

MEMORANDUM

From:	Tina Cuss Ecology Officer		
Service	WBC Ecology	App No:	242832
Address:	31 Hurst Park Road, Twyford, Wokingham RG10 0EZ.		
Proposal:	Householder extension for the proposed first floor rear extension plus garage conversion into habitable space and side extension to form porch and covered storage space. Plus changes to existing 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 Bat Roost Assessment and Great Crested Newt Assessment (GS Ecology, Ref ECO3603 16 September 2024) and Ecological Survey Report Bats (Ref: SPH/ESR-24/16.09) I have also reviewed the plans and elevations that are submitted in support of the application.

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 the 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.

According to the Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment carried out on 15/08/24, the property house has a number of features potentially suitable for use by roosting bats, including

- Gaps between the under cloaking and bargeboard on the front elevation (these are unaffected by the proposals)
- Gaps between the bargeboard and the end walls on the front and rear elevations
- a bat dropping was found stuck on the barge board on the rear elevation

- Holes between the wooden barge board and soffit on the rear elevation – these lead into the soffit.

Due to these potentially roosting features and the bat dropping found on the exterior, the house was assessed as having 'moderate' potential to host roosting bats. And location in habitats of 'moderate' suitability for commuting and foraging bats. The proposed works will destroy some of the potential bat roost features. If these features were to be used by roosting bats the roost could be disturbed, damaged, or destroyed.

According to Urban Tree Expert's Ecologist the site offers foraging and commuting opportunities and there is ecological connectivity via back gardens to the wider landscape that provides good habitat for foraging and roosting bats. The emergence surveys undertaken by UTE on 20 August and 16 September observed and recorded bats foraging in and around the site throughout the surveys, however none were seen emerging from the property.

UTE state that Ecological Survey Report ceases one year after the emergence survey, or if the site conditions change due that affect the site, whichever is the sooner. I am satisfied if the development is implemented with the next 12 months that the site has not been used as a roost and that a European Protected Species Licence from Natural England is not required. I request the inclusion of Informative I17 and a condition to secure resurvey or pre-commencement checks if works do not commence within 12 months.

Conditions & Reasons (if required)

Unless previously agreed in writing with the Council, if the development hereby approved does not commence within 12 months from the date of the planning consent (or, having commenced, is suspended for more than 12 months), update bat emergence 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 the ecological measures will be proposed and 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 full accordance with the proposed new approved ecological measures and timetable.

Reason: To ensure that bats, a protected and priority species (as per the NPPF), 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 currently 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:	20/12/24	Signed:	T Cuss
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