwellings and the lack of any increase in water supply, drainage installation within this development, there will be no mechanism for effect on the River Avon catchment. The Habitat Regulation Assessment (HRA) has concluded that the application is not likely to have significant impacts on the River Avon SAC and the proposal is screened out of Appropriate Assessment.

Protected Species

Field View Ecology Ltd undertook, two dusk emergence surveys between May and June 2025. The results of the surveys detected no emergences from the building. The site is assessed to offering low to moderate suitability for foraging and commuting bats. The proposed replacement dwelling would not require the removal of vegetation considered to be functionally important for bat foraging or commuting. No new lighting has been proposed as part of the development and in the absence of such, together with retention of all vegetation, it is very likely that the functionality of the habitats within the site and their availability to bats will not be adversely affected.

An increase in artificial lux levels can deter bats which could result in roost abandonment and/or the severance of key foraging areas. 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 GN08/23 "Bats and artificial lighting at night", issued by the Bat Conservation Trust and Institution of Lighting Professionals.

Where possible, vegetation removal should be scheduled outside the bird breeding season (1st March–31st August) to avoid potential disturbance. If removal during this period is unavoidable, a pre-works nesting bird inspection must be conducted no more than two weeks before tree felling begins. 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.

Due to the presence of suitable refuge habitat for reptiles, a precautionary method of working is recommended and welcomed. This should include sensitive (phased) vegetation clearance undertaken between April and October. 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.

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 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.

Core Policy 50

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 187 d).

While it is not expected that this development will result in significant loss of habitat, both CP50 and NPPF requires the inclusion of biodiversity enhancements. Ecological enhancements are provided through the installation of 5 bird boxes, 2 bat boxes, log and brash piles, and wildlife friendly planting within section 6.1 of the Preliminary Ecological Assessment and section 1.7 of the Bat Emergence Survey Report. The location of ecological/biodiversity enhancements must be included in the site plan drawings (see condition below) and will become an enforceable part of the planning permission.

CONDITIONS:

1. Compliance with submitted documents

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

- Section 1.7 of the Bat Emergence Survey Report. June 2025. Field View Ecology Ltd. Project Ref. ES/CD/24.02;
- Sections 5 and 6 of the Preliminary Ecological Assessment. 12 November 2025. Origin Arb Ltd. Report Ref. TC0306-1;
- Arboricultural Impact Assessment Survey. November 2025. Origin Arb Ltd.

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

2. Ecological Enhancements

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.

INFORMATIVES:

Protected Species

The applicant should note that under the terms of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) it is an offence to disturb or harm any protected species including for example, breeding birds and reptiles. The protection offered to some species such as bats, extends beyond the individual animals to the places they use for shelter or resting. Please note that this consent does not override the statutory protection afforded to any such species. In the event that your proposals could potentially affect a protected species you should seek the advice of a suitably qualified and experienced ecologist and consider the need for a licence from Natural England prior to commencing works. Please see Natural England's website for further information on protected species.

Final sign off – all matters addressed:

Ecologist	Date
Jessica Cracknell	13/02/2026