

Wiltshire Council Planning Consultation Response

ECOLOGY

Officer name:	Abi Gazzard
Date:	06/10/2026
Application number:	PL/2026/01008
Proposal:	Permission in Principle for detached residential dwelling
Site address:	Woodland View Farm, Silver Street Lane, Brokerswood, Westbury, BA13 4EY
Case officer:	Russell Brown

Recommendations:

☒	HRA required – further information needed
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Further Information Required:

	Issue	Policy/Legislative Compliance	Date information requested & Further information required	Satisfactorily addressed (Document & Date)
a)	HRA assessment for Salisbury Plain SPA	Habitat Regulations, NPPF, Wiltshire CP50	06/10/2026 -Mechanism through which to secure mitigation	
a)	HRA assessment for bat SAC	Habitat Regulations, NPPF, Wiltshire CP50	06/10/2026 -Mitigation strategy -Clarification of whether any new lighting is proposed -Mechanism through which to secure mitigation, including the TWBMS contribution of £1,000 per dwelling	

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, 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 Ecological Appraisal, Arbtech, July 2026
- Supporting Statement, Symonds & Sampson, February 2026

The site comprises an area of land containing modified grassland, hedgerow and trees. The site is neighboured by woodland to the northeast, a field to the south, and dwellings to the southeast and northwest. The woodland at the northeast (~10m away) forms Brokerswood and Hazel Wood County Wildlife Site, also categorised as Priority Habitat and Ancient Woodland. An area categorised as Traditional Orchard Priority Habitat sits adjacent to the site at the southwest

This application seeks permission in principle to erect one dwelling.

COMMENTS:

The site falls within the zone(s) of influence of two European protected sites/habitats sites. For projects that could impact a European habitats site, a habitats regulations assessment (HRA) must be carried out to determine the potential significant effects and the suitability of any measures proposed to avoid or mitigate those effects.

Paragraph 1A of regulation 70 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 states that the assessment provisions apply to "*granting permission in principle under section 59A of the TCPA 1990 (Development orders: permission in principle)*". This makes it clear that the relevant competent authority (the LPA) must make an Appropriate Assessment (AA) of the implications of the proposal before any Permission in Principle is authorised. Further information can be found within the [Government's guidance for applications for permission in principle](#).

Any mitigation required (for positive conclusion of AA) will need to be secured through an appropriate legal agreement at the permission in principle stage (please see appeal ref: APP/Y3940/W/24/3358035). This is because there must be certainty that any adverse effects on the integrity of the European site would be avoided. Therefore, mitigation must be secured through a legal agreement such as a s106 or unilateral undertaking, and the trigger for delivery could be the associated technical details consent. Legal advice should be sought.

The relevant sites are discussed in further detail below.

European protected sites

Salisbury Plain Special Protection Area (SPA) 6.4km buffer

This application lies within the 6.4km zone of influence of the Salisbury Plain SPA and in light of the HRA for the Wiltshire Core Strategy and the HRA for the Wiltshire Housing Site Allocations Plan it is screened into Appropriate Assessment due to the potential impact of recreational pressure on stone curlew in combination with other plans and projects.

A strategic Appropriate Assessment (AA) has been prepared pertaining to development within the 6.4km zone of influence that could result in a likely significant effect on the SPA as a result of an increase in recreational / visitor pressure. The AA reached a conclusion of no adverse effects on the integrity of the SPA or its qualifying features provided that the council's mitigation strategy continues to be implemented. The mitigation strategy is funded by the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) which would not be applicable until the next stage of this proposal (technical details consent). As such, the strategic AA does not apply at this permission in principle stage. There must be a mechanism through which the mitigation is secured, and a bespoke AA must be prepared and sent to NE; the application must not be determined until NE have endorsed any such AA.

Bath & Bradford on Avon Bats Special Area of Conservation (SAC)

This site is located within the **yellow** zone of the Trowbridge & Westbury Bat Mitigation Strategy (TWBMS) as well as a Greater Horseshoe core buffer, associated with the Bath and Bradford-on-Avon SAC. Based on the information provided, the current proposal could result in the loss of potential foraging and commuting habitat (unmanaged grassland, hedgerow, trees) as well as disturbance of habitat at the peripheries during construction and post-development via, e.g., new lighting. It is understood that the site is currently unlit. It is not known whether any trees are proposed for removal. The proposal therefore has the potential to result in significant adverse

impact on the special features of the SAC. The application must be considered under the Habitats Regulations.

The yellow medium risk zone of the TWBMS represents areas where habitat has been shown to be of importance, and in particular takes into consideration the foraging areas and flightlines of horseshoe and Bechstein's bats and is anticipated to be able to accept a degree of development pressure provided applications are designed in accordance with the principles in the TWBMS. Impacts will arise on individual sites and in-combination with other sites as a result of loss and/degradation of habitat of importance to the qualifying bats. In order to conclude the AA favourably, applications impacting greenfield land and bat habitat (such as the present application) are expected to provide a s106 contribution prior to commencement of £1,000 per dwelling towards habitat mitigation detailed in Section 9.1 of the TWBMS.

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. The following is required:

- Demonstration that the proposal is in accordance with the standards for habitat mitigation and management as described at section 8.2 and Figure 6 in the TWBMS
- Demonstration of no net loss (using a Statutory Biodiversity Metric) - *development in the yellow zone is expected to mitigate for habitat loss on site (see paragraph 146 of the TWBMS)*
- Clarification of whether any new lighting is proposed
- Mechanism (at permission in principle) through which to secure any such mitigation, including the TWBMS contribution of £1,000 per dwelling

Protected species and habitats

The site and surrounding area may be suitable for use by bats, badgers, nesting birds, amphibians and reptiles, and there are a number of important habitats in the vicinity (e.g., County Wildlife Sites 10m northeast and ~210m southeast, Traditional Orchard Priority Habitat immediately southwest).

Core Policy 50 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy requires all development to demonstrate:

- i. No net loss of local biodiversity resource and
- ii. Secure the integrity of local ecological networks

Evidence demonstrating no net loss of local biodiversity resource, and that the integrity of ecological networks will be maintained, must be submitted and reviewed by the LPA's ecology team at the technical details consent stage. The Preliminary Ecological Appraisal is welcomed, but many of the recommendations are dependent on the proposed plan, which remains unconfirmed. As such, ecological information submitted at the next stage should consider the presence of protected and Priority species and habitats, and any relevant mitigation as well as enhancements. Species surveys and/or working method statements may be required.

Biodiversity Net Gain

The grant of permission in principle is not within the scope of biodiversity net gain (as it is not a grant of planning permission). The subsequent technical details consent will be subject to the biodiversity gain condition. Please note that applications subject to the biodiversity gain condition must be accompanied by minimum information set out in [Article 7 of The Town and Country Planning \(Development Management Procedure\) \(England\) Order 2015](#), which includes:

- [the completed metric calculation tool](#) showing the calculations of the pre-development biodiversity value of the onsite habitat on the date of application (or proposed earlier date) including the publication date of the biodiversity metric used to calculate that value;
- a description of any [irreplaceable habitat](#) (as set out in [column 1 of the Schedule to the Biodiversity Gain Requirements \(Irreplaceable Habitat\) Regulations 2024](#)) on the land to which the application relates, that exists on the date of application, (or an earlier date); and
- plan(s), drawn to an identified scale and showing the direction of North, showing onsite habitat existing on the date of application (or earlier proposed date), including any irreplaceable habitat (if applicable).

Note: this is a summary, please refer to Paragraph: 011 [Biodiversity net gain - GOV.UK](#) for full details.

If the applicant considers that the development would not be subject to the biodiversity gain condition, Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 the applicant must provide a statement as part of the planning application setting out the reasons why they believe this is the case. Submission of a completed metric calculation tool may be necessary to evidence the statement.

IN SUMMARY: Insufficient information has been submitted. In carrying out its statutory function, the LPA must be reasonably sure that the proposal will not result in significant adverse effects on protected species. The information outlined above must therefore be submitted and reviewed by the LPA's ecology team prior to determination of the application. I therefore maintain a holding objection until all the issues listed above have been suitably addressed.

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

Ecologist	Date
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