

Wiltshire Council Planning Consultation Response

ECOLOGY

Officer name:	Abi Gazzard
Date:	24/06/2026
Application number:	PL/2026/02622
Proposal:	Demolition of existing dwelling with a replacement dwelling and the erection of an outbuilding
Site address:	Old Mill Barn, Middle Woodford, Salisbury, SP4 6NW
Case officer:	Joe Richardson

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:

- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Phase 2 Bat Survey, Bourne Ecology, March 2026
- Existing Site Plan, Michael Lyons Architecture, January 2024
- Proposed Site Plan, Michael Lyons Architecture, January 2024
- Design & Access Statement, Michael Lyons Architecture, April 2026

The site comprises an existing dwelling proposed for demolition and replacement. It is also proposed to construct an outbuilding with a pool, sauna and garages. The site is surrounded by grassland to the west and south, with residential properties to the north and southeast. The River Avon lies ~10m to the east.

COMMENTS:

River Avon Special Area of Conservation (SAC) Hampshire Catchment

This development falls within the catchment of the River Avon SAC and has potential to cause adverse effects alone or in combination with other developments through discharge of phosphorus in wastewater.

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 since there is no proposal to create additional overnight accommodation (i.e., no gain in dwellings), there would be no overall mechanism for adverse effect. The HRA has concluded that the application is not likely to have significant impacts on the SAC and subsequently the application is screened out of Appropriate Assessment.

It should, however, be noted that this site is close to the River Avon SAC. Whilst the site boundary falls within 20m, the footprint of the dwelling is >20m away. In any case, Core Policy 69 seeks to avoid and reduce environmental effects on the River Avon SAC during construction and operation to avoid and prevent pollution and mitigate disturbance effects:

In order to avoid and reduce potential environmental effects on the River Avon SAC, development will need to incorporate measures during construction to avoid and prevent pollution and mitigate potential disturbance effects; appropriate measures may include consideration of suitable buffer zones along watercourses, habitat enhancements and river access management measures.

A Construction Method Statement (CMS), that includes measures to avoid and prevent direct damage, sedimentation, pollution, disturbance and/or changes to the hydrological regime **must be secured via condition**.

Protected species

No evidence of use by roosting bats was observed. However, the building was found to possess several potential bat roosting features. As such, two emergence surveys were undertaken in August 2025. The surveys recorded a peak count of five soprano pipistrelles emerging from the soffits/tiles. Typically, roost characterisation surveys of the building with the confirmed roost should be carried out until sufficient information has been gathered (which may necessitate more than two surveys since the building is now essentially known to be of “high” potential). On the balance of evidence, however, the two surveys are considered adequate in this case – they are not outdated, and it is likely that the building is used by only a low number of common species.

Under the Conservation of Species and Habitat Regulations 2017, it is an offence to harm or disturb bats or damage or destroy their roosts. Planning permission for development does not provide a defence against prosecution under this legislation. The applicant is advised that a mitigation licence will be required before any work is undertaken to implement this planning permission. The bat survey report recommends the addition of at least two bat boxes and three integrated bat tubes, as well as measures such as presence of an ecologist during works that will impact the roosts. **Compliance with these recommendations should be secured via a condition.**

In line with the NPPF and with CP50, applications must ensure that no net loss of functional habitat for the benefit of wildlife in the local area will occur as a result of the proposed development. In addition, gains for biodiversity, relevant to local habitats and wildlife populations, should form part of the proposed development. **Biodiversity enhancements, further to the compensatory bat roosting opportunities, should be secured via a 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 (such as vegetation clearance or building demolition) from March to August inclusive. Structures or vegetation capable of supporting breeding birds should be checked prior to commencement, and any removal or altering of such features should be delayed until after young birds have fledged.

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), as indicated in the application form.

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 document:

- Sections 5 (mitigation) and Appendix 8 of the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Phase 2 Bat Survey, Bourne Ecology, March 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 demolition), until a Construction Method Statement, which shall include measures for the protection of the natural environment stating how pollution of the watercourse will be prevented during construction works, has been submitted to, and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall not be carried out otherwise than in accordance with the approved construction method statement.

REASON: To ensure the development avoids causing harm to the River Avon SAC, as required by Core Policy 69.

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 nesting opportunities for birds and wildlife-friendly plantings – 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.

Informative – Artificial Lighting

The habitat within the proposed development site and the surrounding area is suitable for roosting, foraging and commuting bats. An increase in artificial lux levels can deter bats which could result in roost abandonment and/or the severance of key foraging areas. This will likely result in a significant negative impact upon the health of bat populations across the region. Artificial light at night can have a substantial adverse effect on biodiversity. 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 GN08-18 “Bats and artificial lighting in the UK”, issued by the Bat Conservation Trust and Institution of Lighting Professionals.

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

Ecologist 24/06/2026	Date Abi Gazzard
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