
MEMORANDUM

From:	Tina Cuss Ecology Officer		
Service	WBC Ecology	App No:	252103
Address:	32 Sutcliffe Avenue, Earley, Wokingham, RG6 7JN.		
Proposal:	Householder application for the proposed erection of a part single, part two-storey side extension, single-storey rear extension, conversion of loft to habitable space with rear dormer, addition of 6 no. rooflights following demolition of existing detached garage, single-storey side extensions and rear extension.		
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 Wenman Ecological Consultancy, Ref R2833_BES_a) and (Preliminary Roost Assessment (John Wenman Ecological Consultancy, Ref S2833_PRA_a). I have also reviewed the plans and elevations submitted in support of the application.

The area surrounding the property provides high quality bat foraging habitat. One small sized bat dropping resembling those deposited by crevice-dwelling species such as pipistrelle was observed in the roof of the property. The Ecologist concluded that the bat access point is likely to be within the gap behind the uPVC fascia along the gable and internally via the gap at the apex of the gable. These features and uneven lifted clay roof tiles and lifted ridge tile also have potential to lead to further crevice roost features. I support the Ecologist's conclusion that the property has moderate potential suitability for bats.

Emergence surveys were carried out on 10 June and 1 July 2025. No bats were observed emerging from the property. Noctule bats were first recorded foraging 11 minutes after sunset indicating that there is a nearby roost. Soprano and Common pipistrelle were recorded foraging around the house throughout the survey. The linked gardens along Sutcliffe Avenue contain hedges, scattered trees and tree lines

that provide continuous habitat for flight paths connected to high quality foraging habitat.

The development proposal will open the void in which there is evidence of roosting bats. The suitable roosting tile and fascia features will be directly impacted. I am satisfied that the survey effort and methodology are adequate to conclude that a precautionary working method statement should be secured by condition to ensure that the proposals do not deliberately, intentionally or recklessly disturb or injure bats if roost is re-occupied. The method proposed include:

- Pre-works toolbox talk delivered to the contractors by a suitably licensed ecologist detailing the location of the historic roost, legal protections, working methods (i.e. soft strip), actions to be taken if a bat is found and personal safety procedures;
- A pre-works inspection of the historic roost undertaken by a suitably licensed ecologist internally from the loft space and externally from scaffolding; and
- A soft strip approach to the removal of any roof covering associated with the historic roost (i.e. roof tiles and uPVC fascia) at the western gable, i.e. by gloved hands and with handheld tools under supervision of a suitably licensed ecologist.
- In the event that bats are encountered during the works, the works will stop immediately until written advice from the Ecologist or Natural England has been received. A European Protected Species mitigation licence may be required to permit the works to recommence lawfully.

The lack of enhancement and compensation for the loss of potential roosting features is contrary local plan policy and the NPPF. In order to comply with the requirements of CP3 and CP7 and NPPF paragraph 187 I request that an ecological enhancement planning condition is imposed.

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 ensure the bats are not affected by the development proposals, no external lighting should be installed or erected unless it is designed and maintained in line with BCT/ILP GN08/23 Bats and Artificial Lighting at Night'.

Provided the implementation in accordance with the Precautionary Working Method Statement, additional roosting provision and bat sensitive lighting are secured there are no ecological objection to the development proposed.

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 R2833_BES_a).

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, details of biodiversity enhancements, to include bird boxes, bat boxes/bricks and/or access tiles integrated into the building shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the council. The

biodiversity enhancements shall thereafter be installed as approved. 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 incorporate biodiversity in and around developments and ensure that protected and priority species are maintained and not adversely affected by the proposals. Relevant policy: The NPPF paragraph 187, Local Plan Core Strategy policies CP3 and CP7 and Managing Development Delivery policy TB23.

Condition: At no time shall external lighting be installed on the site or affixed to any buildings on the site without the prior written approval of the local planning.

Reason: To ensure that biodiversity, protected and priority species are not adversely affected by the proposals. Relevant policy: NPPF paragraph 198 Section 15 (Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment), Core Strategy policies CP1, CP3 and CP7 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policy TB23.

Date:	01/12/25	Signed:	T Cuss
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