

Wiltshire Council Planning Consultation Response

ECOLOGY

Officer name:	Jessica Cracknell
Date:	07/07/2026
Application Number:	PL/2025/06413
Proposal:	Demolition of existing units and a dwelling, erecting 3No. dwellings.
Site Address:	Chrislion, 5 Grove Road, Sherston, Malmesbury, SN16 0NF
Case Officer:	Lucie Turner

Recommendations:

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

Thank you for your consultation on the above application. I have reviewed the submitted documents against OS maps, aerial photographs of the site and surrounding area, together with GIS layers of statutory and non-statutory designated sites and existing records of protected species.

The following submitted documentation was reviewed to inform this response:

- Ecological Survey Report (Bats). 06 October 2025. BatCraft. Ref. NWP/ESR-6/10/25;
- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Roost Assessment. 21 January 2025. Arbtech Consulting Ltd;
- The Statutory Biodiversity Metric. 06 February 2025;
- Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment. 06 February 2025. Arbtech Consulting Ltd;
- Proposed ground floor and first floor plans and elevations – Plot 1 & 2. September 2024. Poulson Architectural Design and Planning Services. Drawing No. 334/102. Rev. D;
- Proposed ground floor and first floor plans and elevations – Plot 3 and detached double garage. September 2024. Poulson Architectural Design and Planning Services. Drawing No. 334/103. Rev. D;
- Site location plan proposed site block plan drawings. September 2024. Poulson Architectural Design and Planning Services. Drawing No. 334/101. Rev. D;
- Planning and Heritage Statement. Poulson Architectural Design and Planning Services.

The proposed site does not lie within or adjacent to any sites designated for conservation and there are no areas of significant ecological importance within a zone of influence, it is expected that any adverse impacts on protected species or habitats could be suitably mitigated through an appropriate design scheme and timing of works.

Protected Species

Arbtech Consulting Ltd assessed the buildings onsite as holding habitat value for roosting bats. BatCraft undertook three dusk emergence surveys which found no evidence of roosting bats in the existing buildings. The demolition of the existing units and a dwelling, erecting of 3 new dwellings will not require removal of any vegetation considered to be functionally valuable to foraging or commuting bats. Subject to the retention of key boundary features, it is considered likely that the functionality of habitats within the site, and their availability for foraging and commuting bats, will not be adversely affected. Retained hedgerows across the site must be buffered and enhanced where possible to reduce fragmentation and support bat movement.

The habitat within the proposed development site and the surrounding area is suitable for roosting, foraging and commuting bats. 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 GN08/23 "Bats and artificial lighting at night", issued by the Bat Conservation Trust and Institution of Lighting Professionals. Suitable lighting to ensure dark foraging and commuting routes can be retained could 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. 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.

A precautionary method of working for amphibians and reptiles is proposed within the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Roost Assessment which is welcomed.

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 (06 February 2025) confirming the baseline and predicted post-development biodiversity units of the site has been submitted (including the baseline and proposed habitat maps). A biodiversity net gain assessment was undertaken in February 2025 in support of the application. Although the habitat surveys were undertaken outside the optimal period for botanical survey work, given the nature of the site, the information provided is considered sufficient to inform the assessment in this instance. However, it is expected that any future BNG botanical surveys are undertaken during the optimal survey window.

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	0.08 Habitat units
	0.00 Hedgerow units
	0.00 Watercourse units
Are there any irreplaceable habitats on-site?	No
Has any habitat degradation of occurred?	No

Note to case officer: Appendix 4: Post Development Habitat Plan (Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment. 06 February 2025. Arbtech Consulting Ltd) appears to align with the proposed habitats within the Statutory Biodiversity Metric (06 February 2025). Confirmation of how the development will achieve BNG is a post-determination matter however consideration should be given to how any proposed BNG will be secured.

Core Policy 50

Core Policy 50 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy requires all development to demonstrate no net loss of biodiversity and to seek opportunities to enhance biodiversity. The NPPF also encourages applications to deliver measurable net gains (para 186 d). It is anticipated that all developments will deliver no net loss of biodiversity. To provide increased opportunities for biodiversity/fauna/animals it is expected that new developments will provide integral features to benefit biodiversity such as for birds, bats, reptiles, hedgehogs

and invertebrates. This will comprise integral features on new residential developments at the ratio of 1:1 feature to building. Integral features must seek to benefit a target species/s or group/s and demonstrate viability in terms of position on building, location and clustering in accordance with relevant guidance. Locations should be chosen in consultation with a professional ecologist to ensure they are appropriately positioned, and the following details must be provided: location, number, type (include make/model, if appropriate) and positioning (height, aspect, surrounding habitat, as applicable). The locations of these features must be provided on site plan/elevation drawings, this can be secured via condition if not provided prior to determination and will become an enforceable part of the planning permission. Bird/bat boxes will continue to be available for birds/bats for the lifetime of the development.

CONDITIONS:

1. Compliance with submitted documents

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

- Ecological Survey Report (Bats). 06 October 2025. BatCraft. Ref. NWP/ESR-6/10/25;
- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Roost Assessment. 21 January 2025. Arbtech Consulting Ltd;
- The Statutory Biodiversity Metric. 06 February 2025;
- Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment. 06 February 2025. Arbtech Consulting Ltd.

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

2. Ecological Enhancements

Prior to the commencement of any works, including vegetation removal and demolition, details of the number, design and locations of ecological enhancement features including bat boxes, bird boxes, and hedgehog hibernacula shall be submitted to the Local Authority for approval. The approved details shall be implemented for the lifetime of the development and before completion of the final works.

REASON: To provide mitigation /enhancement for biodiversity.

3. 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.

INFORMATIVES:

Protected Species

The applicant should note that under the terms of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) it is an offence to disturb or harm any protected species including for example, breeding birds and reptiles. The protection offered to some species such as bats, extends beyond the individual animals to the places they use for shelter or resting. Please note that this consent does not override the statutory protection afforded to any such species. In the event that your proposals could potentially affect a protected species you should seek the advice of a suitably qualified and experienced ecologist and consider the need for a licence from Natural England prior to commencing works. Please see Natural England's website for further information on protected species.

Final sign off – all matters addressed:

Ecologist	Date
Jessica Cracknell	07/07/2026