
MEMORANDUM

From:	Tina Cuss Ecology Officer		
Service	WBC Ecology	App No:	252269
Address:	Homeleigh, Sandhills, Knowl Hill, Wokingham, RG10 9XX.		
Proposal:	Householder application for the proposed alteration of the rear roof slope to incorporate two rear-facing dormer windows with plain concrete tiled roofs and cheeks in clay facing brickwork to match the existing dwelling, together with PVC-U framed windows to match existing fenestration, and the installation of a masonry bat box to the rear elevation.		
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 Bat Emergence Survey (John Wensman Ecological Consultancy, Ref R2980_BES_a, September 2025) and Preliminary Roost Assessment (John Wensman Ecological Consultancy, Ref R2980_PRA_a, July 2025). I have also reviewed the plans and elevation submitted in support of the application.

Two small bat droppings of size and shape typical of the crevice dwelling pipistrelle species were found on the fibreglass in the void confirming bat activity. The externally, the roof of the property possessed few potential roosting features and conditions for small crevice-dwelling bat species. These were mainly confined to gaps between the timbers at the eaves and gaps at the base of the timbers at the eaves exposing the roofing membrane on the northeastern facing gable end. I agree with the Ecologist's conclusion that the chalet bungalow has low bat roost potential.

One emergence survey was conducted on 7 August 2025. No bats were observed emerging from the property. Several common pipistrelles were observed emerging from the property to the west. The first bat recorded was a Common pipistrelle, 7 minutes before sunset. The Ecologist notes that Soprano and Common pipistrelle calls were early emergence times for the species, indicating both species are roosting nearby. Noctule emergence times were also early suggesting Noctule bats

are also roosting nearby. The amount of on-site bat activity was moderate, primarily Soprano and Common pipistrelle commuting and foraging passes to the mature trees at the rear of the property and the emergences from the front of the property to the west.

Birds, bats and wildlife active at night is sensitive to light pollution. Increase in artificial light might mean such species are disturbed and/or discouraged from using their breeding and resting places, established flyways or foraging areas. Such disturbance can constitute an offence under relevant wildlife legislation. To comply with the NPPF paragraph 198 and Local Plan policy and ensure the adjacent roost and foraging and commuting bats are not affected by the development proposals, an external lighting condition is required.

Summary

I am satisfied that the survey effort and methodology are adequate for the Ecologist to conclude that currently bats are unlikely to be roosting in the property. To provide mitigation and ensure an enhancement is provided in accordance with local plan policy new roost opportunity must be provided in line with BES paragraph 6.2.3. There are no ecological objections if a planning condition securing implementation in accordance with paragraphs 6.2.3 and 6.2.4. is imposed and a biodiversity sensitive lighting scheme approved by the LPA.

Conditions & Reasons (if required)

Condition: Works are to be carried out in full accordance with the recommendations and biodiversity enhancements given in Section 6.2 and Appendix 4 of the submitted Bat Emergence Survey (John Wensman Ecological Consultancy, Ref R2980_BES_a, September 2025). Within one month of substantial completion a short closing-out report demonstrating that the enhancements have been implemented as approved 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 the commencement of the development a lighting design strategy for light-sensitive biodiversity, designed in accordance with Institution of Lighting Professionals 'Guidance Note 08/23 Bats and Artificial Lighting at Night' shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The scheme shall with details of location, height, type and direction of light sources and intensity of illumination and through the provision of appropriate colour contour plans and technical specifications clearly demonstrate that any areas to be lit will not disturb or negatively impact biodiversity. All external lighting shall be installed and maintained in accordance with the scheme. Under no circumstances should any other external lighting be installed without prior consent from the Local Planning Authority.*

Reason: *To protect biodiversity. Relevant policy: NPPF paragraph 198 and Section 15 (Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment), Local Plan policies CP1, CP3 CP7 and MDD TB23*

Bats are highly 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:	01/12/25	Signed:	T Cuss
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