

Wiltshire Council Planning Consultation Response

ECOLOGY

Officer name:	Abi Gazzard
Date:	25/03/2026, 25/08/2026
Application number:	PL/2026/01111
Proposal:	Demolition of existing triple garage and construction of self build dwelling within curtilage of existing house
Site address:	2 Church Lane, Limpley Stoke, Bath, BA2 7GH
Case officer:	Steven Sims

Recommendations:

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

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 Roost Appraisal Report, Stark Ecology Ltd, February 2026
- Existing site plan and landscape, En Space Architects, February 2026
- Proposed site plan and landscape, En Space Architects, February 2026
- Design and Access Statement, En Space Architects, February 2026
- [Statutory Biodiversity Metric, Georgie Starkie, June 2026](#)
- [Biodiversity Net Gain Calculation, Stark Ecology, July 2026](#)

The site comprises a detached garage building proposed for demolition and replacement with a dwelling. The site is neighboured by dwellings in all directions, with grassland fields 140m southwest and 80m south, as well as woodland patches 100m north and 135m northwest.

[Thank you for re-consulting Ecology; my second comments are shown in blue.](#)

COMMENTS:

Bath and Bradford-on-Avon Bats Special Area for Conservation (SAC)

The site lies within 11 roost buffers for Bechstein's, Lesser Horseshoe and Greater Horseshoe bats associated with the Bath and Bradford-on-Avon Bats SAC. It therefore may have the potential to result in significant adverse impact on the special features of that site. Appropriate Assessment (AA) under Section 63 of the Habitats Regulations 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 given the scale and nature of the currently proposed development - which does not propose removal of any bat habitat or roosts, and does not propose any additional external lighting - there is no mechanism for adverse impact on the Conservation Objectives of the SAC, and the proposal can be screened out of Appropriate Assessment.

Protected species

The garage is a single-storey cement-panelled building with a very shallow mono-pitched roof. The roof is corrugated cement fibre which connects to metal fascia boards. Internally, the garage is subject to a high level of (day)light spill and fairly open to the elements. Overall, the garage and adjacent tree were assessed as having negligible potential to host roosting bats, and no further survey is considered necessary.

The tree and nearby scrub may be used by nesting birds. 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 (such as vegetation clearance or building demolition) from March to August inclusive. 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.

There do not appear to be any ponds mapped within 250m of the site. The habitat surrounding the garage comprises a garden containing individual trees, very small areas of scrub/plantings, mown lawn and hardstanding. These will be of limited value to other protected and notable wildlife, and there will be sufficient opportunities for species to disperse into the surrounding garden areas, if present. In the unlikely event any reptiles, great crested newts or nesting birds are encountered, all works should cease and a professional ecologist contacted for further advice.

In line with NPPF and with CP50, applications that do not fall into the category where Biodiversity Net Gain is required must still ensure that no net loss of functional habitat for the benefit of wildlife in the local area will occur as a result of the proposed development. In addition, gains for biodiversity, relevant to local habitats and wildlife populations, should form part of the proposed development. The proposed green roof is welcomed. A plan showing the details and locations of biodiversity enhancements, such as integrated bat and bird roosting opportunities and wildlife-friendly planting, should be secured via condition. A lighting condition has also been recommended to control any residual risk posed to light-sensitive species, in the event that lighting is required.

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 it 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), as indicated in the application form.

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.

It appears that the self-build exemption will not apply as self-build status will not be secured. As such, the applicant has provided a BNG metric and BNG report.

The pre-development (baseline) is accepted as accurate, and is summarised below.

On-site pre-development (baseline) biodiversity value	0.30 Habitat units
	0.00 Hedgerow units
	0.00 Watercourse units
Are there any <u>irreplaceable</u> habitats on-site?	No
Has any habitat <u>degradation</u> of occurred?	No

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 0.25 biodiversity units or less will be required to meet the 10% BNG requirement and that on-site BNG is not achievable. In these circumstances, statutory credits can be bought without providing evidence that insufficient off-site options are available in England. For further information, please refer to guidance on Statutory Biodiversity Credits on the GOV.UK website (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/statutory-biodiversity-credits>) under 'How to prove statutory credits are needed'.

CONDITIONS:

1. 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 sensitive 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 wildlife-sensitive habitats, including habitat used by bats.

2. Enhancements for Biodiversity

Prior to the commencement of any works, including vegetation removal and demolition, details of the number, design and locations of ecological enhancements – such as nesting opportunities for birds and roosting opportunities for bats – shall be submitted to the local authority for approval. The approved details shall be implemented before occupation of the final works.

REASON: To provide mitigation/enhancement for biodiversity.

Informative – 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, breeding birds and reptiles. The protection offered to some species such as bats, 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 Abi Gazzard	Date 25/08/2026
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