

Wiltshire Council Planning Consultation Response

ECOLOGY

Officer name:	Abi Gazzard
Date:	01/04/2026
Application number:	PL/2026/01352
Proposal:	Demolish outbuildings and lean-to, form new vehicular access and erect two storey dwelling
Site address:	Elmsleigh, Pettridge Lane, Mere, Warminster, BA12 6DG
Case officer:	Mary Rose Scott

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:

- Existing Site Plan, PWCR, February 2026
- P12 SE and NE elevations, PWCR, February 2026
- P11 Proposed SW and NW elevations, PWCR, February 2026
- Ecological Impact Assessment, Abbas Ecology, October 2025
- Statutory Biodiversity Metric, Caitlin O'Reilly, October 2025

The site comprises an existing dwelling and garden where it is proposed to demolish a lean-to and outbuildings, and construct a detached dwelling.

COMMENTS:

Protected species

During the preliminary roost assessment, ~20 bat droppings were identified and later confirmed via DNA analysis as belonging to Brown Long-eared Bats. This evidence was noted from the lower roof void (of the lean-to) which is proposed to be removed. Subsequently, three emergence surveys were undertaken between May-August 2025, though no bats were recorded emerging from the building.

Under the Conservation of Species and Habitat Regulations 2017, it is an offence to harm or disturb bats or damage or destroy their roosts. Planning permission for development does not provide a defence against prosecution under this legislation. The applicant is advised that a mitigation licence will be required before any work is undertaken to implement this planning permission. The ecology survey report recommends the addition of at least two bat boxes and access tiles, as well as supervised roof dismantling, appropriate lighting and roof materials.

Compliance with these recommendations should be secured via a condition.

The report also details precautionary measures for hedgerow, badgers and hedgehogs, which should be adhered to. In line with the NPPF and with CP50, applications must ensure that no net loss of functional habitat for the benefit of wildlife in the local area will occur as a result of the proposed development. In addition, gains for biodiversity, relevant to local habitats and wildlife populations, should form part of the proposed development. The report's recommendations of a hedgehog nest box and additional bat box are welcomed. **Details of these enhancements (finalised locations and specifications) should be shown on plans and secured via a condition.**

Biodiversity Net Gain

Under Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as inserted by Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021) this application is required to deliver 10% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG). The Biodiversity Gain Plan condition will automatically apply if approval is forthcoming.

A statutory metric calculation and maps (*B Ecological Impact Assessment, Abbas Ecology, October 2025; Statutory Biodiversity Metric, Caitlin O'Reilly, October 2025*) detailing the baseline and predicted post-development biodiversity units of the site have been submitted and reports the following values:

On-site pre-development (baseline) biodiversity value	0.25 Habitat units
	0.00 Hedgerow units
	0.00 Watercourse units
Are there any irreplaceable habitats on-site?	No
Has any habitat degradation of occurred?	No

Confirmation of how the development will achieve BNG is a post-determination matter, however, consideration should be given to how any proposed BNG will be secured.

The submitted metric indicates 0.25 biodiversity units or less will be required to meet the 10% BNG requirement and that on-site BNG is not achievable. In these circumstances, statutory credits can be bought without providing evidence that insufficient off-site options are available in England. For further information, please refer to guidance on Statutory Biodiversity Credits on the GOV.UK website (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/statutory-biodiversity-credits>) under 'How to prove statutory credits are needed'.

CONDITIONS:

1. Compliance with submitted documents

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

- Sections 6-8 of Ecological Impact Assessment, Abbas Ecology, October 2025

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

2. 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 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.

Informative – bats

The house at Elmsleigh is used as a bat roost. Under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), it is an offence to harm or disturb bats or damage or destroy their roosts. Planning permission for development does not provide a defence against prosecution under this legislation. The applicant is advised that a mitigation licence will be required before any work is undertaken to implement this planning permission. Future works to the roof space or replacing the roof could also breach this legislation and advice should be obtained from a professional bat ecologist before proceeding with work of this nature.

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

Ecologist Abi Gazzard	Date 01/04/2026
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