

Wiltshire Council Planning Consultation Response

ECOLOGY

Officer name:	Abi Gazzard
Date:	17/03/2026
Application number:	PL/2026/00775
Proposal:	Modular classroom planning permission plus extension to existing building
Site address:	Burbage Primary School, Blackmans Lane, Burbage, Marlborough, SN8 3TP
Case officer:	Lucy Rutter-Dowd

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:

- Arboricultural Report, Sharples Tree Services, July 2025
- BNG baseline maps
- Statutory Biodiversity Metric (Small Sites Metric), Alison Williams, January 2026
- Location Plan, ReQuestaPlan, July 2024
- Mobile Classrooms Elevations, Granham Hill, December 2025
- Mobile Classrooms Existing Floor Plan, Granham Hill, December 2025
- Mobile Classrooms Proposed Floor Plan, Granham Hill, December 2025

The site comprises a modular classroom unit proposed for extension. The classroom is surrounded by hardstanding and artificial grass, with no further habitats to be impacted.

COMMENTS:

River Avon Special Area of Conservation (SAC) Hampshire 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.

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 since there is no proposal to create additional and separate classroom units, nor overnight accommodation, there would be no overall 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.

Protected species

No trees are proposed for removal. Should any pruning be required, if bats or signs of bats are observed, all works must cease immediately and an ecologist contact. Works to trees must also be undertaken outside of the bird nesting season (March to August inclusive). 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. 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 the NPPF and with CP50, applications must ensure that gains for biodiversity, relevant to local habitats and wildlife populations, should form part of the proposed development. As such, it is recommended that ecological enhancements – such as a bird box or invertebrate hotel/brick – are secured via a condition. Alternatively, the locations and specifications/designs of enhancements could be provided prior to determination (and shown within the redline or blueline boundary), to be secured with a compliance 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).

A completed small sites statutory metric calculation and map have been submitted. However, upon review, it is noted that the area to be impacted comprises only the existing building, hardstanding and artificial grass. These habitats would generate 0 biodiversity units in the baseline calculation. Therefore, 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:

- 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
- 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:

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 bird or bat box – shall be submitted to the local authority for approval. Development shall be carried out in strict accordance with the approved enhancement plan.

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 17/03/2026
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