

Wiltshire Council Planning Consultation Response

ECOLOGY

Officer name:	Jessica Cracknell
Date:	27/07/2026
Application Number:	PL/2025/09448
Proposal:	Conversion of Goat Barn to one dwelling.
Site Address:	Baydon Manor Farm Buildings, Marridge Hill, Ramsbury, SN8 2HG
Case Officer:	Hilary Quixley

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	Barn Owl Mitigation/Enhancement	Habs Regs, WCA, NPPF, CP50	27/07/2026 The proposed site plans must include the barn owl mitigation/enhancement measures.	NO
2	Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)	Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as inserted by Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021)	27/07/2026 Clarification of BNG Exemption: must be demonstrated that proposals impacts less than 25 square metres of onsite habitat; or, submit the statutory metric calculation with the correct baseline habitats, condition assessments and associated baseline habitat plans. (see comments in main text)	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.

The following submitted documentation was reviewed to inform this response:

- Ecological Assessment. 03 December 2025. GS Ecology Ltd. Ref. ECO3901A;
- Arboricultural Impact Assessment. 23 June 2026. Naturally Trees Ltd;
- Site Plan. 24 June 2026. Mathewson Waters Architects. Drawing No. 24006-113;
- Plans & elevations. 23 July 2025. Mathewson Waters Architects. Drawing No. 24006-109-A;
- Site Location & Block Plan. 15 September 2025. Mathewson Waters Architects. Drawing No. 24006-111;
- As existing. 23 July 2025. Mathewson Waters Architects. Drawing No. 24006-112;
- Design & Access Statement. November 2025. Mathewson Waters Architects.

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.

An ecological assessment, including, an extended phase 1 habitat & protected species scoping survey, preliminary bat roost assessment and barn owl survey, was undertaken in October 2025 in support of the application. Although the surveys were undertaken outside the optimal period for certain protected species 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 protected species surveys are undertaken during the optimal survey window.

Bats

The Ecological Assessment identified the existing buildings as having low to negligible potential to support roosting bats. The site is assessed to offering suitability for foraging and commuting bats. The conversion of the Goat Barn to a dwelling will not require the removal of vegetation considered to be functionally valuable for foraging or commuting bats. Subject to retention of key boundary features and implementation of a sensitive lighting strategy, it is likely that the functionality of the habitats within the site and their availability to 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 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. 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.

Barn Owls

The Barn Owl Survey identified an adult barn owl roosting within the barn, with approximately 80 barn owl pellets of varying ages, barn owl droppings and feathers beneath an existing barn owl box. No eggshells or nestling fluff were recorded and, on the basis of the evidence available, the building was assessed as supporting a confirmed barn owl roost which would be lost as a result of the proposed conversion works.

All birds, their nests and eggs are protected by law under Part 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Barn owls are listed under Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Roosting sites are recognised as important features for barn owls, particularly during the breeding season when adult birds may utilise separate roosting and nesting locations. Where possible, vegetation removal should be scheduled outside the bird breeding season (1st March–31st August) to avoid potential disturbance. If removal during this period is unavoidable, a pre-works nesting bird inspection must be conducted no more than two weeks before construction begins. 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.

To mitigate for the loss of the roosting site, the ecological assessment sets out a mitigation strategy comprising of installation of a barn owl nest/roost box on a suitable nearby tree at least 30 days before the commencement of development to provide alternative temporary and permanent accommodation with the retention of that box as long-term provision for barn owls. **This mitigation must be included in the site plan drawings and will become an enforceable part of the planning permission.** A pre-commencement survey by a suitably qualified barn owl surveyor to confirm the absence of an active nest immediately prior to works is recommended and welcomed. Further information in relation to the proposed mitigation strategy must be outlined and included within a construction method statement (CMS)

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). This application was submitted after Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) became mandatory however information required for applications subject to the biodiversity gain condition has not been submitted.

The development must meet the following criteria to qualify for the de minimis exemption:

- 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).

It is noted within the submitted Site Plan (24 June 2026. Mathewson Waters Architects. Drawing No. 24006-113) proposals include an area of gravel parking and turning, which appears to exceed 25 square metres of onsite habitat. As such, the development does not qualify for exemption under the de-minimis threshold and is therefore subject to the requirements of mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG).

Applications subject to the biodiversity gain condition must be accompanied by minimum information set out in [Article 7 of The Town and Country Planning \(Development Management Procedure\) \(England\) Order 2015](#), which includes:

- [the completed metric calculation tool](#) showing the calculations of the pre-development biodiversity value of the onsite habitat on the date of application (or proposed earlier date) including the publication date of the biodiversity metric used to calculate that value;
- a description of any [irreplaceable habitat](#) (as set out in [column 1 of the Schedule to the Biodiversity Gain Requirements \(Irreplaceable Habitat\) Regulations 2024](#)) on the land to which the application relates, that exists on the date of application, (or an earlier date); and
- habitat condition assessment sheets and plan(s), drawn to an identified scale and showing the direction of North, showing onsite habitat existing on the date of application (or earlier proposed date), including any irreplaceable habitat (if applicable).

Note: this is a summary, please refer to Paragraph: 011 [Biodiversity net gain - GOV.UK](#) for full details.

If the applicant considers that the development would not be subject to the biodiversity gain condition, Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 the applicant must provide a statement as part of the planning application setting out the reasons why they believe this is the case. Submission of a completed metric calculation tool may be necessary to evidence the statement

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. For this application, biodiversity measures should focus on delivering continued ecological functionality for swifts, bats, and hedgehogs.

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. 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 (see

condition below) 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.

Insufficient information has been submitted. In carrying out its statutory function, the LPA must be reasonably sure that the proposal will not result in significant adverse effects on protected habitats or species. The information outlined above must therefore be submitted and reviewed by the LPA's ecology team prior to determination of the application. I therefore maintain a holding objection until all the issues listed above have been suitably addressed.

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