

Wiltshire Council Planning Consultation Response

ECOLOGY

Officer name:	Jessica Cracknell
Date:	14/07/2026
Application Number:	PL/2026/01605
Proposal:	Installation of four temporarily portable cabins (including security, office, welfare and rest rooms units) ranging in size from 4.8m to 12m in length to support essential site operations
Site Address:	Charnage Quarry, Mere, Warminster, BA12 6AP
Case Officer:	Hayley Clark

Recommendations:

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

Further Information Required:

	Issue	Policy/Legislative Compliance	Date information requested & Further information required	Satisfactorily addressed (Document & Date submitted)
1	Charnage Down Chalk Pit SSSI	The Wildlife and Countryside Act, NPPF, CP50	15/07/2026 Consultation with Natural England and the submission of sufficient information prior to carrying out any works likely to damage the qualifying features of sites special scientific interest.	NO

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 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.

Charnage Down Chalk Pit Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)

The LPA have a duty to consult NE prior to determining a planning application that is in or likely to affect a SSSI (Schedule 4 (w) of The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 and section 28i of The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981).

This application lies within the Impact Risk Zone of Charnage Down Chalk Pit Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

There is potential for the proposed development to have a harmful effect on this SSSI and those SACs, SPAs or Ramsar sites that they underpin. Consultation with NE is therefore required prior to determination of the application.

Please note that the developer has a responsibility to protect the qualifying features of this site and must seek approval (assent) from Natural England prior to carrying out any works likely to damage the qualifying features of sites special scientific interest. Further advice can be found here: [Sites of special scientific interest: public body responsibilities - GOV.UK](#)

The LPA must be reasonably sure that the proposal will not result in significant adverse effects on this protected site/these protected sites. Additional information as outlined above must therefore be submitted and reviewed by the LPAs ecology team prior to determination of the application.

Protected Species

The application site comprises an area of existing hardstanding, with scrub, trees and hedgerows located around its boundaries. The proposed development does not appear to result in the loss of, or direct impacts to, any habitats within the site. 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. Should the proposals change such that trees or existing features with potential roosting features are affected, further survey work would be required, and mitigation measures would need to be reviewed and updated accordingly.

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.

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 GN08/23 "Bats and artificial lighting at night", issued by the Bat Conservation Trust and Institution of Lighting Professionals.

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 development meets the following criteria and is therefore below the de minimis threshold, meaning the development:

- does not impact an onsite priority habitat (a habitat specified in a list published under section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006); and
- impacts less than 25 square metres of onsite habitat that has biodiversity value greater than zero and less than 5 metres in length of onsite linear habitat (as defined in the statutory metric).

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.

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 and invertebrates.

All details on exact locations and specifications must be added to all working plans (see condition below) and will become an enforceable part of the planning permission to avoid oversight and to ensure consistency and enforceability. Integrated features are generally maintenance-free and seek to benefit a target species/s or group/s and should demonstrate viability in terms of position on the building, location and clustering in accordance with relevant guidance and the additional features.

CONDITIONS: these will be added once the issues above have been addressed

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

Ecologist	Date