
MEMORANDUM

From:	Tina Cuss Ecology Officer		
Service	WBC Ecology	App No:	252667
Address:	Willow Tree House, St Annes Drive, Wokingham, RG40 1PB.		
Proposal:	Householder application for the proposed erection of single-storey front and rear extensions, raised roof and loft conversion.		
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 Ecological Survey Report and BS5837 Tree Survey and Arboricultural Impact Assessment. I have also reviewed the Tree Impact drawing, plans and elevations submitted in support of the application.

The external inspection recorded raised or moved corners of some of the hanging tiles on both dormers, leaving gaps that could be used by roosting bats. On the rear elevation a section of missing mortar between the ridge and roof tiles which crevice dwelling bat species could exploit for roosting. I agree with the characterisation that the property had low roosting potential, that the absence of bats could not be determined without further survey effort. The desktop study appears to take no account of the bats historically recorded at Greenacres immediately to the west and local planning and bat survey records have not been requested or assessed by the Ecologists.

From one emergence survey completed 26 August 2025 the Ecologist concluded that Pipistrelle and Noctules are early emerging bat species after sunset, and as the first call from Pipistrelles were heard and seen 12 and 13 minutes after sunset, the bats are most probably roosting in the vicinity. The bat survey methodology is generally in line with best practice standards. I support the Ecologist's conclusion that bats are not currently roosting at Willow Tree House. The report is valid only for 12 months from the site inspection. I agree that whilst no bats were seen emerging from or returning to the property to roost, this does not mean that they will not be

present in the future as bats are known to be transient and use a wide variety of crevice like features opportunistically. I request that I17 and conditions requiring submission and implementation of an approved Arboricultural Method Statement to protect retained hedgerows and trees, and minimizing lighting impacts on wildlife are included in the decision notice.

Conditions & Reasons (if required)

Condition: No external lighting shall be installed on the site or affixed to any buildings on the site without the written approval of the local planning authority.

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

Condition:

a) No development or other operation shall commence on site until an Arboricultural Method Statement and Scheme of Works which provides for the retention and protection of trees, shrubs and hedges growing on or adjacent to the site in accordance with BS5837: 2012 has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. No development or other operations shall take place except in complete accordance with the details as so-approved (hereinafter referred to as the Approved Scheme).

b) No operations shall commence on site in connection with development hereby approved (including any tree felling, tree pruning, demolition works, soil moving, temporary access construction and or widening or any other operation involving use of motorised vehicles or construction machinery) until the tree protection works required by the Approved Scheme are in place on site.

c) No excavations for services, storage of materials or machinery, parking of vehicles, deposit or excavation of soil or rubble, lighting of fires or disposal of liquids shall take place within an area designated as being fenced off or otherwise protected in the Approved Scheme.

d) The fencing or other works which are part of the Approved Scheme shall not be moved or removed, temporarily or otherwise, until all works including external works have been completed and all equipment, machinery and surplus materials removed from the site, unless the prior approval in writing of the local planning authority has first been sought and obtained.

Reason: To secure the protection of hedgerows and trees throughout the time that the development is being carried out of trees shrubs or hedges growing within or adjacent to the site which are biodiversity habitat and/or of value to wildlife to the area, and to allow for verification by the local planning authority that the necessary measures are in place before development and other works commence Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP3 and CP7 Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policies TB23.

Despite ecological surveys being undertaken which suggest that protected species are not 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:	15/12/25	Signed:	T Cuss
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