

Wiltshire Council Planning Consultation Response

ECOLOGY

Officer name:	Abi Gazzard
Date:	01/04/2026
Application number:	PL/2026/01754
Proposal:	Permission in Principle for erection of a single detached dwelling
Site address:	Land between Long Craggs and Bower House, Church Street, Bowerchalke, Salisbury
Case officer:	Sarah Hill

Recommendations:

☒	HRA required – further information needed
-------------------------------------	---

Further Information Required:

	Issue	Policy/Legislative Compliance	Date information requested & Further information required	Satisfactorily addressed (Document & Date)
a)	River Avon SAC	Habitat Regulations, NPPF, Wiltshire CP50	01/04/2026 -Nutrient budget -Mitigation	

The outstanding document(s) listed above are needed to enable the council's ecology team to consider all the relevant impacts and benefits of the proposed scheme. The council's ecologists will provide a further response once all the above information has been submitted via the case officer. Please Note: When resubmitting a revised document, ALL changes must be highlighted to enable review.

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.

The site comprises an area of land between dwellings to the north, south and west. No plans or ecological information, further to a location plan, have been submitted. As per aerial imagery, the site appears to contain scrub, trees, hedgerow and grassland. The application form states that this plot was previously used as an allotment.

This application seeks permission in principle to erect one dwelling.

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. Appropriate Assessment 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.

Paragraph 1A of regulation 70 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 states that the assessment provisions apply to "granting permission in principle under section 59A of the TCPA 1990 (Development orders: permission in principle)". This makes it clear that

the LPA must make an Appropriate Assessment (AA) of the implications of the proposal before any Permission in Principle is authorised. Further information can be found within the Government's [guidance for applications for permission in principle](#).

A positive conclusion to the Habitats Regulations Assessment requires certainty that the development proposals will not have an adverse effect on the integrity of the European site. Currently, the application does not demonstrate how the impacts of an increase in phosphorus will be mitigated.

A completed River Avon SAC nutrient neutrality calculator has not been submitted. The approved calculation is required to enable the AA to be undertaken, which must be completed, and the conclusion agreed with Natural England prior to the application being determined. Guidance on completing the phosphorus budget is available on our website ([Phosphorus and nitrogen mitigation - Wiltshire Council](#)). This webpage also contains information on the options available for developments to achieve nutrient neutrality.

Please note that conditions to ensure no adverse impacts on European sites cannot be imposed for this type of application (Permission in Principle).

Protected species and habitats

The site and surrounding area may be suitable for use by bats, badgers, nesting birds, amphibians and reptiles. Bowerchalke SSSI lies 460m southeast.

Core Policy 50 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy requires all development to demonstrate:

- i. No net loss of local biodiversity resource and
- ii. Secure the integrity of local ecological networks

The scope of permission in principle is generally limited to location, land use and amount of development. At the technical details consent stage, evidence to demonstrate that there will be no net loss of local biodiversity resource, and that the integrity of ecological networks will be maintained, must be submitted for review by the LPA's ecology team. Ecological information submitted at that stage should consider the presence of protected and priority species and habitats, and any relevant mitigation as well as enhancements.

Biodiversity Net Gain

The grant of permission in principle is not a grant of planning permission, and so the mandatory biodiversity gain requirement does not apply at this stage. The subsequent technical details consent will be subject to the biodiversity gain condition. Please note that applications subject to the biodiversity gain condition must be accompanied by minimum information set out in [Article 7 of The Town and Country Planning \(Development Management Procedure\) \(England\) Order 2015](#), which includes:

- [the completed metric calculation tool](#) showing the calculations of the pre-development biodiversity value of the onsite habitat on the date of application (or proposed earlier date) including the publication date of the biodiversity metric used to calculate that value;
- a description of any [irreplaceable habitat](#) (as set out in [column 1 of the Schedule to the Biodiversity Gain Requirements \(Irreplaceable Habitat\) Regulations 2024](#)) on the land to which the application relates, that exists on the date of application, (or an earlier date); and

- plan(s), drawn to an identified scale and showing the direction of North, showing onsite habitat existing on the date of application (or earlier proposed date), including any irreplaceable habitat (if applicable).

Note: this is a summary, please refer to Paragraph: 011 [Biodiversity net gain - GOV.UK](#) for full details.

If the applicant considers that the development would not be subject to the biodiversity gain condition, Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 the applicant must provide a statement as part of the planning application setting out the reasons why they believe this is the case. Submission of a completed metric calculation tool may be necessary to evidence the statement.

IN SUMMARY: Insufficient information has been submitted. In carrying out its statutory function, the LPA must be reasonably sure that the proposal will not result in significant adverse effects on protected sites. The information outlined above must therefore be submitted and reviewed by the LPA's ecology team prior to determination of the application. I therefore maintain a holding objection until all the issues listed above have been suitably addressed.

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

Ecologist	Date
-----------	------