

Wiltshire Council Planning Consultation Response

ECOLOGY

Officer name:	Jessica Cracknell
Date:	17/03/2026
Application Number:	PL/2026/00905
Proposal:	Demolition of existing agricultural buildings and construction of replacement building consisting of office, rest room, wash room and vehicle store
Site Address:	Great Elm Farm, Pink Lane, Charlton, Malmesbury, SN16 9DS
Case Officer:	Samantha Stockley

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:

- Protected Species Report. 04 February 2026. Pure Ecology. Ref. 1379 Great Elm Farm Protected Species Report 04-02-26;
- Proposed Plans and Elevations. 06 February 2026. Dolman Surveyors. Drawing No. 4439-02. Rev. E;
- Location Plan, Existing Block Plan, Floor Plan and Elevations. 17 February 2026. Dolman Surveyors. Drawing No. 4439-01. Rev. D;
- Design, Access & Justification Statement. February 2026. Dolman Surveyors.

The proposed site does not lie within or adjacent to any sites designated for conservation and there are no areas of significant ecological importance within a zone of influence, it is expected that minor adverse impacts could be suitably mitigated through an appropriate design scheme and timing of works.

Bat Species

The Protected Species Survey confirms that neither of the two agricultural buildings proposed for removal contain any external or internal gaps, crevices or hidden voids capable of supporting crevice-dwelling bats. No evidence of bat use was recorded during the inspection, with both buildings considered to have negligible bat roosting potential. The site is considered to offer limited suitability for foraging and commuting bats. The existing agricultural buildings and construction of replacement building will 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, it is very likely that the functionality of habitats and their availability to bats will not be adversely affected.

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. 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.

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 from March to August inclusive. All British birds, their nests and eggs are protected under Section 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 while birds are nesting, building nests and sitting on eggs. 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. This season is usually taken to be the period between 1st March and 31st August but some species are known to breed outside these limits.

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 186 d).

The plans show the location of two swift bricks. Since the works will result in the loss of a building that was used by nesting swallows, the applicant should consider adding swallow nest cups to their plans. A condition requiring submission of details of enhancements (including the design of the bat and bird boxes) should be applied; alternatively, the applicant might wish to update their plans (Proposed Plans and Elevations. 06 February 2026. Dolman Surveyors. Drawing No. 4439-02. Rev. E) to include the design/specifications of swallow enhancements, and then compliance with said plan can be secured via a 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:

- 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:

1. Compliance with submitted documents

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

- Section 5 and Appendix A of the Protected Species Report. 04 February 2026. Pure Ecology. Ref. 1379 Great Elm Farm Protected Species Report 04-02-26;
- Proposed Plans and Elevations. 06 February 2026. Dolman Surveyors. Drawing No. 4439-02. Rev. E.

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

2. Swallow Mitigation/Enhancements

Prior to the commencement of any works, including vegetation removal and demolition, details of the number, design and locations of opportunities for swallows 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.

3. Lighting

No external light fixture or fitting will be installed within the application site unless details of existing and proposed new lighting have been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority in writing. The submitted details will demonstrate how the proposed lighting will impact on bat habitat compared to the existing situation.

The plans will be in accordance with the appropriate Environmental Zone standards set out by the Institution of Lighting Professionals (ILP) Guidance Notes on the Avoidance of Obtrusive Light (GN 01/2021) and Guidance note GN08/23 "Bats and artificial lighting at night", issued by the Bat Conservation Trust and Institution of Lighting Professionals.

REASON: To avoid illumination of habitat used by bats.

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	17/03/2026