

Wiltshire Council Planning Consultation Response

ECOLOGY

Officer name:	Jenna Buss
Date:	18/05/2026
Application number:	PL/2026/00347
Proposal:	Approval of Reserved Matters (Appearance, Landscaping, Layout and Scale) Following Outline Planning Permission PL/2022/02452 for 140 Dwellings, a Habitat Support Area and Associated Landscaping and Works
Site address:	Land at Stones Farm, West Mill Lane, Cricklade
Case officer:	Joe Richardson

Recommendations:

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

Further Information Required:

	Issue	Policy/Legislative Compliance	Date information requested & Further information required	Satisfactorily addressed (Document & Date)
1	HSA	Habitat Regulations, CP50, NPPF	clarification of the details of the Habitat Support Area to support the HRA within the KEMP HMMP and Ecological Parameters Plan	

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.

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:

- 10 Year Landscape Maintenance Programme. January 2026. Peter Quinn Associates
- Detailed Landscape Proposals 26/591/01. January 2026. Peter Quinn Associates
- Planning Layout Sheet 2 247-06-02. January 2026. Newland Homes
- Planning Layout Sheet 1 247-06-01. January 2026. Newland Homes
- Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan. April 2026. Ethos and Newland Homes
- Landscape and Ecological Management Plan. March 2026. Ethos

We note the proposal for reserved matters in relation to application PL/2022/02452 determined at Appeal APP/Y3940/W/24/3351265 December 2024.

North Meadows and Clattinger Farm Special Area of Conservation SAC

The development lies within the inner zone of influence (0-4.2km) for the North Meadow National Nature Reserve (NNR)/Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) component of North Meadow and Clattinger Farm SAC, notified as an exceptional example of lowland meadow with a very high proportion of the surviving UK population of snake's head fritillary. The development is screened into Appropriate Assessment under the Habitat Regulations 2017 (as amended) on account of its potential to cause adverse effects through increased recreational pressure, which may occur alone or in-combination with other plans and projects.

As noted in our email of the 23rd April 2026 and our written response 18th May 2026, there appear to be discrepancies between the Habitats and Landscape Strategy (1379-04-P13. January 2019. David Wilson Partnership) agreed at Appeal and the more recently submitted Planning Layout Sheet 2 (247-06-02. January 2026. Newland Homes) submitted in support of the Reserved Matters application.

Appropriate Assessment (AA) under Section 63 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) 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. Insufficient information has so far been submitted to enable the AA to be undertaken, which must be completed and the conclusion agreed with Natural England prior to the Reserved Matters being determined.

As requested in our email, additional information in relation to the proposed Habitat Suitability Area (HSA) must be submitted in accordance with conditions 16 and 17 of the Appeal Decision in order to support an Appropriate Assessment.

We welcome the submission of the LEMP and HMMP to support the discharge of these conditions, however clarification is sought as outlined below, in order for this information to support the favourable conclusion of the AA.

As outlined previously the Planning Layout Sheets have been modified to those agreed at Appeal and will require amendment prior to favourable completion of the AA. It is noted in section 3.2.2 of the LEMP that the northwest and east fields will be prioritised for biodiversity and not public open space. The updated landscape plans reflect this with the removal of footpaths from these northern parcels. However, the Appeal Decision states that the HSA should be a 'functional and accessible greenspace', this must be reflected both within the management plans and on the Ecological Parameters Plan (Planning Layout Sheet) as detailed in condition 16.

It is noted that although the HSA is consistent with actions of the SIP by reducing the fragmentation of semi natural grasslands in the area surrounding the SAC and provides distinct management plans for the biodiversity area and recreational area, reducing public access in the north eastern section on the Planning Layout Sheet to only the public right of way does not meet the criteria of the HSA as agreed at Appeal. This will require amendment prior to a favourable conclusion of the AA.

The LEMP suggests that access will be in the form of informal paths of mown grass and may not always be fixed in nature, although this is supported and will align with the biodiverse nature of the northeastern parcel aims, the general locations of these paths should be included on plans with the understanding that the actual routes may alter over time but that general access will be provided in these areas in perpetuity. In its current form the Planning Layout Sheets with the single right of way path indicated do not support the proposals agreed at Appeal.

Additionally, the HSA is to be provided in perpetuity for the lifetime of the development, at present the HMMP and LEMP refer to 30 year management plans which does not reflect the level of management required to support the HSA and should be amended to read in perpetuity or 80 years for clarity.

Additional management prescriptions including fencing off of ponds and the 10m buffer zone along the river corridor should be included within the Landscape Masterplan as in accordance with condition 16 and the Ecological Parameters Plan.

In accordance with Appendix 4 of the North Meadow and Clattinger Farm interim Recreation Mitigation Strategy 2023-2028, other measures for management of the public open spaces should include litter bins at key points to minimise dog fouling and also signage to direct people around the site. This would be especially important in the northeastern section which will be managed to prioritise biodiversity. These details should also be included within the HMMP and the locations detailed on the Landscape Masterplan.

Protected and Notable Species

As identified within the Ecological Impact Assessment (January 2022. Ethos) the application lies adjacent to the River Thames which supports otter, water vole and beaver. These protected species will be buffered from the development by the HSA, however the original Landscape drawings indicate a 10m buffer between the river corridor and development within the HSA which is not indicated on the current Landscape Plans. This should also be addressed within the ecological parameters plan as outlined within condition 16 of the Appeal Decision.

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 application for planning permission was made before 12 February 2024.

Final sign off – all matters addressed:

Ecologist Jenna Buss	Date
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