

Council Planning Consultation Response

ECOLOGY

Officer name:	Elizabeth Burrows
Date:	17/06/2026
Application No:	PL/2026/01558
Proposal:	Erection of a single new dwelling and associated works. (Technical details consent following approval of permission in principle reference PL/2025/03764).
Site Address:	Rectory Barn, Whaddon, Hilperton, Trowbridge, BA14 6NR
Case Officer:	Andrew Thomas

Recommendations:

☐	No Comment
☐	Support
☐	No objection
☒	Condition (no objection subject to conditions)
☐	Objection - further information required
☐	Objection in principle
☒	HRA Bath and Bradford on Avon Bat SAC.

Appropriate Assessment with a positive conclusion has been sent to Natural England, who must agree the conclusion (within 21 days) prior to this application being permitted.

Further Information Required:

	Issue	Policy/Legislative Compliance	Date information requested & Further information required	Satisfactorily addressed
1	Bath and Bradford on Avon Bat SAC	CP50, NPPF, W&C Act, Habitats Regulations	Hedgerow Protection Plan	Yes Hedgerow Protection Plan (ethos environmental planning)
2	Protected species mitigation – great crested newts.	CP50, W&C Act, Habitats Regulations	Confirmation of mitigation strategy. If using District Level Licensing Scheme the <i>Impact Assessment and Conservation Payment Certificate (IACPC)</i> must be submitted to the LPA for review. Or If site-specific mitigation and compensation is proposed a GCN mitigation strategy must be submitted to the LPA for review	Yes - Great Crested Newt District Level Licensing Impact Assessment and Conservation Payment Certificate. Reference DLL-ENQ-WILT-00156

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.

Information considered:

- Existing Site Block Plan. Drawing No: 25/856/E002 Rev B. (Richmond Ball Architects, Dec 2025).
- Proposed Site Plan. Drawing No: 25/856/P003 Rev B. (Richmond Ball Architects, Jan 2026).
- Rectory Barn, Whaddon, Hilperton, Wiltshire, BA14 6NR. Technical Details Consent Planning Statement. (Vision Planning, February 2026).
- Ecological Impact Assessment. Rectory Barn, Church Corner, Whaddon, Wiltshire. V3. (Ethos Environmental Planning, February 2026).
- **Rectory Barn - Hedgerow Protection Plan (ethos environmental planning, submitted 17th August 2026).**
- **Great Crested Newt District Level Licensing Impact Assessment and Conservation Payment Certificate. Reference DLL-ENQ-WILT-00156.**

COMMENTS:

Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA)

Bath and Bradford on Avon Bat Special Area of Conservation

The application site is located within the yellow medium risk zone of the Trowbridge & Westbury Bat Mitigation Strategy (TWBMS). The application must therefore be considered under the Habitats Regulations. The yellow medium risk zone represents the areas where habitat has been shown to be of importance, or is highly likely to be of importance for bats associated with the Bath and Bradford-on-Avon Bat SAC, and in particular the yellow zone takes into consideration the foraging areas and flightlines of horseshoe species and Bechstein's bats and is anticipated to be able to accept a degree of development pressure provided applications are designed in accordance with the principles in the TWBMS.

Although the plans indicate that the northern and western hedgerows are to be retained, they do not appear to be adequately buffered from development impacts (direct loss and artificial light spill). In particular, the proposed parking area extends directly up to the base of the hedgerow. **A Hedgerow Protection Plan is therefore required, specifying a clearly defined no-development dark buffer of sufficient width to protect the hedgerow from harm and maintain its integrity and function as a bat foraging and commuting corridor.** Satisfied by the submitted Rectory Barn - Hedgerow Protection Plan (ethos environmental planning, submitted 17th August 2026).

The carefully designed fenestration along the northern and western boundaries, intended to minimise artificial light spill, is welcomed. No external lighting units are proposed. A lighting condition is nonetheless required to ensure that bat habitats are not adversely affected by any future external lighting.

The development will result in the loss of a small area of garden known to be used by SAC qualifying bat species for foraging. Impacts will arise on individual sites and in-combination with other sites as a result of loss and/degradation of habitat of importance to the qualifying bats.

All greenfield site applications within this zone are subject to S106 contributions as follows:

Each residential unit contributes £1,000 per dwelling (index linked from 2018) to be paid before commencement towards habitat mitigation as detailed the TWBMS.

The total financial contribution to mitigate the burden would be £1,000 plus legal and admin fees of 5%.

Developer contributions must be secured through a Section 111, Section 106 or Unilateral Undertaking at the time of permission with contributions secured prior to commencement. The applicant should be directed to the Guidance Note for Completing Agreements Under S111 of the Local Government Act 1972. Where the applicant elects to use the S111 process the fee must be paid and S111 signed by both the applicant

Great Crested Newts

It is agreed that a European Protected Species (EPS) great crested newt Mitigation Licence will need to be obtained for the lawful construction of this development. In terms of ecology, insufficient information has

been provided to ensure that favourable conservation status of great crested newts can be maintained should the application be approved.

If the applicant wishes mitigate via District Level Licensing (DLL), as advised by their consultant, the applicant must apply to Natural England to determine whether the scheme is eligible for DLL. Once the scheme is accepted under the District Level Licensing Scheme for Great Crested Newts, the *Impact Assessment and Conservation Payment Certificate (IACPC)*, which must be signed by the applicant and countersigned by Natural England must be submitted to the LPA for review prior to permission being granted.

If site-specific mitigation and compensation is proposed a GCN mitigation strategy must be submitted to the LPA for review prior to permission being granted.

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 the application 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).

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

DRAFT CONDITIONS:

The following or similarly worded, conditions are recommended. Please note these may amended once the issues raised has been addressed.

COMPLIANCE WITH SUBMITTED DOCUMENTS

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

- ~~Hedgerow Protection Plan [title and reference to be confirmed]~~
- Rectory Barn - Hedgerow Protection Plan (ethos environmental planning, submitted 17th August 2026).
- Proposed Site Plan. Drawing No: 25/856/P003 Rev B. (Richmond Ball Architects, Jan 2026).

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

LIGHTING

No external light fixture or fitting will be installed within the application site unless details of existing and proposed new lighting have been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority in writing. The submitted details will demonstrate how the proposed lighting will impact on bat habitat compared to the existing situation.

The plans will be in accordance with the appropriate Environmental Zone standards set out by the Institution of Lighting Professionals (ILP) Guidance Notes on the Avoidance of Obtrusive Light (GN 01/2021) and Guidance note GN08/23 "Bats and artificial lighting at night", issued by the Bat Conservation Trust and Institution of Lighting Professionals.

REASON: To avoid illumination of habitat used by bats.

Informative

General 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, great crested newts, breeding birds and reptiles. The protection offered to some species such as great crested newts, 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.

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

Ecologist	Date