

Wiltshire Council Planning Consultation Response

ECOLOGY

Officer name:	Abi Gazzard
Date:	08/06/2026
Application number:	PL/2026/00388
Proposal:	Demolition of agricultural building and erection of replacement barn with associated access track, landscaping and works
Site address:	Levetts Farm, Clench Common, Marlborough, SN8 4DR
Case officer:	Joe Leesam

Recommendations:

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

Further Information Required:

	Issue	Policy/Legislative Compliance	Date information requested & Further information required	Satisfactorily addressed (Document & Date)
	BNG	Environment Act 2021 Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023	08/06/2026 The area comprising the proposed access must be included in the BNG baseline in its present state (i.e., pre-authorised works [PL/2025/04899])	

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.

Information considered:

- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, Pro Vision, May 2026
- Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment, Pro Vision, March 2026
- Statutory Biodiversity Metric, Alex Hanman, March 2026
- Condition Assessment Sheets
- Planning Statement, Atlas Planning Group, January 2026
- Existing Block Plan, CAT Architectural Services, July 2025
- Proposed Block Plan, CAT Architectural Services, July 2025

The site comprises modified grassland, hedgerow, bare ground and one agricultural building. It is proposed to demolish and replace the building. The site is neighboured by fields to the northeast, northwest and southwest, with residential buildings and patches of woodland to the south. An application for the construction of a dwelling was previously approved in an area adjoining the current site (PL/2025/04899).

COMMENTS:

Protected species and habitats

The site is not located in any statutory designated areas or associated consultation/buffer zones. The habitats on-site are of limited suitability for use by protected species; the modified grassland is maintained as a short-sward and patchy in places. The existing barn is open-fronted with corrugated metal walls and roof, and was found to have negligible potential for use by roosting bats. In line with the ecology response for PL/2025/04899, a Construction Method Statement (CMS) will be appropriate and should be secured via condition.

Information submitted with a previous application (PL/2025/04899) reported evidence of barn owl in the building to be demolished presently. This was not reported during the more recent survey. In any case, given that evidence of a barn owl roost was found in the neighbouring building as well (which will also be lost), enhancements for barn owls – i.e., the addition of a barn owl nest box on site – would be appropriate, and would be in line with the NPPF and with Wiltshire's CP50. This must be secured via condition.

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 from March to August inclusive. Precautions for nesting birds, and other wildlife, must be detailed within a CMS.

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, map (*Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment, Pro Vision, March 2026; Statutory Biodiversity Metric, Alex Hanman, March 2026*) and condition assessment sheets demonstrating the baseline and predicted post-development biodiversity units of the site have been submitted. The baseline is summarised below:

On-site pre-development (baseline) biodiversity value	0.65 Habitat units
	0.14 Hedgerow units
	0.00 Watercourse units
Are there any irreplaceable habitats on-site?	No
Has any habitat degradation occurred?	No

The following issues must be addressed in the baseline prior to determination:

- The condition assessments for the “modified grassland” parcels appear to be missing
- The proposed access associated with PL/2025/04899 will be shared with this application. The BNG report therefore states that “*where these habitats overlap, the baseline has been assessed as the proposed habitat (artificial unvegetated; unsealed surface) to avoid*

double counting habitat loss". Whilst I appreciate the proposed approach, the [Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023](#) makes clear that for any authorised works undertaken after the 25 August 2023, the current pre-development biodiversity value of the onsite habitat is to be taken as its biodiversity value immediately before the carrying out of such works. This means that the current baseline value must be taken as the baseline value that existed prior to the commencement of any works associated with PL/2025/04899. It cannot also be guaranteed that the plans approved for PL/2025/04899 will be implemented. In the first instance, please could the applicant confirm the type and extent (in sq m) of habitat that exists in the area that will comprise the proposed access? This information should be included within the BNG baseline.

DRAFT CONDITIONS:

1. Construction Method Statement

No development shall commence on site (including any vegetation removal or works to existing structures), until a Construction Method Statement has been submitted to, and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Construction Method Statement shall include all precautionary measures to be implemented during the construction period for the protection of sensitive habitats and species known to be present within or adjacent the site, including barn owls, great crested newts and bats. The development shall be carried out in strict accordance with the approved Construction Method Statement.

REASON: To ensure adequate protection, mitigation and compensation for protected species and priority habitats throughout the construction period.

2. Ecological enhancements

Prior to the commencement of any works, including vegetation removal and demolition, details of the number, design and locations of ecological enhancements – including a barn owl nest box – shall be submitted to the local authority for approval. The approved details shall be implemented before occupation of the final works.

REASON: To provide mitigation /enhancement for biodiversity.

3. Artificial lighting

All lighting provided on site shall 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.

REASON: In the interests of the amenities of the area and to minimize impacts on biodiversity caused by light spillage to areas above and outside the development site.

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

Ecologist	Date
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