

MEMORANDUM

From:	Duncan Fisher Ecology Officer		
Service	WBC Ecology	App No:	251814
Address:	400 Regus House, Thames Valley Park Drive, Wokingham, Earley, RG6 1PT.		
Proposal:	Prior approval submission for erection of a two storey upwards extension to provide 32no residential units on the 4th and 5th floor with associated plant, car and cycle parking.		
Type of Development:			
Site Visit Made:	Yes/ 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

This Prior Approval submission is supported by a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Roost Assessment report (Arbtech, June 2024).

Bats

I can recommend that sufficient survey effort has been undertaken for the local planning authority to be able to consider the potential impact on bats. Although the survey and report are over a year old, I am of the view that the findings are still relevant and applicable to this submission.

I can recommend that the proposed upwards extension is unlikely to result in adverse impacts on this protected species. I note that recommendations have been made in the Arbtech report for biodiversity enhancements in relation to this taxon. Whilst these may be desirable, as this is a Prior Approval submission, I think it is not appropriate to require their implementation by condition.

Great Crested Newts

Both the Planning Statement and Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Roost Assessment report recognise that this application site is within a red risk zone for impacts to Great Crested Newt, according to the district licence model developed for Wokingham Borough. The ecological consultants have made mitigation recommendations to implement during construction. The standard approach is for

NatureSpace Partnership to be consulted to advise on whether these measures are appropriate and whether this protected species requires a conditioned mitigation strategy in order to maintain favourable conservation status. Therefore, I shall not consider this protected species further unless requested to provide a response in place of NatureSpace Partnership.

Other Protected Species

The applicant's ecologist has made further recommendations for mitigation measures to implement during construction. I consider these disproportionate to the risk for this particular site so do not recommend that they need to be conditioned.

The recommended enhancements for species and habitats are desirable but, as I understand it, are not a matter for the local planning authority to consider at Prior Approval so I cannot recommend that these are secured by condition.

Conditions & Reasons (if required)

n/a

Date:	12 September 2025	Signed:	D. Fisher
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