

MEMORANDUM

From:	Tina Cuss Ecology Officer		
Service	WBC Ecology	App No:	252104
Address:	17 Kingsbridge Cottages, Nine Mile Ride, Wokingham, Wokingham, RG40 3LY.		
Proposal:	Householder application for the proposed erection for a two-storey side and part rear extension with pitched roof and Velux rooflights. Single-storey rear extension with parapet walls, flat roof and feature roof lantern. Additional apertures to front elevation.		
Type of Development:	Other Householder		
Site Visit Made:	No		

Summary Of Recommendations

- ☐ No comment
- ☐ No objection
- ☐ No objection subject to conditions (and reasons) **stated below**
- ☒ **Request further information before determination as stated below**
- ☒ Objection due to the reason(s) **stated below**

Comments On Proposal

I have read the Preliminary Roost Assessment (John Wenman Ecological Consultancy, Ref R3062_PRA_a, November 2025) and reviewed the LPA 242546 pre-application responses, Holtham Newman's letter ref 2315 dated 30 July 2025 and the submitted plans and elevations.

All bat species are protected under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, as amended. Under this legislation it is an offence to deliberately or recklessly to destroy or damage their roosts, or to disturb, kill or injure them without first having obtained the relevant licence for derogation from the regulations from Natural England. A bat roost is interpreted as "any structure or place used for shelter or protection" whether or not bats are present at the time.

The external inspection records potential access points and roost features include a visible gap in the verge mortar on the western end of the house and gap in the ridge mortar at the eastern end. A large bird's nest was present at the base of the gap in the mortar leading to the western end of the roof void. A small-sized bat dropping resembling those typically deposited by Pipistrelle species was observed on the rendered chimney at the eastern end of the property.

Government Circular 06/05 states that: *“It is essential that the presence or otherwise of protected species, and the extent that they may be affected by the proposed development, is established before the planning permission is granted, otherwise all relevant material considerations may not have been addressed in making the decision. The need to ensure ecological surveys are carried out should therefore only be left to coverage under planning conditions in exceptional circumstances, with the result that the surveys are carried out after planning permission has been granted”*. In this case, since 1) the extent to which bats (which are a protected species) may be affected by the proposals has not been established, and 2) there appear to be no “exceptional circumstances”, the application would not be in accordance with planning policy.

Summary

I agree with PRA paragraph 6.2.4 that the proposals will impact the potential roosting site. In line with WBC Local Plan policies, the NPPF and Circular 06/05, as stated in my pre-application advice, the further surveys recommended in section 7 of the PRA report must be submitted before the application can be approved. If further surveys and detailed mitigation and avoidance methodology are not provided, failure to comply with planning policy and lack of ecological information can be included in reasons for refusal.

Conditions & Reasons (if required)

Awaiting endoscope and/or bat emergence surveys protected species mitigation and compensation strategy.

Date:	30/12/25	Signed:	T Cuss
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