

Wiltshire Council Planning Consultation Response

ECOLOGY

Officer name:	Jenna Buss
Date:	14/09/2026
Application number:	PL/2026/03223
Proposal:	Outline application with some matters reserved for the erection of 5 self-build dwellings with new crossover access from Witt Road, following the demolition of existing barn and removal of containers; retention of existing access to woodland behind (Access and Layout).
Site address:	Land opposite Jubilee Cottage, Witt Road, Winterslow, Salisbury, Wilts
Case officer:	Sarah Hill

Recommendations:

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

Please Note: When resubmitting a revised document, ALL changes must be highlighted to enable review.

I have reviewed the application and supporting documents against OS Maps and aerial photography of the site and surrounding area, together with GIS layers of statutory and non-statutory sites and existing records of protected species.

The following submitted documentation was reviewed to inform this response:

- Drainage Strategy and Flood Risk Statement. May 2026. Aqua Callidus
- Nutrient Assessment and Budget. May 2026. Aqua Callidus
- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal. May 2026. Ecosupport
- Natural England Nutrient Neutrality budget calculator for the Solent Marine Sites.

Protected and Notable Species

The proposal seeks the demolition of the existing buildings on site and the construction of five dwellings under outline permission. Having reviewed the submitted ecological information, it is noted that the development site comprises habitat of ecological value, particularly the boundary hedgerows and associated trees which provide connectivity to the wider landscape. In accordance with Core Policy 50 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy, development proposals should demonstrate no net loss of biodiversity and maintain the integrity of local ecological networks. It is therefore important that these features are retained and appropriately managed throughout the construction and operational phases of the development.

Bats

The submitted ecological assessment concludes that the existing buildings have negligible potential to support roosting bats and no further surveys are therefore considered necessary.

The boundary hedgerows, however, are functionally connected to the wider habitat network and are likely to be used by bats for commuting and foraging. The proposal to retain all existing hedgerows and trees is welcomed and will help maintain the ecological connectivity of the site.

The incorporation of sensitive lighting measures is also supported, with minimal external lighting proposed. To ensure that bat commuting and foraging routes remain functional, a sensitive lighting scheme should be secured by condition. Any lighting should accord with the appropriate Environmental Zone standards contained within the Institution of Lighting Professionals (ILP) *Guidance Notes for the Reduction of Obtrusive Light (GN01/2021)* and *GN08/23 Bats and Artificial Lighting at Night*, produced jointly by the Bat Conservation Trust and ILP.

Dormice

Evidence of dormouse is known from the local area, with functionally connected habitat linking nearby woodland to the development site. The proposed retention of all hedgerows and trees is therefore strongly supported, as are the enhancement measures outlined within Section 6.3.3 of the ecological assessment.

Should any future works result in impacts to hedgerows or trees that provide suitable dormouse habitat, the applicant is advised that **a licence from Natural England may be required prior to the commencement of such works.**

The proposals include protection of retained vegetation during construction through the use of Heras fencing to prevent root damage and soil compaction. This approach is welcomed. However, detailed protection measures with specific consideration to dormice, should be incorporated within a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP), which should be secured by condition.

Section 6.3.3 of the Preliminary Ecological Assessment states that retained hedgerows will not only be conserved but enhanced through supplementary native, species-rich planting. These measures are welcomed as they will strengthen habitat connectivity and increase biodiversity value across the site. To ensure the long-term success of these enhancements, a Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP) should be secured by condition and set out the future management and maintenance of retained and enhanced hedgerows.

The site contains only limited habitat suitable for reptiles. Nevertheless, the precautionary working methods outlined within the ecological assessment are welcomed and should be implemented to minimise the risk of harm to reptiles during site clearance and construction activities.

The recommendation for pre-commencement badger checks is welcomed and should be undertaken by a suitably qualified ecologist immediately prior to the commencement of works should there be any delay between survey and construction.

Although the buildings have been scoped out as supporting roosting bats, nesting birds cannot be ruled out. All vegetation clearance, tree works and demolition activities should therefore be undertaken outside of the bird nesting season (March to August inclusive), unless a suitably qualified ecologist first confirms that no active nests are present. If active nests are identified, an appropriate exclusion buffer must be maintained until the young have fledged.

The enhancement outlined in section 6.9 of the ecology report must be implemented. An Ecological Parameters Plan (EPP) is required to ensure required ecological features are integrated into the development. The EPP must clearly identify those areas of the site which are

unconstrained, those areas where sensitive design or restrictions may be required, and any areas of the site which are to be retained, remain undeveloped, enhanced or form part of the landscaping for the purposes of protecting and enhancing biodiversity. The EPP must include the enhancement details outlined in section 6.9 of the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal.

Subject to the retention and protection of boundary habitats, implementation of the recommended ecological mitigation and enhancement measures, and the securing of appropriate conditions relating to:

- Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP);
- Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP);
- Sensitive lighting strategy; and
- Ecological Parameters Plan;

it is considered that the proposal can be carried out in accordance with Core Policy 50 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy by avoiding harm to ecological features and maintaining the integrity of local ecological networks. The proposed retention and enhancement of hedgerows and trees is particularly welcomed and will contribute positively to biodiversity and habitat connectivity within the site and surrounding landscape.

Mottisfont Bat SAC

The application site is located within a consultation zone for bats associated with the Mottisfont 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 application has potential to result in significant adverse impact either alone or in combination with other projects on the statutorily designated Mottisfont Bat SAC. As required by the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) an Appropriate Assessment has been completed by the LPA with a favourable conclusion. The AA has been sent to Natural England and the application must not be determined until they have agreed with the LPAs conclusion.

New Forest Protected Sites

The proposed development site lies within the 13.8km zone of influence for the New Forest internationally protected sites, which comprises the New Forest SPA, New Forest SAC and New Forest Ramsar site. Therefore, the application is screened into appropriate assessment under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) on account of its potential to cause adverse effects on the New Forest protected sites through increased recreational pressure which may occur alone and in-combination with other plans and projects.

In line with the Councils Interim Mitigation Strategy, the applicant has agreed to pay the SAMM payment requirements of £660 per dwelling/tourism unit (plus legal and admin fees). This will be secured via a S111 agreement at determination. Unilateral undertakings or s106 agreements are also available to ensure the necessary mitigation is secured.

This will enable the Council to conclude, subject to endorsement from Natural England, that the development proposed by means of this application will not lead to significant adverse effects on the New Forest protected sites alone or in-combination with other plans and projects.

The cost of developer contributions to mitigate the burden would be £3,300 plus legal and admin fees.

The applicant should be directed to the Guidance Note for Completing Agreements Under S111 of the Local Government Act 1972.

It is considered that this approach delivers the required level of certainty to secure effective mitigation for the recreational burdens of this planning application. There will be no in combination effects with other developments, therefore we can conclude that there would be no adverse effect on the integrity of the above European Sites as a result of the development.

River Test Catchment

Solent Protected Sites - Solent Maritime Special Area of Conservation (SAC), Chichester and Langstone Harbours Special Protection Area (SPA) and Ramsar site, Portsmouth Harbour (SPA) and Ramsar site, Solent and Southampton Water (SPA) and Ramsar site.

This development falls within the catchment of the River Test which drains into the Solent Protected Sites and has potential to cause adverse effects alone or in combination with other developments through discharge of nitrogen 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 nitrogen budget has been submitted. The nitrogen budget is in line with Natural England's advice and it is agreed that the development will result in a nitrogen burden of 17.05 kg/N/yr and mitigation is required.

Wiltshire Council has a strategic nitrogen mitigation scheme available to applicants located in the River Test catchment in Wiltshire. We can confirm that this option would be applicable for this proposal.

The cost of Nitrogen credits from the Council's strategic scheme to mitigate the burden would be £51,150 (£3000 per 1 kg/N) plus additional legal and admin fees.

The purchase of nitrogen credits prior to the commencement of development must be secured by planning obligations.

Where a Section 106 agreement is not in place, mitigation can alternatively be secured under Section 111. In such cases, the credits must be purchased upon the granting of planning permission by completion of S111 process.

The applicant should be directed to the Guidance Note for Completing Agreements Under S.111 of the Local Government Act 1972.

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 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 0.2 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).

CONDITIONS:

1. Prior to the commencement of works, including demolition, ground works/excavation, site clearance, vegetation clearance and boundary treatment works, a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) shall be submitted to the local planning authority for approval in writing. The Plan shall provide details of the avoidance, mitigation and protective measures to be implemented before and during the construction phase, including but not necessarily limited to, the following:
 - Identification of ecological protection areas/buffer zones and tree root protection areas and details of physical means of protection, e.g. exclusion fencing.
 - Working method statements for protected/priority species, such as nesting birds and reptiles.
 - Mitigation strategies already agreed with the local planning authority prior to determination, such as for dormice or bats; this should comprise the pre-construction/construction related elements of strategies only.
 - Work schedules for activities with specific timing requirements in order to avoid/reduce potential harm to ecological receptors; including details of when a licensed ecologist and/or ecological clerk of works (ECoW) shall be present on site.
 - Key personnel, responsibilities and contact details (including Site Manager and ecologist/ECoW).

Development shall be carried out in strict accordance with the approved CEMP.

REASON: To ensure adequate protection and mitigation for ecological receptors prior to and during construction, and that works are undertaken in line with current best practice and industry standards and are supervised by a suitably licensed and competent professional ecological consultant where applicable.

2. Prior to the start of construction, a Landscape and Ecology Management Plan (LEMP) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The LEMP will include long term objectives and targets, management responsibilities and maintenance schedules for each ecological feature within the development, together with a mechanism for monitoring success of the management prescriptions, incorporating review and necessary adaptive management to attain targets.

The LEMP shall be implemented in full and for the lifetime of the development in accordance with the approved details.

REASON: To ensure the long-term management of landscape and ecological features retained and created by the development, for the benefit of visual amenity and biodiversity for the lifetime of the scheme.

3. Prior to the commencement of any works, including vegetation removal and demolition, details of the number, design and locations of ecological enhancement features as outlined in section 6.9 of the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal shall be submitted to the Local Authority on technical drawings for approval. The approved details shall be implemented for the lifetime of development and before completion of the final works.

REASON: To provide mitigation /enhancement for biodiversity.

4. 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.

5. The residential development hereby approved shall be designed to ensure it does not exceed 110 litres per person per day water consumption levels (which includes external water usage). Within 3 months of each phase being completed and the housing being brought into use, a water efficiency report certifying that this standard has been achieved shall be submitted to the local planning authority for its written approval.

REASON: To ensure compliance with the prevailing mitigation strategy for nutrient neutrality in the water catchment within which this development is located.

A water efficiency calculation will be needed to discharge this condition. For guidance on how to do this and what is required, please refer to the following document: '*The Building Regulations 2010 – Sanitation, hot water safety and water efficiency*', Appendix A (p36-44).

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/504207/BR_PDF_AD_G_2015_with_2016_amendments.pdf

INFORMATIVES:

Nesting 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

Final sign off – all matters addressed:

Ecologist Jenna Buss	Date 18/09/2026
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