

## Wiltshire Council Planning Consultation Response

### ECOLOGY

|                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
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| <b>Officer name:</b>       | Abi Gazzard                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| <b>Date:</b>               | 17/08/2026                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>Application number:</b> | PL/2026/03683                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>Proposal:</b>           | Demolition of existing buildings. The erection of a freestanding restaurant/takeaway with drive thru facility, car parking, landscaping and associated works, including Customer Order Displays. |
| <b>Site address:</b>       | Cannings Hill Garage, Horton Road, Devizes, SN10 2JG                                                                                                                                             |
| <b>Case officer:</b>       | Jonathan James                                                                                                                                                                                   |

### Recommendations:

|                                     |                                                |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | No Comment                                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Support                                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | No objection                                   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Condition (no objection subject to conditions) |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Objection - further information required       |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Objection in principle                         |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <b>HRA completed</b>                           |

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 Report, Practical Ecology, May 2026
- Bat Survey Report, Practical Ecology, May 2026
- Biodiversity Net Gain Design Stage Report, Practical Ecology, May 2026
- Statutory Biodiversity Metric, AS Curtis, May 2026
- Block Plan, Scurr Architects, November 2025, updated April 2026
- Site Layout Plan As Existing, Scurr Architects, updated April 2026
- Proposed Lighting Layout, Signify, December 2025, updated April 2026
- Supporting Statement, Planware Ltd, June 2026

The site comprises a petrol station and worksop proposed for demolition and replacement with a restaurant. The site is bordered by scrub to the northeast, and bound by roads in all other directions.

### 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. Appropriate Assessment 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 since there is no proposal to create additional overnight accommodation, 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.

### Protected species and habitats

The site contains mostly hardstanding and buildings, though there are some areas of mown grassland, scrub (some of it recently removed), scattered trees and tall forbs. These habitats were assessed to be of important at site-level only. The site is not likely to host great crested newts, dormice or reptiles. The recommendations for nesting birds should be followed.

One potential roosting feature was noted on Buildings 2 and 4. As such, a single emergence survey of these buildings was conducted in August 2025. No bats were recorded emerging, and the features remained heavily cobwebbed. Minimal activity, by common species, was recorded during the surveys. Given the presence of a potential roost feature, the ecology report advises that the site is demolished sensitively with an ecologist present when appropriate – **these recommendations should be adhered to, and secured via a condition.**

The lighting scheme shows lighting  $\geq 0.5$  lux along the site boundaries. However, the majority of the site boundary and site is already illuminated by seven street lights and on-site lighting. The scrub to the northeast will be subject to at least 0.5 lux at most points, but the adjacent fixtures will be at a low height (~1m) and facing away from this border. Overall, given the site's location, lack of good bat habitat and existing level of lighting, the lighting proposed is considered acceptable.

The bat survey report recommends the addition of at least two bat boxes. Considering the proposed lighting plan, it may be more appropriate to omit bat boxes and instead add invertebrate bricks, hibernacula in the scrub, and wildlife-friendly plantings. The ecology report further suggests a water source for birds, and hedgehog nest box. **Full details of these enhancements, and any other biodiversity enhancements (in line with CP50 and the NPPF), should be secured via a condition.**

The nearest nature conservation site is Lay Wood, a Local Wildlife Site, located ~460m southeast with a residential area in between. The proposed development is not anticipated to have any impacts on this site, or any other protected sites locally.

### 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, condition assessments and map (Biodiversity Net Gain Design Stage Report, Practical Ecology, May 2026; Statutory Biodiversity Metric, AS Curtis, May 2026) confirming the baseline and predicted post-development biodiversity units of the site have been submitted. The pre-development (baseline) situation is summarised below.

|                                                          |                        |
|----------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|
| On-site pre-development (baseline) biodiversity value    | 1.73 Habitat units     |
|                                                          | 0.00 Hedgerow units    |
|                                                          | 0.00 Watercourse units |
| Are there any <a href="#">irreplaceable</a> habitats on- | No                     |

|                                                          |                                                                                                                         |
|----------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| site?                                                    |                                                                                                                         |
| Has any habitat <a href="#">degradation</a> of occurred? | Yes – an area of mixed scrub was removed around May 2025. This is entered into the metric as scrub in 'good' condition. |

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.

The submitted metric indicates 1.38 biodiversity units are required to meet the 10% BNG requirement, and that on-site BNG is not achievable. All land located outside the redline application boundary of the development site is considered off-site. All off-site biodiversity gains sites must be registered on the national biodiversity gains site register. Guidance on how to register a biodiversity gains site, and/or allocate off-site gains to your development (e.g., through the purchase of biodiversity units) can be found here: [Make off-site biodiversity gains as a developer - GOV.UK](#). In order for the Biodiversity Gain Plan condition to be discharged, all off-site gains must be shown on the Biodiversity Gain Plan as allocated to this development on the national biodiversity gains site register.

## CONDITIONS:

### 1. Compliance with Permitted Documents

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

- Mitigation detailed in Section 3 of Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Report, Practical Ecology, May 2026
- Bat Survey Report, Practical Ecology, May 2026
- Biodiversity Net Gain Design Stage Report, Practical Ecology, May 2026

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 enhancements – such as invertebrate bricks, nest boxes and wildlife-friendly plantings – 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.

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

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| <b>Ecologist</b><br>Abi Gazzard | <b>Date</b><br>17/08/2026 |
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