

Wiltshire Council Planning Consultation Response

ECOLOGY

Officer name:	Abi Gazzard
Date:	11/03/2026
Application number:	PL/2026/00638
Proposal:	Replacement of existing light industrial unit with new two storey light industrial unit and external landscaping.
Site address:	41B MAIN STREET, WEST WILTS TRADING ESTATE, WESTBURY, BA13 4JU
Case officer:	Alex Edge

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:

- Design & Access Statement, Forgeworks, January 2026
- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Roost Assessment, January 2026
- Existing site & location plan, Forgeworks, December 2025
- Proposed Elevations, Forgeworks, January 2026

The site comprises an industrial unit proposed for demolition and replacement. The site contains hardstanding and buildings, with small strips of grassland outside of the site boundary, and is connected to lines of trees with a large pond 35m south and brook 150m west.

COMMENTS:

Salisbury Plain Special Protection Area (SPA) 6.4km buffer

This application lies within the 6.4km zone of influence of the Salisbury Plain SPA and potential impact of recreational pressure on stone curlew, in combination with other plans and projects, must be considered.

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 will be no additional overnight accommodation created), there is no mechanism for adverse effect. The HRA has concluded that the application is not likely to have significant impacts on Salisbury Plain SPA and subsequently the application is screened out of Appropriate Assessment.

Bath & Bradford on Avon Special Area of Conservation (SAC)

TWBMS Grey Zone

The application site is located within the grey zone of the Trowbridge & Westbury Bat Mitigation Strategy (TWBMS), as well as a Greater Horseshoe core roost buffer 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 the SAC. The application must be considered under the Habitats Regulations.

The grey medium risk zone represents an area where new residential development is likely to result in increased recreational use of important woodland bat sites. In order to conclude the AA favourably, new residential development proposals for 49 dwellings or less within the grey hatched medium recreational risk zone will be expected to provide a financial contribution per dwelling towards the council's strategic recreational pressure mitigation scheme. This application is not for residential development and, therefore, a financial contribution is not required.

A test of likely significance (screening assessment) has been carried out by Wiltshire Council as required under Regulation 63 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) (also known as the Habitat Regulations). The site is already subject to disturbance from human activities (and the industrial estate surrounding) and the proposals do not represent a significant increase in human disturbance in this area. No loss of green habitat is proposed, with the works to impact existing hardstanding and one small building. The preliminary bat roost assessment confirmed that the building does not possess any suitable bat roosting features. As such, the proposal is not considered likely to adversely affect roosting bats, or foraging or commuting habitat, and the principles of the TWBMS are not considered further. The application is screened out of Appropriate Assessment with respect to the Bath and Bradford-on-Avon Bat SAC.

Protected and notable wildlife

Bats

As noted above, the building was found to be of negligible potential to host roosting bats. The building is a single-storey, flat-roofed breeze block construction, heavily disturbed as it is actively used as garages, offices and workshops. The trees (which will likely be cut back to accommodate the new building) were also found to have no potential bat roosting features. Therefore, no further survey is required.

Given the existing level of disturbance and light pollution experienced at the site as well as limited green habitat, it is unlikely that the site represents a significant foraging/commuting resource for bats. Nonetheless, it is connected to habitats that may be of some value. 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.

Nesting birds

The adults, young, eggs and nests of all species of birds are protected by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) while they are breeding. Please be advised that works should not take place that will harm nesting birds (such as vegetation clearance or building demolition) from March to August inclusive. 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.

In line with CP50 and the NPPF, the ecology report recommends that a sparrow terrace nest box is installed on the new building. This recommendation is welcomed, but is not shown on the plans. As such, a biodiversity enhancement condition securing the bird box details should be applied.

Sensitive habitats

There is a large pond 35m south and brook 150m west, both of which are priority habitats. Further, the pond is surrounded by woodland, with a line of trees also connecting to the site and extending eastwards. Given the site's proximity to sensitive habitats, a Construction Method Statement (CMS) would be appropriate to ensure the surrounding habitats are protected from pollution during the construction phase (from, e.g., runoff, dust, noise, light). This should be secured via condition.

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 development meets the following criteria and is therefore below the de minimis threshold, meaning the development:

- o does not impact an onsite priority habitat (a habitat specified in a list published under section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006); and
- o impacts less than 25 square metres of onsite habitat that has biodiversity value greater than zero and less than 5 metres in length of onsite linear habitat (as defined in the statutory metric).

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 a sparrow terrace – 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 reference to the surrounding woodland, pond and watercourse, as well as nesting birds and bats. 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.

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

Ecologist Abi Gazzard	Date 11/03/2026
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