

Planning Department
Wokingham Borough Council
Civic Offices
Shute End
Wokingham
Berkshire
RG40 1BN

Our ref: JO-1067-LET-LPA-01-A

Your ref: 623137 /

6 October 20256

Dear Sir/Madam

Town and Country Planning Act 1990

Wychwood House, Hollybush Ride, Finchampstead, RG40 3QP

Erection of First Floor Side Extension and Enlarged Front Porch

Please accept this letter in support of the enclosed planning application for the erection of a first-floor side extension and enlarged front porch at Wychwood House.

This proposal is substantially the same as that previously submitted to the Council under an earlier planning application (LPA ref. 252861). That application was subsequently withdrawn solely to allow further ecological work to be undertaken in relation to bats, following advice received from the Council's ecological consultees. At the time of withdrawal, it was our understanding that the ecology issue represented the only outstanding matter requiring further investigation and that no other substantive planning concerns had been identified with the proposal.

The previous application was supported by a Preliminary Roost Assessment which identified historical evidence of brown long-eared bats within the roof void and recommended that further emergence surveys be undertaken before the impacts of the development could be fully assessed. The application was therefore withdrawn to allow this additional work to be completed and to ensure that the Council had sufficient information before determining the proposal.

Subsequent to the withdrawal of the application, the applicant commissioned a comprehensive bat emergence survey undertaken by John Wenman Ecological Consultancy LLP, contained within submitted report 'Wychwood House, Finchampstead - Bat Emergence Survey (R3264_BES_a)'. This work included three dusk emergence surveys undertaken on 14 July, 4 August and 25 August 2026 together with a further internal inspection of the roof void.

The findings of that report can be summarised as follows:

- No bats were observed emerging from the building during any of the three emergence surveys.

- Evidence of brown long-eared bat use remains present within the roof void through the presence of droppings.
- The building is considered to support a transitional and/or occasional day roost used by individual or small numbers of brown long-eared bats.
- The ecologist concludes that the roost is of site-level conservation importance only.

Accordingly, the report provides a clear mitigation strategy, including supervised works, provision of bat boxes, retention of roosting opportunities and the implementation of a European Protected Species Mitigation Licence (or Bat Earned Recognition Licence route) prior to commencement of relevant works.

The updated ecological information therefore provides the evidence that was unavailable when the previous application was withdrawn. Importantly, the report does not conclude that the development should not proceed. Rather, it confirms that the ecological impacts are understood, can be appropriately mitigated and can be addressed through the licensing process identified by the ecologist.

In particular, the report concludes that the development will require a European Protected Species Mitigation Licence and sets out a detailed mitigation strategy to ensure that the favourable conservation status of the species is maintained. Appropriate mitigation measures include supervised roof works, installation of bat boxes and provision of long-term bat access opportunities within the completed development.

The applicant is fully committed to implementing the recommendations contained within the ecological report and obtaining all necessary ecological licences before commencing development works affecting the roof structure.

As such, the reason for withdrawal of the previous application has now been comprehensively addressed. The enclosed ecological report provides the additional information previously requested and demonstrates that the proposal can be carried out lawfully and with appropriate mitigation for protected species. In light of this, it is respectfully considered that there are no outstanding ecological reasons that would prevent the Council from granting planning permission.

We therefore respectfully request that planning permission be granted.

Yours faithfully



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