

Wiltshire Council Planning Consultation Response

ECOLOGY

Officer name:	Jenna Buss
Date:	12/05/2026
Application number:	PL/2025/09177
Proposal:	Creation of two wildlife ponds
Site address:	Stoke Farm, High Road, Broad Chalke, SP5 5EF
Case officer:	Daniel Jacobs

Recommendations:

	No Comment
	Support
	No objection
	Condition (no objection subject to conditions)
x	Objection - further information required
	Objection in principle
	HRA completed/required

I have reviewed the application and supporting documents against OS Maps and aerial photography of the site and surrounding area, together with GIS layers of statutory and non-statutory sites and existing records of protected species.

The following submitted documentation was reviewed to inform this response:

- The Statutory Biodiversity Metric. November 2025. SLME
- Pond Creation Baseline Habitat Assessment and BNG. November 2025. Smart Land Management and Ecology

Protected and Notable Species/Habitats

The proposal to create two ponds at Stokes Farm is welcomed. It is noted that the pond A will be situated within temporary grassland whilst the location of pond B will be situated on modified grassland as assessed during a site visit undertaken in November. Although this survey falls outside the optimal botanical survey period, the sward composition and overall species assemblage are considered unlikely to vary substantially during the peak growing season such that the assigned UKHab classification would materially change.

The proposed pond locations are directly adjacent to the Hydon Hill Down Local Wildlife Site. Whilst the ponds to be created are situated outside of this site, which is welcomed, the report proposes that *'excavated soil will be blended into the adjoining valley bottom and sown with native grasses'*. It is not clear the proposed location of this landscaping, the habitats currently present and whether this will be outside of the Local Wildlife Site boundary. An assessment of the impacts on this site are therefore not possible at this time.

In addition, due to the assemblage of bird species identified on site which included ground nesting species, possible impacts on these species are anticipated through pond creation and associated landscaping. Measures to reduce impacts upon these species is also required in support of the application.

Whilst we support the creation of the two ponds in principal, additional information is required to enable us to make a full assessment of the possible impacts.

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 completed statutory metric calculation (The Statutory Biodiversity Metric. November 2025. SLME) confirming the baseline and predicted post- development biodiversity units of Site has been submitted (including the condition assessment sheets and maps).

Information in the completed on-site baseline habitat tabs is accepted as accurate based on the information submitted. The pre-development (baseline) situation is summarised below.

On-site pre-development (baseline) biodiversity value	0.03 Habitat units
	0 Hedgerow units
	0 Watercourse units
Are there any irreplaceable habitats on-site?	No
Has any habitat degradation occurred?	No

We note the uplift that will be created by the proposal and although the complexity of the habitats to be created and the distinctiveness will be high, we are of the opinion that risk of this application not obtaining the 10% gain required is low. The purpose of the application is also for the creation of wildlife ponds, therefore when considering the above, we are of the opinion that an HMMP and monitoring fee will not be required in this instance.

DRAFT CONDITIONS:

Please note these conditions may be subject to change once the additional information requested above is received.

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

- Landscape Masterplan. January 2025. Pegasus Group
- The Statutory Biodiversity Metric. October 2024. Ethos

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

INFORMATIVES:

Great Crested Newts

There is a residual risk that great crested newts / reptiles could occur on the application site. These species are legally protected and planning permission does not provide a defence against prosecution. In order to minimise the risk of these species occurring on the site, the developer is advised to clear vegetation during the winter, remove all waste arising from such clearance and maintain vegetation as short as possible. If these species are found during the works, the

applicant is advised to stop work and follow advice from an independent ecologist or the Council Landscape and Design Team (ecologyconsultations@wiltshire.gov.uk).

Nesting Birds

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.

Reptiles

There is a residual risk that reptiles could occur on the application site. These species are legally protected and planning permission does not provide a defence against prosecution. In order to minimise the risk of these species occurring on the site, the developer is advised to clear vegetation during the winter, remove all waste arising from such clearance and maintain vegetation as short as possible. If these species are found during the works, the applicant is advised to stop work and follow advice from an independent ecologist or the Council Landscape and Design Team (ecologyconsultations@wiltshire.gov.uk)

Final sign off – all matters addressed:

Ecologist Jenna Buss	Date
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