

MEMORANDUM

From:	Tina Cuss Ecology Officer		
Service	WBC Ecology	App No:	252252
Address:	L'Ortolan Restaurant, Church Lane, Shinfield, Wokingham, RG2 9BY.		
Proposal:	Householder application for the proposed erection of a rooftop extension with terrace decking to the existing main building, alongside alterations to the fenestration; the erection of a rooftop infill extension to the annex building; the erection of a detached single-storey garage with dual-pitched tiled roof and facing brickwork and stone/render to match the main dwelling; landscaping and parking alterations; and the demolition of the existing single- storey rear kitchen/service extension.		
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**
☒ Negotiate the amendments **stated below**; or
☐ Objection due to the reason(s) **stated below**

Comments On Proposal

I have reviewed the revised existing and proposed plans and Landscape Concept Plan - 1519.01D Revision D.

I cannot recommend approval of Landscape Concept Plan - 1519.01D. The recommendations made in the PRA have not informed the revised Landscape Concept Plan and the issues that I have previously raised have not been addressed.

To support approval of landscaping works or tree and hedgerow removal at the determination stage. To ensure wildlife populations are maintained and enhanced and bats which may use the site for roosting, foraging or commuting, the following changes must be made to a detailed landscape retention and enhancement planting scheme that must be approved prior to site set-up, habitat management or clearance and commencement:

- Omission of the East Terrace and loss of vegetable garden
- Retention and protection T11. Removal of access door in RPA.

- Retention and protection of T13.
- Justification for need for paved terrace and the Outdoor Kitchen
- Omission (or relocation) to protect the northern boundary unless avoidance mitigation proposals demonstrate no disturbance to wildlife in the “*ecologically significant linear feature*” (see PRA section 3.6) to the north.
- Detail of Outdoor Kitchen ground levels, screening, boundary treatment and lighting proposals
- Omission of shrub clearance and single-species Yew hedging proposal.
- Omission of habitat clearance to provide 2 features within southwest border/tree line wildlife corridor.

If the current application is approved, I therefore request plan 1519.01D is not included in condition 2.

In line with my previous comments of 11 November 2025, I cannot support the inclusion of the outdoor kitchen in the current revised drawings. 1519.01D shows the outdoor kitchen is raise above the existing ground level and extension of the footprint of built development. The impact on the potential bat roosts in the annex, wildlife foraging and commuting corridor immediately to the west and the maternity roost to the north from increase in use of the area for recreation, particularly at night, light pollution, noise and disturbance of a raised entertaining area has not been assessed and no mitigation is proposed in order to not negative direct or indirect impacts.

As the PRA did not include a comprehensive data and local planning history search, I recommend be undertaken before the bat emergence surveys recommended in PRA paragraph 5.4 are undertaken. Given the proximity to the Annex B2 and the potential impact of the loss on bats, I must maintain my objection to the removal of Hawthorn T13 in the absence of further bat activity surveys and consideration of the cumulative impact on bats. The planning decisions must ensure favourable conservation status of bats in the local area is maintained and enhancement for wildlife provided in line with Local Plan Managing Development Delivery policies and the NPPF.

2025



2023



Photographic plate showing T13 (centre). (ROAVR, 2025)

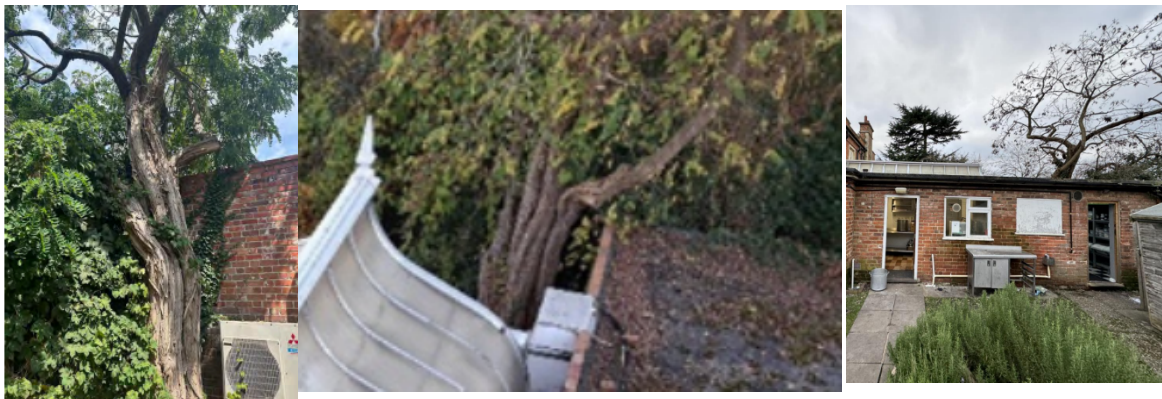


T11 is described by the Arboricultural Consultant as having a cavity and shear bomb cracks. T11 is not included in the Tree Removals table. T11 is categorized as B1, and its loss is not justified. According to the AIA, it can be protected and retained in the long-term.

There are 5 trees with potential roosting features. According to Plate 10 I believe T11 could be the tree the Ecologist has labelled T5 and misidentified as a *Robinia pseudoacacia*. No appendix or amendment to the PRA has been submitted to provide a habitat plan identifying the Target Notes. I request confirmation from the Ecologist if their T5 is T11. PRA T5 is described as *“with visible trunk decay and several fissures and holes identified as PRFs. The degraded condition of this tree suggests that internal cavities or moisture-retaining voids may be present, which can support a diversity of bat species”*. The PRA summarizes the importance of the 5 trees with roosting potential *“Overall, these trees contribute to the ecological function of the site by offering natural roosting sites that complement the wider network of foraging and commuting habitat”*.

I am satisfied according to the amendments to Proposed Site Plan P10 RevA, that T11 will be retained and protected during the hard landscaping and demolition of outbuilding removal. I request that the door is removed out of the RPA of T11. If the application and AIA V1.0 are approved submission, approval and implementation of the development in full accordance with an Arboricultural Method Statement supervised by an Arboricultural Clerk of Works must be secured by planning condition. I must maintain my objection to the unamended Landscape Concept Plan proposal to remove T11 and advised that no current landscaping proposals should be approved.

Plate 10 - Five trees were identified as having PRFs on site.



It is not clear if the Ecologist assessed the impact of the removal of T13 and whether this tree may also include features suitable for bats as no habitat plan is included in the PRA report. They fail to report that mature ivy on the tree has been severed. The Ecologist has not taken account that this tree is just 30m from the maternity bat tree roost to northwest recorded at The Manor. The AIA describes Hawthorn T13 described as having Ivy, a stem that divides below 1.5m. The Arboriculturist recommended no works to the tree and the reason for proposed removal therefore appears to be to facilitate redevelopment of the Annex which has now been removed from the current phase of development proposals.

The Landscape Concept Plan the proposal to create hard standing for an East Terrace between the annex and the house must be omitted and the existing vegetable garden retained until bat emergence surveys demonstrating the annex does not support a bat roost.

The PRA states that modified grassland interspersed throughout the garden provides additional foraging value, particularly where allowed to grow long and unmanaged along the site perimeter, supporting a diversity of moths, beetles, and other invertebrates". The loss of the vegetable garden and the construction of an East Terrace or replacement with amenity grass has not been assessed by the Ecologist. Neither creation of the East Terrace nor felling of T13 should be approved and be removed from the landscape proposals until the Landscape Concept is informed by the PRA and bat activity surveys.

In the absence of an existing habitat or landscaping plan do not support the proposal to remove existing shrub to plant a single-species yew hedge. The landscape consultant doesn't demonstrate the benefits would outweigh the impact to wildlife.



Plate 4 - View from B1 roof showing front garden and small oriental pond (TN1).

Summary

I repeat my advice of Nov 2025 that unless all works to the kitchen garden are amended, the location of the outdoor kitchens, installation of the outdoor kitchen., removal of Hawthorn T13 and Honey locust T11, removal of shrubs in the southern habitat corridor to install features and shrub clearance for a yew hedge should not be approved until the impact on wildlife has been assessed and mitigation measures can be secured.

Conditions & Reasons (if required)

CL5

Reason: To incorporate biodiversity in and around developments in accordance with paragraph 187 of the NPPF. Relevant policy: NPPF 2024 Section 15 (Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment), Core Strategy policies CP3 and CP7 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policy TB23.

CL6

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.

CL7

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 any forms of external lighting be installed on the site or affixed to any buildings on the site without the prior written approval of the local planning and unless it is in accordance with the recommendation Guidance Note 08/23 Bats and Lighting at Night (BCT/ILP).

Reason To ensure that biodiversity, protected and priority species are not adversely affected by the proposals. Relevant policy: NPPF 2024 paragraph 198 Section 15 (Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment), Core Strategy policies CP3 and CP7 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policy TB23.

Date:

20/01/26

Signed:

T Cuss