

Wiltshire Council Planning Consultation Response

ECOLOGY

Officer name:	Abi Gazzard
Date:	15/06/2026
Application number:	PL/2026/00473
Proposal:	Replace Class Q Barn with a self-build house, car parking, EV charging, landscaping, removal of c.650 sqm tarmac/fenced tennis court and re-wilding all that Previously Developed Land (PDL), pre-packaged treatment works (PPTW) and drainage field, nutrient neutrality and associated works.
Site address:	Parkwater Farm, Cowesfield Green, Whiteparish, Salisbury, SP5 2QS
Case officer:	Sarah Hill

Recommendations:

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

The Appropriate Assessment (AA) of impacts on the New Forest protected sites (included in these comments) has been sent to Natural England (NE) for their consideration (15/06/2026). There is a statutory 21-day response window. The application must not be approved until NE have endorsed the conclusion of the AA.

Further Information Required:

	Issue	Policy/Legislative Compliance	Date information requested & Further information required	Satisfactorily addressed (Document & Date)
1.	River Test	CP50, NPPF, Habs Regs	02/03/2026 (via online comment) -Confirmation of land use type, amended budget if appropriate -Confirmation of certified value of total nitrogen for relevant PTP	15/06/2026 YES

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:

- Planning, Design and Access Statement, Benchmark, January 2026
- Natural England Nutrient Neutrality budget calculator for the Solent Marine Sites
- Nutrient Statement, Holbury Consultancy Service, January 2026
- Preliminary Roost Assessment, Daniel Ahern Ecology, January 2025
- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Survey Report, Daniel Ahern Ecology, January 2026

- DRAFT A Construction GCN Management Statement, Benchmark, January 2026
- Proposed Site Plan, October 2025
- GCN Report, Bourne Ecology, April 2026
- PIA certificate
- Proposed Site Plan “Submitted to assist with nutrient neutrality assessment”, October 2025

The site comprises an agricultural barn proposed for replacement with a dwelling, as well as associated landscaping and PTP installation. The barn conversion is permitted under Prior Approval (PL/2025/00767), but the current full application includes its demolition. If the works proceed under PL/2025/00767, it should be noted that a Regulation 77 application will be needed to address the mitigation required for potential impacts on European protected sites.

These comments follow my comment submitted online on 10/03/2026 which requested clarification regarding the nutrient calculation and GCN data.

COMMENTS:

New Forest protected sites

The proposed development site lies within the 13.8km zone of influence for the New Forest internationally protected sites, which comprises the New Forest SPA, New Forest SAC and New Forest Ramsar site. Therefore, the application is screened into appropriate assessment under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) on account of its potential to cause adverse effects on the New Forest protected sites through increased recreational pressure which may occur alone and in-combination with other plans and projects.

In line with the Councils Interim Mitigation Strategy (January 2022), the applicant has agreed to pay the SAMM payment requirements of £660 per dwelling/tourism unit (plus legal and admin fees). This will be secured via a S111 agreement at determination. Unilateral undertakings or s106 agreements are also available to ensure the necessary mitigation is secured. This will enable the Council to conclude, subject to endorsement from Natural England, that the development proposed by means of this application will not lead to significant adverse effects on the New Forest protected sites alone or in-combination with other plans and projects.

The cost of developer contributions to mitigate the burden would be £660 plus legal and admin fees.

The applicant should be directed to the Guidance Note for Completing Agreements Under S111 of the Local Government Act 1972.

It is considered that this approach delivers the required level of certainty to secure effective mitigation for the recreational burdens of this planning application. There will be no in combination effects with other developments, therefore we can conclude that there would be no adverse effect on the integrity of the above European Sites as a result of the development.

River Test catchment

This development falls within the River Test catchment which drains into the Solent. This region is protected by a number of international designations and the proposal has the potential for adverse effects alone or in combination to the Solent designated sites (Solent Maritime SAC, Solent and Southampton Water Special Protection Area (SPA)) with other developments through increased nitrogen in the catchment.

In line with Natural England's Advice on Nutrient Neutrality, a calculation of the nitrogen burdens of the proposal is required. Natural England has issued guidance and a calculator tool to be used by applicants and this is available here: [Solent: nutrient neutrality calculator - GOV.UK](#).

A nitrogen budget has been submitted. A GRAF One2Clean PTP will be installed, and is marked on the Proposed Site Plan. The user-defined value of mg TN/l removed aligns with that included in the now-submitted PIA certificate. Appropriate information has also been supplied to confirm the land use type as "lowland", as well as "urban" and "mixed".

The nitrogen budget is in line with Natural England's advice and the calculator shows that the proposed development should result in a negative nitrogen burden (relative to the current scenario) with the PTP is secured as part of the scheme. As such, no nitrogen mitigation is required, and the proposal is screened out of Appropriate Assessment with regards to impacts on the Solent protected areas.

Mottisfont Special Area of Conservation (SAC)

The site lies within the 7.5km Mottisfont Bat SAC buffer and therefore may have potential to result in significant adverse impact on the special features of that site. 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.

A test of likely significance has been carried out by the relevant Competent Authority (Wiltshire Council) as required by Regulation 63 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). This concluded that given the scale and nature of the currently proposed development which does not propose removal of any bat habitat or roosts, and does not appear to propose any additional external lighting, there is no mechanism for adverse impact on the Conservation Objectives of the SAC, and the proposal can be screened out of Appropriate Assessment.

Other protected species and habitats

Bats

A preliminary bat roost assessment was undertaken in December 2024. As per CIEEM's (Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management) Advice Note ([Advice-Note.pdf](#)), referred to in the Government's standing advice on protected species and development, if data were collected over 18 months ago, the results may no longer be valid. In this case, the survey is considered to still be valid given (i) the initial result (negligible roosting potential), (ii) likelihood that conditions on site have not significantly changed, and (ii) period of time that has passed since the survey (18 months). Should the works be delayed significantly further, an update survey will likely be required.

The barn is a corrugated metal construction that is open at the front. No evidence of bats was found, and it was assessed as having negligible bat roosting potential. The hollow willow tree on site was found to have low bat roosting potential, but further survey is not recommended given it will be retained.

The site likely provides some bat foraging and commuting opportunities. Habitat improvements will be achieved via the removal of hard surfaces (tennis courts) and associated lighting, and replacement with a wildflower meadow. **Details of wildlife-friendly plantings – as well as bat roosting provisions – in line with CP50 and the NPPF should be provided as part of a biodiversity enhancements plan, to be secured via condition.**

Great Crested Newts (GCN)

There is some potential for GCN to use the site during their terrestrial phase, given the presence of waterbodies within 250m of the site. There is also a pond mapped adjacent to the site, albeit it is drained, and therefore unsuitable for use by GCN.

The primary habitats to be impacted by the works comprise the existing barn and areas of hardstanding. However, there is a small area of modified grassland close to the barn that will be impacted that may be suitable for use by GCN during their terrestrial phase. Three ponds surrounding the site were tested for GCN eDNA. The GCN report confirms a negative result.

As such, it is recommended that the risk avoidance measures outlined in the submitted "DRAFT A Construction GCN Management Statement" are adhered to. **Finalised details of precautionary measures for GCN and other herpetofauna must be included within a Construction Method Statement (CMS), to be secured via condition.** Appropriate measures would include a toolbox talk and sensitive vegetation removal. There is also scope to improve the site for amphibians through, e.g., the addition of refugia – details should be provided as part of a biodiversity enhancement plan (as above).

Nesting birds

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.

Local sites

The site is close to a number of County Wildlife Sites, including Aldermoor Copse 80m south, Cowesfield Manor Meadow 100m southwest and 150m southeast, Shortlands Row 240m west, Bushy Copse 250m southwest, Rosemead Farm Meadow 260m west and Cowsfield Wood 270m east.

CP50 requires that CWSs are protected from the effects of development, and that proposals must demonstrate how features of nature conservation can be protected. **It is therefore recommended that the aforementioned Construction Method Statement includes details of measures to reduce the risk posed to the surrounding habitats, including pollution prevention measures.** Given the value of these neighbouring habitats, **a lighting condition is also recommended to ensure that any residual risk to light-sensitive species is managed appropriately post-development.**

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 it is for self and Custom Build Development, meaning development which:

- consists of no more than 9 dwellings;
- is carried out on a site which has an area no larger than 0.5 hectares; and
- consists exclusively of dwellings which are self-build or custom housebuilding (as defined in section 1(A1) of the Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015)

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:

- 'DRAFT A Construction GCN Management Statement, Benchmark, January 2026'
- PTP as shown on 'Proposed Site Plan, October 2025' and 'Nutrient Statement, Holbury Consultancy Service, January 2026'

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

2. 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 nearby County Wildlife Sites. 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.

3. 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 – such as wildlife-friendly plantings and bat boxes – 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.

4. 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.

5. New PTP

The proposed package treatment plant and drainage field shall be installed, maintained and operated in accordance with the submitted specification and details hereby approved. Any subsequent replacements shall have an equivalent or improved performance specification. The package treatment plant and drainage field shall be installed, connected and available for use before the development is occupied and they shall be maintained and operated thereafter for the lifetime of the development.

REASON: To provide ongoing and adequate nutrient mitigation for the nutrient neutrality water catchment for the life of the development and to ensure that any future package treatment plant is of an equivalent or improved standard

6. Water efficiency in River Test catchment

The overnight development hereby approved shall be designed to ensure it does not exceed 110 litres per person per day water consumption levels (which includes external water usage) and a water efficiency assessment should be submitted. Before the development is brought into use, a water efficiency report certifying that this standard has been achieved shall be submitted to the local planning authority for its written approval.

REASON: To ensure compliance with the prevailing mitigation strategy for nutrient neutrality in the water catchment within which this development is located.

A water efficiency calculation will be needed to discharge this condition. For guidance on how to do this and what is required, please refer to the following document: 'The Building Regulations 2010 – Sanitation, hot water safety and water efficiency', Appendix A (p36-44).

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/504207/BR_PDF_AD_G_2015_with_2016_amendments.pdf

As well as relevant agreement to secure New Forest mitigation contribution.

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

Ecologist Abi Gazzard	Date 15/06/2026
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