

MEMORANDUM

From:	Tina Cuss Ecology Officer	To (Case Officer):	Claire Moore
Service	WBC Ecology	App No:	251493
Address:	3 Pinewood Avenue, Crowthorne, Wokingham, RG45 6RS.		
Type of Development:	Other Householder		
Proposal:	Householder application for the proposed erection of single storey extension, single storey garage following demolition of existing garage, entrance porch extension, raised roof conversion for habitable accommodation, 2 no. front and side dormer windows, 1 no. rear dormer window and changes to fenestration.		
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 (Arbtech, 4 June 2025) and Ecological Survey Report (Bats) (Urban Tree Experts, Ref SPH/ESR-25/20.08, 4 September 2025). I have also reviewed the plans and elevations submitted in support of the application.

The Preliminary Roost Assessment inspections recorded lifted flashing and missing mortar and access to the soffit boxes, lifted and missing roof tiles provide a suitable roosting feature for crevice dwelling bat species. The loft lining was damaged provided a potential point of access to the loft void. GS Ecology therefore concluded that the site has moderate value for foraging and commuting bats. The house B1 was considered to provide moderate suitability and shed B2 low suitability for roosting bats.

Urban Tree Experts considered that the surrounding urban area does not provide prime habitat for bats in which to forage and the roosting potential in neighbouring buildings may also be higher. The Ecologist states "*whilst no bats were seen emerging from or returning to the property to roost, this does not mean that they will not be present in the future as bats are known to be transient and use a wide variety of crevice like features opportunistically*". The advice that whilst a limited number of

calls from BLE bats were heard by the surveyors, this is not unusual as the BLE bat is commonly referred to as the 'silent' bat as the calls are very quiet and difficult to detect as they prefer to hunt using their hearing and sight. They also state that bat calls and field observations were, in our opinion, considered low and that this has been a common theme in the 2025 season.

I support UTE's conclusion that bats are not currently roosting at 3 Pinewood Avenue. Urban Tree Experts stated the emergence survey ceases to be valid one year from the survey, or if site conditions change due to unspecified works that affect the site whichever is the sooner. I therefore request that BS42020 condition D.5.2 is included in the decision notice.

Conditions & Reasons (if required)

Condition: If the development hereby approved does not commence, (or having commenced, is suspended for more than 12 months) within 18 months from the date of the planning consent, further ecological surveys shall be commissioned to:

- i) Establish if there have been any changes in the presence and/or abundance of bats; and
- ii) Identify any likely new ecological impacts that might arise from any changes. Where the survey results indicate that changes have occurred that will result in ecological impacts not previously addressed in the approved scheme, new ecological measures, and a timetable for their implementation, will be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority prior to the commencement of development. Works will then be carried out in accordance with the proposed new approved ecological measures and timetable.

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.

Despite ecological surveys being undertaken which suggest that protected species are not using the application site, bats are mobile creatures, and it is possible that protected species may be encountered once works commence. I recommend the following informative should be appended to any such consent:

Informative: Bats are a protected species under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). Should any bats or evidence of bats be found prior to or during the development, all works must stop immediately and an ecological consultant contacted for further advice before works can proceed. All contractors working on site should be made aware of the advice and provided with the contact details of a relevant ecological consultant.

Date:	08/09/2025	Signed:	T Cuss
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