

Council Planning Consultation Response

ECOLOGY

Officer name:	Patrick Olshansky
Date:	24/08/2026
Application No:	PL/2026/03957
Proposal:	Removal of existing 16x12ft shed and erection of a single-storey timber outbuilding in the rear garden to be used as a home office. Extension of existing rectangular patio shed base.
Site Address:	Fairfields, Green Lane, Trowbridge, BA14 6DJ
Case Officer:	Andrew Thomas

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.

Information considered:

- Proposed Elevations. Uploaded 21 Jul 2026
- Existing Elevations. Uploaded 21 Jul 2026
- Existing Site Plan. Uploaded 21 Jul 2026
- Proposed Site Plan. Uploaded 23 Jul 2026
- Existing Floor Plan. Uploaded 21 Jul 2026
- Proposed Floor Plan. Uploaded 21 Jul 2026
- Application Form. Uploaded 23 Jun 2026

COMMENTS:

Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA)

The application site is located within a consultation zone for bats associated with the Bath & Bradford on Avon Bats Special Area of Conservation (SAC). 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 given the scale and nature of the development there is no mechanism for adverse effect and any temporary construction impacts and operational impacts would be de-minimis. 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

Annex II Bats

The site lies 1.6 km from three Bechstein's bat core roosts, but Bechstein's bats rarely roost in buildings, so the likelihood of this development affecting roosts or individual bats is very limited. The site is adjacent to a small block of deciduous woodland, but no tree felling is proposed and therefore no loss of potential Bechstein's habitat will occur. Although a historical roost is recorded approx. 350m to the south and Bechstein's bats are known to use woodland located over 500 m to the east, the woodland immediately adjacent to the site is small, isolated by recent housing development, and its value for commuting or foraging from these features is constrained. As a result, the adjacent woodland is unlikely to form part of a significant connectivity route for this species. Overall, no significant impacts on Bechstein's bats or their associated resources and networks are predicted.

Other Bats

The existing floor and elevation plans show a small 17.28 m² structure with a window on the southern elevation, indicating that the internal void is unlikely to support roosting bats. The supporting documents do not confirm the construction materials or current use of the building, so the presence of external or internal crevice features cannot be fully ruled out. However, given the small size, suggested usage, and internal light levels, the structure is considered to have limited roost potential.

From the LPA's perspective, it is unclear whether a bat licence would be required, but based on the information provided, the likelihood of a roost being present is low. In this context, a proportionate approach is appropriate, and no further surveys are requested. An informative will be added to the decision notice to ensure the applicant is aware of their responsibilities.

There remains a low risk that bats could be encountered during works. Many bat species roost in crevices such as under ridge tiles, behind roofing felt or within cavity walls, and these roosts are protected at all times under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), even when bats are not present. Planning permission does not provide a defence against offences under this legislation, nor does it replace the need for a licence if an offence is likely.

Accordingly, the applicant is advised that if bats or evidence of bats are found at any point during works, all works must stop immediately, and the applicant must seek advice from an independent professional ecologist. Alternatively, advice can be sought from Natural England's Batline. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure compliance with wildlife legislation throughout the development.

Birds

The structure may be suitable as a nesting site for birds. 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.

Compliance with CP50 (no net loss etc)

Habitat Loss

Based on the application form there will be no tree removal during this development. However, a block of deciduous woodland lies immediately to the southeast of the development and is identified on Natural England's Priority Habitat Inventory. The existing structure, including its patio slab base, is located approximately one metre from this woodland boundary. The proposed replacement structure will move the footprint further away from the woodland edge but potentially still within root protection areas. According to the application form, works have already commenced without permission. It is unclear if groundworks for a

building of this scale and nature would require any excavation that would significantly impact tree roots, but the applicant should ensure that any new shed base is positioned outside the root protection areas of the adjacent woodland, or, where this is not possible, implement precautionary working measures within any root protection area in accordance with BS 5837:2012. In the unlikely event that any trees are lost due to development, these trees should be replaced by the applicant.

Artificial Lighting

The current proposals include no additional external lighting. The percentage fenestration will be limited which limits the potential of light spill degrading the woodland to the south. Based on the product description windows will mostly face east and north and will be largely screened to the south by the structure itself. Therefore, limited impact on the woodland from lighting is predicted. A standard lighting condition will be added to control external lighting.

Enhancement

No significant biodiversity loss is predicted as part of this development. To provide biodiversity enhancement in line with CP50 and NPPF, the applicant is encouraged to provide some form enhancement feature within the redline boundary. This will be secured through condition.

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

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 application is for development which is subject of a householder application within the meaning of article 2(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 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.

CONDITIONS:

Approved Plans

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

- Proposed Elevations. Uploaded 21 Jul 2026
- Existing Elevations. Uploaded 21 Jul 2026
- Existing Site Plan. Uploaded 21 Jul 2026
- Proposed Site Plan. Uploaded 23 Jul 2026
- Existing Floor Plan. Uploaded 21 Jul 2026
- Proposed Floor Plan. Uploaded 21 Jul 2026
- Application Form. Uploaded 23 Jun 2026

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

Enhancement

Prior to the commencement of any works, including vegetation removal and demolition, details of the number, design and locations of ecological enhancement features such as bat boxes, bird boxes, reptile features 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.

Artificial 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.

INFORMATIVES

Bats

There is a low risk that bats may occur at the development site. Many species of bat depend on buildings for roosting, with each having its own preferred type of roost. Most species roost in crevices such as under ridge tiles, behind roofing felt or in cavity walls and are therefore not often seen in the roof space. Bat roosts are protected all times by the Conservation of Habitats and Species 2017 (as amended) even when bats are temporarily absent because, being creatures of habit, they usually return to the same roost site every year. Planning permission for development does not provide a defence against prosecution under this legislation or substitute for the need to obtain a bat licence if an offence is likely. If bats or evidence of bats is found during the works, the applicant is advised to stop work and follow advice from an independent ecologist or the applicant is advised to follow the advice of a professional ecologist or to contact Natural England's Batline through the internet.

Birds

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

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

Ecologist	Date