

Wiltshire Council Planning Consultation Response

ECOLOGY

Officer name:	Abi Gazzard
Date:	04/03/2026
Application number:	PL/2025/09001
Proposal:	46 Priory Close, Bradford On Avon, BA15 1QZ
Site address:	Two storey front and side extension and garden outbuilding
Case officer:	Steven Vellance

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 Ecological Assessment, Alder Ecology, January 2026
- Existing Block Plan, Ateller 17 Ltd, April 2025
- Proposed Block Plan, Ateller 17 Ltd, September 2025

The site comprises an end-terrace property where it is proposed to construct a two storey front and side dwelling, as well as a single-storey outbuilding. The site is neighboured by woodland to the south, and further dwellings to the north, east and west.

COMMENTS:

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

The site lies within a 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, and does not propose any additional external lighting, 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

The ecology report concludes that the existing dwelling has no features potentially suitable for use by roosting bats, and the wider site offers limited foraging opportunities, though is connected to good habitat (woodland to the south). A single tree is to be removed, but was reported to be of “negligible value and low distinctiveness”. The report recommends that two bat boxes are provided within the site; this should be secured via a biodiversity enhancements condition, in line with the NPPF and CP50.

Other species and habitats

A small area of woodland south and west of the site falls under the same ownership as the site itself, but will not be directly affected by the current proposal. The woodland is noted to be in poor condition with no understorey, restricted crown growth and low growing ivy. Nonetheless, it is included on Natural England’s Priority Habitat Inventory. Lowland mixed deciduous woodland in England is categorised as a habitat of principal importance, or priority habitat, under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act. Paragraph 192 of the NPPF states that plans should:

“promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats”.

Enhancements to the woodland and/or woodland edge within the application site boundary would therefore be welcomed, and should be indicated on a biodiversity enhancement plan, as mentioned above. Further, precautionary working measures should be implemented to ensure the woodland remains protected from light, noise, dust and chemical pollution during the construction phase – a Construction Method Statement (CMS) should be secured through a planning condition.

A fox earth was noted outside of the site’s application boundary. The site and surrounding woodland may be used by nesting birds, hedgehogs and amphibians. The above-mentioned CMS should include precautionary measures for these species, such as pre-commencement checks for nesting birds and the covering of any excavations left overnight.

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 development which is subject of a householder application within the meaning of article 2(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 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. 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 the type and locations of bat roosting opportunities and woodland enhancements – 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. Construction Method Statement

No development shall commence on site (including any vegetation removal or works to existing structures), until a Construction Method Statement has been submitted to, and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Construction Method Statement shall include all precautionary measures to be implemented during the construction period, for the protection of sensitive habitats and species known to be present within or adjacent the site, with particular reference to the neighbouring woodland. The development shall be carried out in strict accordance with the approved Construction Method Statement.

REASON: To ensure adequate protection, mitigation and compensation for protected species and priority habitats throughout the construction period.

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 Abi Gazzard	Date 04/03/2026
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