

Wiltshire Council Planning Consultation Response

ECOLOGY

Officer name:	Jessica Cracknell
Date:	27/08/2026 17/09/2026 updated comments
Application Number:	PL/2026/03332
Proposal:	Erection of single storey link building between SP3 and SP2 and single storey airlock lobby, installation of external plant decks, fire escape, goods lift, new windows and doors, flues and associated plant and machinery. Relocated parking and refuse and waste areas and associated works.
Site Address:	Building SP2, Corsham Science Park, Park Lane, Corsham, SN13 9FU
Case Officer:	Lucie Turner

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)
	Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)	Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as inserted by Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021)	27/08/2026 Submission of statutory metric calculation with the correct baseline habitats, and associated baseline condition assessment sheets and maps. The redline boundary used in the BNG assessment must align with the redline boundary shown in all other site documentation.	YES 17/09/2026 - Ecological Assessment. 08 September 2026. Davidson-Watts Ecology Ltd. Project ref. DWE-1129. Version. 0.1; - The Statutory Biodiversity Metric. 08 September 2026. Davidson-Watts Ecology Ltd. Iteration. Version 2.

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. 08 September 2026. Davidson-Watts Ecology Ltd. Project ref. DWE- 1129. Version. 0.1;](#)
- [The Statutory Biodiversity Metric. 08 September 2026. Davidson-Watts Ecology Ltd. Iteration. Version 2;](#)
- Arboricultural Report. 18 May 2026. Silver Maple Consultants Ltd;
- Planning – Site Plan & Location Plan – Proposed. 10 June 2026. Scitech Engineering Limited. Drawing No. 300031-SCI-PL-SI-DP-AR-101. Rev. P04;
- Planning – Proposed Elevations. 10 June 2026. Scitech Engineering Limited. Drawing No. 300031-SCI-PL-ZZ-DE-AR-101. Rev. P03;
- Planning – Proposed Elevations – Link Building. 10 June 2026. Scitech Engineering Limited. Drawing No. 300031-SCI-PL-ZZ-DE-AR-102. Rev. P03;
- Planning – Proposed Elevations – Outbuildings. 10 June 2026. Scitech Engineering Limited. Drawing No. 300031-SCI-PL-ZZ-DE-AR-103. Rev. P02;
- Planning – Site Plan – Existing. 19 June 2026. Scitech Engineering Limited. Drawing No. 300031-SCI-PL-SI-DP-AR-001. Rev. P04;
- Planning – Existing Elevations. 10 June 2026. Scitech Engineering Limited. Drawing No. 300031-SCI-PL-ZZ-DE-AR-001. Rev. P03;
- Planning – Existing Elevations. 10 June 2026. Scitech Engineering Limited. Drawing No. 300031-SCI-PL-ZZ-DE-AR-002. Rev. P03;
- Bath ASU SP2 Design and Access Statement. 01 May 2026. Scitech Engineering Limited. Document No. 300031-RE-0005. Issue. A3;
- Planning Statement. May 2026. Savills. Issue. 2.0.

Bath and Bradford on Avon Bat Special Area of Conservation (SAC): Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA)

The application site is located within a consultation zone for Bechstein's bats, Greater Horseshoe bats and Lesser Horseshoe bats associated with the Bath and Bradford on Avon Bats Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and therefore has potential to result in significant adverse impact on the special features of that site. Appropriate Assessment (AA) under Section 63 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) 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.

The submitted Ecological Assessment includes a Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) and Ground Level Tree Assessment (GLTA) of the buildings and trees affected by the proposals. No evidence of bat use was recorded and all buildings were assessed as having negligible potential to support roosting bats. The GLTA also confirmed that the on-site field maple tree and nearby off-site trees do not contain potential roost features (PRFs) and therefore have no suitability for roosting bats. Any future amendments to the proposals that would affect features with potential bat roosting value may require further survey work, and a review of mitigation and management measures will be required and will be subject to reassessment under the Habitats Regulations.

The proposed development will result in the loss of a small section of hawthorn hedgerow and a single young field maple tree. The Ecological Assessment does not consider these features to form significant commuting routes for bats and their removal is not anticipated to adversely affect local bat populations. Subject to the 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.

A test of likely significance has been carried out by the relevant Competent Authority (Wiltshire Council) as required by Regulation 63 Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019. This concluded that given the scale and nature of the development there is no mechanism for adverse effect. The Habitat Regulation Assessment (HRA) has concluded that the application will not result in any mechanism for adverse effect on Annex II bats, or on the conservation objectives of the SAC and subsequently is screened out of Appropriate Assessment.

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. This will likely result in a significant negative impact upon the health of bat populations across the region. Artificial light at night can have a substantial adverse effect on biodiversity. 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. Suitable lighting to ensure dark foraging and commuting routes can be retained could be secured via condition.

Nesting Birds

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 vegetation clearance 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.

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 ([08 September 2026. Davidson-Watts Ecology Ltd. Iteration. Version 2](#)) confirming the baseline and predicted post- development biodiversity units of the site has been submitted (including the condition assessment sheets and maps).

Information in the completed on-site baseline habitat tabs is accepted as accurate based on the information submitted. The pre-development (baseline) situation is summarised below.

On-site pre-development (baseline) biodiversity value	0.04 Habitat units
	0.01 Hedgerow units
	0.00 Watercourse units
Are there any irreplaceable habitats on-site?	No
Has any habitat degradation of occurred?	No

If planning permission is granted, a Biodiversity Gain Plan confirming how the development will meet the biodiversity gain objective must be submitted and approved prior to the commencement of the development. The Biodiversity Gain Plan must be accompanied by a completed Biodiversity Metric with the following issues addressed:

- The trading rules must be satisfied. The Statutory Biodiversity Metric calculation ([08 September 2026. Davidson-Watts Ecology Ltd. Iteration. Version 2](#)) does not provide information on how the development will achieve 10% BNG.
- The submission of a post-development habitat map linked to the metric (e.g. including habitat ID numbers) must be provided to demonstrate where each proposed habitat type will be delivered on site.

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'.

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 bats, swifts and hedgehog.

The Ecological Assessment proposes the inclusion of a bat and bird boxes which is welcomed. 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. 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). Bird/bat boxes will continue to be available for birds/bats for the lifetime of the development.

CONDITIONS:

1. Compliance with submitted documents

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

- Sections 4, 5 and 6, Figure 4 and Appendix F of the Ecological Assessment. 08 September 2026. Davidson-Watts Ecology Ltd. Project ref. DWE- 1129. Version. 0.1;
- The Statutory Biodiversity Metric. 08 September 2026. Davidson-Watts Ecology Ltd. Iteration. Version 2;
- Arboricultural Report. 18 May 2026. Silver Maple Consultants Ltd.

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 enhancement features including bat boxes and bird boxes 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.

3. 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:

Bat Species

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.

Final sign off – all matters addressed:

Ecologist	Date
Jessica Cracknell	17/09/2026