

MEMORANDUM

From:	Tina Cuss Ecology Officer		
Service	WBC Ecology	App No:	250589
Address:	4 Rowan Drive, Crowthorne, Wokingham, RG45 6RZ.		
Proposal:	Householder application for the proposed loft conversion into habitable accommodation, including the addition of a front and rear dormer and raising of the roof. Plus, a single storey rear extension and changes to fenestration. Following the demolition of the existing conservatory and chimney.		
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 Bat Roost Assessment (Chase Ecological Consultancy, Ref CE4771, February 2025) and reviewed the plans and elevations submitted in support of the application.

In England all species of bats are European protected species. The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) make it illegal to:

- intentionally or deliberately kill, injure or capture (or take) an EPS,
- deliberately disturb an EPS,
- recklessly disturb an EPS or obstruct access to breeding site or place of shelter and
- damage or destroy 'any structure or place which any EPS uses for shelter or protection.

A bat roost is interpreted as "any structure or place used for shelter or protection" whether or not bats are present at the time.

If a bat roost will be affected by the works, a licence for development works affecting bats (i.e. for derogation from the provisions of the Habitat Regulations) will need to be obtained before works which could impact upon the roost can commence.

The desk study undertaken by the Ecologist fails to include a search of the Council's constraining mapping and has only relied on aerial photos to determine if there are important landscape features around the application site. The consultant has not undertaken a local planning history search or bat group or TVERC records. The Ecologist therefore not taken account of or made the Owner and Agent aware of the bat roost recorded in the neighbouring property and the European Protected Species derogation licence.

The Ecologist concluded there was no internal evidence of bats was identified both internally or externally. However, as both records for bats and suitable habitats commonly used by bats for both feeding and commuting were observed locally a level of protection must be implemented to prevent disturbance.

Provided that potential roosting features for crevice dwelling bats in soffits and roof coverings and the loft void are retained I agree with the PRA that the works proposed will not impact features which are likely to bats. There are no ecological objections provided the application is implemented in full accordance with PBRA Appendix 4 which should be issued to the contractor and WBC informative I17 is included in the decision notice.

Conditions & Reasons (if required)

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.

Informative: This permission does not convey or imply any approval or consent required under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 for protected species. The applicant is advised to contact Natural England and the Owner's Ecologist with regard to any protected species that may be found on the site.

Date:	28/04/25	Signed:	T Cuss
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