

MEMORANDUM

From:	Tina Cuss Ecology Officer		
Service	WBC Ecology	App No:	261815
Address:	109 Reading Road, Finchampstead, RG40 4RD.		
Proposal:	Householder application for the proposed erection of a single storey front extension with porch canopy roof and a two storey side extension following demolition of the existing garage, plus changes to fenestration.		
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/ESR-26/15.06, 22 June 2026) and Ecological Survey Report (UTE, Ref SPH/ESR-26/15.06, 22 June 2026). I have also reviewed the submitted plans and elevations.

All species of bats receive special protection under UK law. It is a criminal offence under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (The Habitat Regulations) to deliberately or recklessly 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 DBW slipped/raised roof tiles and gaps between the fascias and hanging tiles on the front and rear elevations resulting in gaps which could provide potential roosting opportunities for bats or access into the building. The presence or absence of bats could not be established without further survey effort. I note the ecologist data search did not include data requests from either the local bat group or the environmental records centre and no local planning history search has been completed. The Ecologist has therefore not taken account of the bat roosts recorded in a number of properties on the east and west of Reading Road Finchampstead.

I support the characterisation of the property as having a low potential to support roosting bats.

One bat emergence survey was carried out on 15 June 2026. Whilst no bats were seen emerging from 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. Pipistrelle bats are the first bat species to emerge after sunset. As the first Soprano pipistrelle was seen and heard at 2 minutes after sunset, UTE conclude that the bat is roosting in the immediate area but did not emerge from 109 Reading Road. I note the Ecologist states that the Ecological Survey Report is only valid for one year after the survey or if site conditions change.

I am satisfied that the survey effort and methodology are adequate for the Ecologist to conclude that bats are not currently roosting in the property. Provided that informative I17 is included in the decision notice, there is no ecological objection to the development at proposed.

Conditions & Reasons (if required)

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 I recommend the following informative should be appended to any 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:	28/09/26	Signed:	T Cuss
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