

MEMORANDUM

From:	Tina Cuss Ecology Officer		
Service	WBC Ecology	App No:	242712
Address:	Little Gables, Sindlesham Road, Arborfield, Wokingham, RG2 9QE.		
Proposal:	Householder application for the proposed erection of a new front porch, single storey front/side extension and two first floor rear extensions with changes to existing fenestrations.		
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 Bat Survey (GS Ecology, Ref ECO3668b, 26 August 2025) and reviewed the revised plans and elevations submitted in support of the application.

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 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 in 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 house has numerous features potentially suitable for use by roosting bats including:

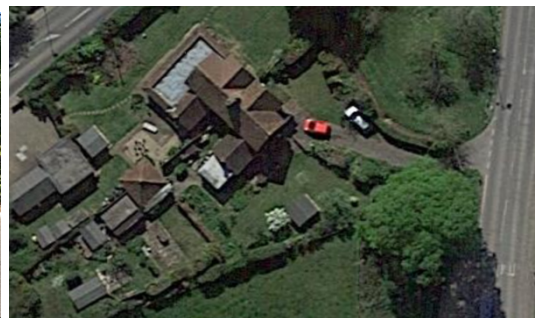
- Numerous gaps under raised roof tiles on the rear elevation
- Gap between verge tiles and barge board at both front and side gable ends
- Small gaps under raised and slipped roof tiles on the rear single storey section.

The void below the rear roof was inaccessible to the Ecologist. The habitats surrounding were predominantly 'high' suitability for commuting and foraging bats.

Bat emergence surveys were completed on 15 May, 19 June and 24 July 2025. A single Common pipistrelle bat emerged from under a roof tile of the southeaster front elevation of the house.

I agree with the assessment that the house has 'high' potential to host a bat roost. I am satisfied that the survey effort and methodology are adequate. According to the Ecologist the front of the house will not be directly affected by the proposed works, and they conclude it is unlikely that the roost will be disturbed by the proposal. Provided the front of the main house roof is not impacted I support the Ecologist's conclusion that a derogation licence is not currently required for the development proposed. I agree that locations of day roosts are transient, and it is possible that bats will utilise the other numerous potential roosting features around the building, depending on time of year and environmental factors. It is therefore necessary to secure the recommended non-licensed method statement by condition including toolbox talks, direct ecological supervision, bat-safe roofing membrane, limits to external lighting.

According to the application form states no trees or hedges on site or within falling distance and no trees or hedges have to be removed to facilitate the development. However, neither the Location Plan, Bat Survey, nor the Site Plan provide details of the existing boundaries or hedges and trees on the site to be retained or protected. In particular those which may constrain access, deliveries, site welfare, storage, plant and vehicle parking. I am concerned that the Proposed Block Plan and swept path appears to propose widening of the narrow drive and therefore hedgerow removal which has not been assessed. Consideration should be given to including WBC CL6, and if necessary CL7, to secure submission and approval of a Tree Protection Plan to ensure habitat for wildlife is maintained.



Parking provision to remain the same as existing





Conditions & Reasons (if required)

Condition: Works are to be carried out in full accordance with the Non-Licensed Method Statement given in section 4.6 of the submitted Bat Survey (GS Ecology, Ref ECO3668b, 26 August 2025). Within one month of substantial completion a short closing-out report demonstrating that the ecological mitigation and enhancement measures have been implemented to the satisfaction of the Owner's Ecologist is to be issued to the council.

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 removal of hedgerows, trees or shrubs, brambles, ivy and other climbing plants shall take place between 15 February and 15 September inclusive, unless a competent ecologist has undertaken a careful, detailed check of vegetation for active birds' nests immediately before the vegetation is cleared and provided written confirmation that no birds will be harmed and/or that there are appropriate measures in place to protect nesting bird interest on site. Any such written confirmation should be submitted to the local planning authority.

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: At no time shall external lighting be installed on the site or affixed to any buildings on the site without the prior written approval of the local planning.

Reason To ensure that biodiversity, protected and priority species are not adversely affected by the proposals. Relevant policy: NPPF paragraph 198 and Section 15, Core Strategy policies CP1, CP3 and CP7 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policy TB23.

Date:

12/11/25

Signed:

T Cuss