

MEMORANDUM

From:	Tina Cuss Ecology Officer		
Service	WBC Ecology	App No:	261690
Address:	3 Old Bath Road, Sonning, Wokingham RG4 6SZ.		
Proposal:	Householder application for the proposed erection of two front two storey gable extensions, raising of the ridge and eaves height with the formation of a dormer window to the front roof slope, erection of a single storey side extension, erection of a single storey rear extension, erection of a two storey rear extension, installation of two rear dormer windows, formation of a first floor rear balcony, alterations to fenestration, removal of chimney pots and associated external alterations.		
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 Ecological Appraisal DBW (Urban Tree Experts, Ref SPH/NP/PEA-26./20.01, February 2026), Ecological Survey Report (UTE, Ref SPH/ESR-26/16.07, 30 July 2026) and Planning Statement (SMS Planning, July 2026). I have also reviewed the submitted plans and elevations.

All species of British bat 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 interfere with, injure, or kill a bat, or to interfere, destroy or damage any roosting or resting site, without first having obtained the relevant licence for derogation from the regulations from Natural England. A bat roost is interpreted in law as any structure or place used for shelter or protection whether or not bats are present at the time.

The Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Daytime internal survey found occasional bat droppings were observed under the roof main ridge between the chimney stacks. The DBW external survey recorded slipped tiles on the single storey part of the house on both the front and rear elevations, leaving gaps suitable for crevice-

dwelling bats. The Ecologist recorded a section of soffits and fascias on the rear elevation which are not tight to the wall with access gaps or splits. There are some gaps in the hanging tiles on both elevations. The Ecologist assessed that all the gaps on the building could afford roosting opportunities for crevice dwelling bat species or allow access into the building for bats.

The presence of roosting bats was confirmed in all the three emergence surveys carried out. On 28 May an individual Soprano pipistrelle emerged from under the right-hand corner hanging tile on the front dormer. On 21 June two Soprano pipistrelle were seen and recorded emerging from under the rear gable end and under a raised roof tile on the rear mono-pitched roof. On 16 July 2026 one Soprano pipistrelle emerged from under a hanging tile on the front left gable end and one Common pipistrelle emerged from under the right-hand corner hanging tile on the rear dormer. Seven different bat species were recorded and identified foraging and commuting around the site.



Figure 9. Gap in soffit on rear elevation. 3 Old Bath Road, Sonning. 20.01.26



ESR Section 5.6 advises all new lighting must be design in line with ILP/BCT GN08/23. Contrary to Bat Surveys Good Practice Guidelines 4th Edition, the Ecologist has failed to assess the detrimental, and potentially illegal, affects on commuting and foraging and obstruction of the confirmed roosts and potential roosting features, particularly the floodlight erected hanging tiles and first floor. To mitigate the impacts of existing lighting and provide compensation and enhancement required by Local Plan policies CP1, CP3, CP7 and MDD TB23 and the NPPF sections 14 and 19, a biodiversity-sensitive external scheme should be submitted to and approved by the LPA.

The emergence surveys confirmed the presence of 4 small day roosts for Soprano pipistrelle bats and one Common pipistrelle day roost. DNA analysis of bat dropping confirmed use of the loft by Brown long-eared bats. The Ecologist concludes the evidence indicates that use by BLE is historical and opportunistic.

Summary

The development would lead to the destruction of 5 bat roosts. I am satisfied that the survey methodology and effort are adequate for the ecologist to conclude that the owner requires a European Protected Species Licence (EPSL) to lawfully implement the proposed development and mitigation and compensation /enhancement measures must be secured as a condition of planning permission. The development must be implemented in accordance with the Method Statement for Planning and a copy of the EPSL submitted to the Planning Authority prior to commencement of any works. If the application is approved an external lighting condition must be secured to provide enhancement and mitigate for the impact of development, protect dark corridors for bats and ensure the favourable conservation status of bats on the site is maintained.

Conditions & Reasons (if required)

Condition: No works shall commence until a licence for development works affecting bats has been obtained from Natural England and a copy of the licence (or an email from Natural England that the site has been registered under a Bat Mitigation Class Licence and copy of the approved mitigation strategy have been submitted to the council. Thereafter the approved mitigations measures shall be maintained in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: *To ensure that bats, a protected and priority species, are not adversely affected by the proposals. Relevant policy: NPPF Section 19, Local Plan Core Strategy policies CP3 and CP7 and Managing Development Delivery policy TB23.*

Condition: Prior to commencement of development an external lighting scheme for biodiversity designed in accordance with best practice including in accordance with Bats and Artificial Lighting at Night' Guidance Note GN 08 / 23 shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The scheme shall show (through appropriate lighting contour plans and technical specifications) how and where existing and new external lighting will be removed, amended and installed so that it can be clearly demonstrated that areas to be lit will not disturb or prevent the bats and birds using their territory or having access to their breeding sites and resting places.

Reason: *To ensure that bats, a protected and priority species, are not adversely affected by the proposals. Relevant policy: NPPF Section 14 P3 and 19 N2, Core Local Plan Strategy policies CP1, CP3 and Managing Development Delivery policy TB23.*

Condition: Works are to be carried out in full accordance with Method Statement for Planning the given in Section 5 of the submitted Ecological Survey Report (UTE, Ref SPH/ESR-26/16.07, 30 July 2026).

Reason: *To ensure that biodiversity, protected and priority species are not adversely affected by the proposals. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP3 and CP7 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policy TB23.*

Condition: No retained tree or hedgerow shall be cut down, uprooted or destroyed, nor shall any retained tree or shrub be topped or lopped, other than in accordance with the approved particulars, without the written approval of the local planning authority. If within a period of **ten years** any tree, or any tree planted in replacement for it, that is removed, uprooted or destroyed or dies, another tree of the same

species and size as that originally planted shall be planted at the same place, unless the local planning authority gives its written consent to any variation.

Reason: *To ensure that bats, a protected and priority species, are not adversely affected by the proposals. Relevant policy: NPPF Section 19 N2, Local Plan Core Strategy policies CP3 and CP7 and Managing Development Delivery policies CC03 and TB23.*

Date:	22/09/26	Signed:	T Cuss
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