

Wiltshire Council Planning Consultation Response

ECOLOGY

Officer name:	Abi Gazzard
Date:	26/02/2026
Application number:	PL/2026/00406
Proposal:	Demolition of existing petrol filling station shop and car wash and construction of replacement retail building, together with relocation of vac and air facilities, introduction of EV charging points and replacement of underground fuel storage tanks, pipework, forecourt drainage, interceptor, utilities infrastructure and associated works.
Site address:	101, Pickwick Road, Corsham, SN13 9DA
Case officer:	Isobella Wise

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:

- Planning, Design and Access Statement, Crossman Planning Consultancy, January 2026
- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, LHB Ecology, December 2025
- Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment, LHB Ecology, December 2025
- Statutory Biodiversity Metric, Joe Slade, December 2025
- External Lighting, PJJ Technical Services, January 2026
- Proposed External Lighting, PJJ Technical Services, December 2025
- Proposed Plan, Wellsfield Associates, October 2025

The site comprises an existing petrol station with two buildings, proposed for demolition and replacement with a retail unit, broadly following lapsed permission 20/03036/FUL. The site is in a relatively urban setting, surrounded by buildings in all directions.

COMMENTS:

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

The site lies within a core roost buffer and parcel roost buffer for 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.

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 (which does not propose removal of any bat habitat or roosts) as well as current level of lighting compared to the proposed, there is no mechanism for adverse impact on the Conservation Objectives of the SAC, and the proposal can be screened out of Appropriate Assessment.

Bats

Both buildings were single-storey with shallow pitched and hipped roofs, with no gaps suitable for use by roosting bats. No evidence of bats was observed internally. Overall, the buildings were assessed as having negligible bat roosting potential, and no further survey is required. The trees on site are small and we also considered unsuitable for use by bats.

The site possesses negligible foraging habitat for bats (very small areas of amenity grassland, small trees and introduced shrub on the roadside). The site is heavily illuminated and experiences a high level of disturbance from vehicles and people. The submitted lighting documents show that new lighting will be most intense at the centre of the site, with light spill at the boundaries reaching measurements between 0.3-1 lux. These boundaries do not connect to bat habitat that would be of significant value to Annex II species, and, as per the ecology report, the level of lighting proposed is unlikely to exceed that of the existing scenario. Therefore, no significant ecological impacts from lighting are anticipated based on the absence of suitable bat habitat as well as existing level of lighting and disturbance.

Other species

The ecology report makes a number of recommendations of precautionary measures for nesting birds, reptiles, hedgehogs and cotoneaster (invasive non-native species). These recommendations should be adhered to, as secured via a condition.

In line with NPPF and with CP50, gains for biodiversity, relevant to local habitats and wildlife populations, should form part of the proposed development. The ecology report recommends the consideration of bat and swift boxes, as well as new native tree and shrub plantings. The locations and specifications of biodiversity enhancements should be shown on a plan, to be secured via a condition.

Biodiversity Net Gain

Under Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as inserted by Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021) this application is required to deliver 10% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG). The Biodiversity Gain Plan condition will automatically apply if approval is forthcoming.

A completed statutory metric calculation, condition assessments and map (Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment, LHB Ecology, December 2025; Statutory Biodiversity Metric, Joe Slade, December 2025) stating the baseline and predicted post-development biodiversity units of the site have been submitted. The pre-development (baseline) situation is summarised below.

On-site pre-development (baseline) biodiversity value	0.30 Habitat units
	0.00 Hedgerow units
	0.00 Watercourse units
Are there any irreplaceable habitats on-site?	No

Has any habitat degradation of occurred?	No
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Confirmation of how the development will achieve BNG is a post-determination matter, however, consideration should be given to how any proposed BNG will be secured.

The submitted metric indicates 0.25 biodiversity units or less will be required to meet the 10% BNG requirement and that on-site BNG is not achievable. In these circumstances, statutory credits can be bought without providing evidence that insufficient off-site options are available in England. For further information, please refer to guidance on Statutory Biodiversity Credits on the GOV.UK website (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/statutory-biodiversity-credits>) under 'How to prove statutory credits are needed'.

CONDITIONS:

1. Compliance with submitted documents

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

- Section 5 of the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, LHB Ecology, December 2025
- Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment, LHB Ecology, December 2025
- External Lighting, PJJ Technical Services, January 2026

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 bird boxes and wildlife-friendly plantings – 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.

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

Ecologist Abi Gazzard	Date 26/02/2026
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