

ECOLOGY ADDENDUM

Address: 565 Reading Road, Winnersh
Proposal: Rear dormer window extension.
Local Planning Authority: Wokingham Borough Council
Previous Planning Reference: 231919

1. Background

A Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) prepared by Arbtech and dated 18 October 2023 was submitted in support of a previous householder planning application at 565 Reading Road, Winnersh (ref. 231919). That application comprised:

- The erection of a two-storey side extension following demolition of the existing garage;
- A single-storey rear extension with roof lanterns;
- Changes to fenestration; and
- The insertion of 1 no. rear dormer window.

The PRA included detailed internal and external inspections, including assessment of the roof structure.

2. Previous Ecology Consultation Response

The Council's Ecology Officer (T. Cuss) reviewed the PRA and confirmed that:

- The dwelling was assessed as having negligible potential for roosting bats due to the absence of suitable roost features;
- The survey methodology and effort were appropriate;
- No impacts on roosting bats were anticipated as a result of the proposed development, including the rear dormer; and
- No ecological objections were raised.

The Ecology Officer requested that the recommendations contained within Section 4 of the PRA be secured by condition, together with an informative relating to bats.

3. Current Proposal

The current application seeks consent for a small dormer window within the existing pitched roof at first-floor level. This proposal represents a reduced and less intrusive form of development compared to the previously assessed scheme.

The proposal does not involve:

- Additional roof disturbance beyond that previously assessed;
- Works to new or unassessed parts of the building; or
- Any increased likelihood of impacts on bats or other protected species.

4. Section 4 Recommendations – Implementation

All development will adhere to the recommendations in Section 4 of the PRA:

Roosting Bats

- In the unlikely event that a bat or evidence of bats is discovered during the development, all works will stop immediately, and a licensed bat ecologist will be contacted.
- One bat box will be installed on a retained tree to provide additional roosting habitat. Box positioning: 3–5 m above ground, facing south or south-west, with a clear flight path. A suitable crevice-style box (e.g., Woodstone Bat Box) will be used.

Foraging and Commuting Bats

- No habitats used by foraging or commuting bats will be removed.
- Low-impact lighting measures will be adopted during and post-development:
 - Narrow spectrum, low UV lights; avoid white/blue wavelengths; warm/neutral colour temperature <4,200K.
 - Lights will be directional, shielded, and on PIR sensors set to the minimum duration.
 - Dimmable wall/security lights will be set to the lowest intensity.
- Opportunities to enhance bat foraging habitat include planting native trees, shrubs, and hedgerows.

Nesting Birds

- Although the building offers no nesting opportunities, at least one bird box will be installed on a mature tree or retained building.
- Box placement: ~3 m above ground, sheltered from wind and rain, using suitable Woodstone nest boxes (or equivalent). Small-hole boxes: 1–3 m above ground on unobstructed tree trunks.

5. Ecology Conclusion

Given that a rear dormer and more extensive roof works were already assessed under planning reference 231919, and the dwelling was found to have negligible bat roost potential, it is concluded that the findings of the Preliminary Roost Assessment (Arbtech, 18 October 2023) remain valid.

No further ecological surveys are required to support this application. The development can proceed in accordance with the recommendations set out in Section 4 of the PRA, and with due regard to the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended).

6. Policy Compliance

The proposal fully accords with national and local planning policies relating to biodiversity and ecological protection:

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) – Section 15: The development avoids harm to protected species and their habitats, conserving and enhancing the natural environment, in line with national guidance.

Core Strategy Policy CP3 – General Principles for Development: The proposal is designed to be sympathetic to its surroundings and to avoid environmental harm, consistent with strategic development principles.

Core Strategy Policy CP7 – Biodiversity: The development conserves and enhances biodiversity, ensuring that no protected species are adversely affected, as confirmed by the Preliminary Roost Assessment (Arbtech, 18 October 2023).

Managing Development Delivery Local Plan Policy TB23 – Biodiversity and Development: The scheme safeguards species of importance, including bats, and incorporates mitigation measures recommended in the PRA, ensuring that biodiversity is maintained or enhanced.