

Wiltshire Council Planning Consultation Response

ECOLOGY

Officer name:	Abi Gazzard
Date:	01/04/2026
Application number:	PL/2026/01356
Proposal:	Alterations to attached Barn to create 1No holiday let.
Site address:	Down Farm, Kington St Michael, Chippenham, SN14 6LP
Case officer:	Lucie Turner

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:

- Planning Statement, lpc, February 2026
- Site Plan Proposed, lpc, January 2026
- Proposed Elevations, lpc, January 2026
- Protected Species Report, Pure Ecology, February 2026

The site comprises an existing barn/stables proposed for conversion into a holiday let.

COMMENTS:

Protected species

Bats

The adjacent building/s (barn and car port) were redeveloped in 2024 (PL/2024/03484), during which a bat mitigation licence was obtained. As part of said development, a bat loft was secured in one of the barns adjacent to (to the north of) the current site/barn in question.

A preliminary bat roost assessment of the current site/stables was undertaken in December 2025, following on from previous inspections and surveys associated with the above application. Previous surveys confirmed the presence of a maximum of two lesser horseshoe bats in the southern section of the stables. As this section of the barn was functionally connected to the car port, this roost was 'closed' under licence in association with works to the car port (PL/2024/03484) and replaced with the aforementioned bat loft.

The updated preliminary bat roost assessment noted that the same gaps under tiles/roof edge observed in 2023 remained present in December 2025, with no additional potential roosting features recorded. No evidence of roosting bats was found. The majority of the stables building is, internally, exposed to the elements and experiences light spill. On the balance of evidence, it

is concluded that the stables building is of negligible bat roosting potential. I agree with this conclusion, and am satisfied that sufficient enhancements for bats can be provided as marked on the submitted plans.

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

Numerous old nests were observed in the stables (of swallows and small passerine species). 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.

A swift nest box and bat access tile are shown on the approved plans for PL/2024/03484 as being located at the northern end of the current site/barn, with a bat box at the southern end. The integration of these features into the current plan (Site Plan Proposed) is appropriate, with the addition of another bat access tile welcomed.

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) requiring applications to deliver 10% BNG unless exempt. 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:

- Bat and bird enhancements shown on 'Site Plan Proposed, lpc, January 2026'
- Bat and bird enhancements shown on 'Proposed Elevations, lpc, January 2026'
- Protected Species Report, Pure Ecology, February 2026

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

Informative – 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 bats. 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.

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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