

Wiltshire Council Planning Consultation Response

ECOLOGY

Officer name:	Kirsten Pryde (Graduate ecologist)
Date:	10/03/2026 18/09/2026 text in red
Application number:	PL/2025/03843
Proposal:	Proposed extensions to existing Agricultural Dwelling House and ancillary works.
Site address:	Ridgefield Farm, Green Road, The Ridge, Corsham, SN13 9PW
Case officer:	Peter Crozier

Recommendations:

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

Further Information Required:

	Issue	Policy/Legislative Compliance	Date information requested & Further information required	Satisfactorily addressed (Document & Date)
	Bats	Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)	10/03/2026 Detailed emergence surveys, adhering to the Bat Conservation Trust's Good Practice Guidelines. 18/09/2026 Information to demonstrate roosting functionality will be retained.	NO- Preliminary Roost Assessment by Daniel Ahern Ecology 19th December 2025 REF: 5868.3 Bat Emergence Survey Report by Wessex Ecology 9th July 2026 REF: 6095.2

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 consulting Ecology, 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:

- Ecology Letter written by Luscina Ecology, dated 16/12/2024 (REF: LUS24201)
- Design and Access Statement by bba architects and planners, dated March 2025
- Proposed Extension Proposed Site Plan by bba architects and planners, dated October 2025 (REF: 4526-102_C)
- Proposed Extensions and Floor Plans by bba architects and planners, dated October 2025 (REF: 4526-110_F)
- Proposed Extension Existing Elevations by bba architects and planners (REF: 4526-106_A)
- Proposed Extension Front and Side Elevations by bba architects and planners (REF: 4526-111_F)
- Floor Plan Comparison Existing Overlaid on Proposed by bba architects and planners (REF: 4526-115)
- Proposed Extensions Side and Rear Elevations by Proposed Extensions Side and Rear Elevations by bba architects and planners (REF: 4526-112_E)
- (REF: 4526-112_F)
- Proposed Extension Existing Floor Plans by bba architects and planners (REF: 4526-105_A)
- Preliminary Roost Assessment by Daniel Ahern Ecology 19th December 2025 REF: 5868.3
- **Bat Emergence Survey Report by Wessex Ecology 9th July 2026 REF: 6095.2**

Matters Considered:

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

The application site is located within a 4km Core Roost Buffer consultation zone for greater horseshoe bats associated with the Bath & 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.

~~Insufficient information has so far been submitted to enable the AA to be undertaken, which must be completed and the conclusion agreed with Natural England prior to the application being determined. Detailed emergence bat surveys, adhering to the Bat Conservation Trust's Good Practice Guidelines, are required to assess the potential impact on bats, their roosts, and how bats are currently using the site for foraging and commuting.~~

~~The information outlined above must therefore be submitted and reviewed by the LPA's ecology team prior to determination of the application.~~

During bat surveys undertaken at the site (Bat Emergence Survey Report by Wessex Ecology 9th July 2026 REF: 6095.2), a greater horseshoe bat, a qualifying species of the Bath and Bradford-on-Avon Bats SAC, was recorded within the wider survey area. However, no greater horseshoe bats were recorded emerging from, re-entering, or otherwise using the building proposed for alteration.

The proposed development relates to alterations and extensions to an existing residential property and there is no evidence that the works would result in the loss or deterioration of

habitat supporting the SAC qualifying species. Given that only an incidental activity record of greater horseshoe bats were recorded and no roosts or key supporting habitat for SAC qualifying species were identified on site, the proposal is not considered likely to have a significant effect on the Bath and Bradford-on-Avon Bats SAC, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects. As such, the proposal can be screened out from Appropriate Assessment under the Habitats Regulations.

Protected Species

Bats

The Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) (Preliminary Roost Assessment by Daniel Ahern Ecology 19th December 2025 REF: 5868.3) confirmed that Building 1 at Ridgefield Farm supports a bat roost, with approximately 200 droppings recorded in the roof void and subsequently identified through eDNA analysis as originating from brown long-eared bats. ~~As extensions to the building are proposed, the PRA recommends that three bat emergence surveys are undertaken between May and August, as well as a hibernation survey in winter, to establish the roost type, level of use and seasonal activity. These emergence survey results are required prior to determination so that appropriate mitigation and habitat enhancement measures can be accurately designed and proportionately secured, ensuring that impacts on the confirmed roost are fully understood and addressed in line with best practice.~~

The emergence surveys (Bat Emergence Survey Report by Wessex Ecology 9th July 2026 REF: 6095.2) recorded no bats emerging from the building strongly indicating the roost is not a maternity roost of high conservation significance. Contrary to the statement in the report the roost will be impacted by the replacement roof works and a European Protected Species (EPS) bat 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 brown long-eared bats can be maintained should the application be approved.

A plan demonstrating that the existing bat roost will be retained is required. This plan must clearly identify how the roost, including its existing access points and internal roosting conditions will be retained following the roof replacement.

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 0.5 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: to be added once the above has been addressed, subject to change.

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 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.

2. The development will be carried out in broad accordance with the following documents

- Bat Emergence Survey Report by Wessex Ecology 9th July 2026 REF: 6095.2 section 6.2 Habitat Enhancement Measures
- Retained roost plan TBC

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

Informative

The roof space of Ridgefield Farm is used as a bat roost. Under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), it is an offence to harm or disturb bats or damage or destroy their roosts. Planning permission for development does not provide a defence against prosecution under this legislation. The applicant is advised that a European Protected Species Licence will be required before any work is undertaken to implement this planning permission. Future conversion of the roof space to living accommodation or replacing the roof could also breach this legislation and advice should be obtained from a professional bat ecologist before proceeding with work of this nature.

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.

Final sign off – all matters addressed:

Ecologist	Date
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