

MEMORANDUM

From:	Tina Cuss Ecology Officer		
Service	WBC Ecology	App No:	242015
Address:	349 Hyde End Road, Spencers Wood, Wokingham, RG7 1DD.		
Proposal:	Householder application for the proposed reconfiguring of the main roof from hipped to end gable, first floor and second floor extensions, including the addition of dormer windows and roof lights.		
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 Roost Assessment (John Wenman Ecological Consultancy, ref.: S2780_PRA_a, October 2024) and the Bat Emergence Survey (John Wenman Ecological Consultancy, ref.: R2780_BES_a, July 2025). I have also reviewed the plans and elevations submitted in support of the application.

All species of British bat are protected under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, as amended. Under this legislation it is an offence to deliberately or recklessly to 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 in 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.

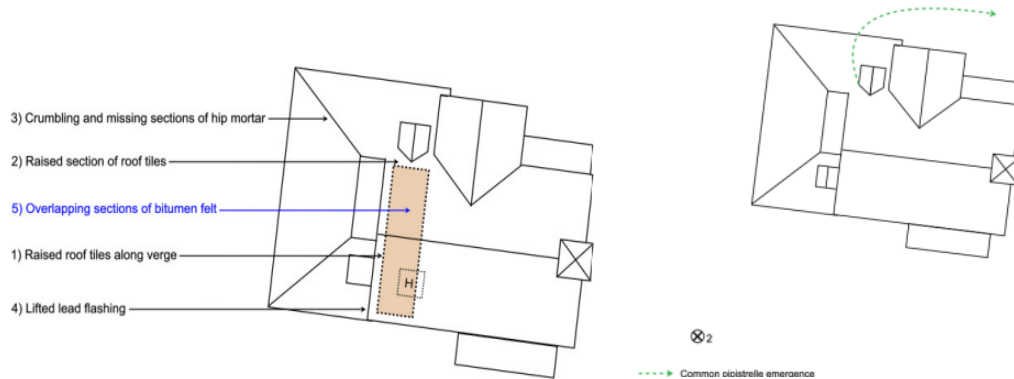
The external surveys identified the following potential bat access points and roost features:

- Lifted roof tiles along the western verge of the house on the front, behind the front dormer window, and rear elevation,
- Crumbling and missing sections of hip mortar on the western section of the roof; &
- Overlapping sections of bitumen felt within the void.

According to the ecologist these features offer potential crevice roosting features for

a small number of crevice-dwelling bats such as common and Soprano pipistrelle. I support the conclusion that the property is considered to be of moderate suitability for roosting bats.

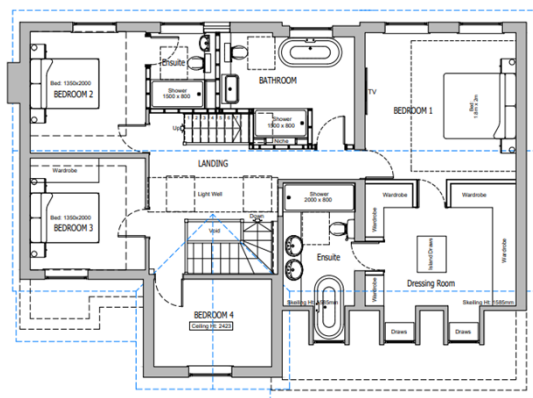
n. External target note	n. Internal target note	 Chimney	 Roof void
Drawn by: JM	Date: October 2024	Scale: Not to scale	349 Hyde End Road, Spencers Wood Preliminary Roost Assessment Plan



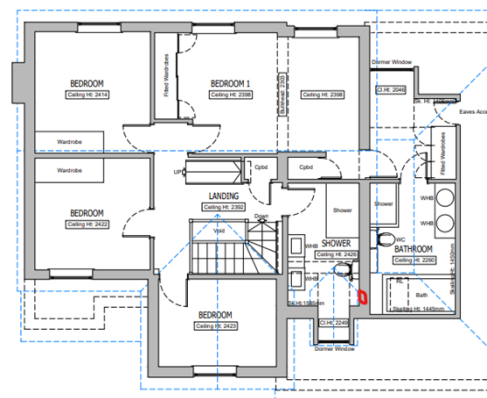
Emergence surveys were carried out on 20 May and 10 June 2025. During the first emergence survey on Common pipistrelle bat was recorded emerging from below the hanging tiles on the corner of the front dormer at the junction with the roof. The first Common pipistrelle was detected at 11 minutes after sunset. I agree with the assumption that the bat was likely to have emerged from a neighbouring property to the east. Bat activity was moderate during the survey, with Common pipistrelle activity including occasional foraging passes over both the front driveway and rear garden Common pipistrelle were recorded during the second emergence survey which suggested that they had emerged from a roost in the wider area.



Photograph 1. Common pipistrelle (*P. pipistrellus*) Emergence at 21:20 – Canon XA30 at Survey Location 1.



FIRST FLOOR PLAN As Proposed
Scale 1:50



FIRST FLOOR PLAN As Existing
Scale 1:50

I consider that the survey effort and methodology are adequate. I support the conclusion that the house supports a day roost for an individual Common pipistrelle. I am not satisfied that the Ecologist has fully taken into account the location of the external wall and the roof covering that would have to be removed to install timbers for the extension roof.

Paragraph 6.2.1 states that the alterations to the existing roof and proposed second storey extension “*are highly unlikely to result in the damage or destruction of the confirmed bat roost, as the existing former window and hanging tile cladding is to be retained and will be available during construction and in the long term*”. The application form and elevation drawings do not confirm if the existing front dormer window would be replaced. I am concerned that the number of lifted tiles in the construction design of the existing roof will result in dismantling of more of the roof than has been considered by the Ecologist. The Ecologist fails to consider the impact of increased light pollution, including from the new dormer windows on the bat roost. According to the Good Practice Guidelines “*Current lighting levels and location should be noted to provide a comparison with new lighting proposals*”. However, the exterior lighting as well as light pollution impacts have not been recorded, and no mitigation or enhancements have been recommended by the Ecologist in line with policy and best practice.

If the application is approved, implementation of the development in strict accordance with the Precautionary Working Method Statement must be secured by condition in order to minimize the risk and avoid illegal disturbance of the confirmed roost in the dormer. Consideration must be given to direct ecological supervision of the roof stripping works set out in BES Section 6.3.2. If the dormer window is not retained and any hanging tile will be disturbed, a revised Precautionary Working Method Statement and details of proposed replacement roosting features must be submitted to, and approved by the LPA.



Summary

Provided that the dormer structure, existing window hanging tiles and cladding are not affected and the removal of minimal areas of roofing tiles will be affected the development can be implemented legally under a non-licensed precautionary method statement secured by planning condition.

Conditions & Reasons (if required)

Condition: Works are to be carried out in full accordance with the Precautionary Working Method Statement given in Section 6.3 of the submitted Bat Emergence Survey (John Wenman Ecological Consultancy, ref.: R2780_BES_a, July 2025).

Within one month of substantial completion a short closing-out report demonstrating that the ecological mitigation and enhancement measures have been implemented to the satisfaction of the Owner's Ecologist is to be issued to the council.

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: Prior to occupation, a "lighting design strategy for biodiversity" for any *areas to be lit* designed in accordance with best practice including in accordance with Bats and Artificial Lighting at Night' Guidance Note GN 08 / 23 shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The strategy shall:

a) identify those areas/features on site that are particularly sensitive for bats and birds and that are likely to cause disturbance in or around their breeding sites and resting places or along important routes used to access key areas of their territory, for example, for foraging; and

b) show how and where external lighting will be installed (through the provision of appropriate lighting contour plans and technical specifications) so that it can be clearly demonstrated that areas to be lit will not disturb or prevent the above species using their territory or having access to their breeding sites and resting places.

Reason To ensure that biodiversity, protected and priority species are not adversely affected and provide enhancement *in accordance the NPPF*. Relevant policy: NPPF paragraph 198 Section 15 Core Strategy policies CP3 and CP7 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policy TB23.

Date:	26/09/25	Signed:	T Cuss
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