

Memo

To: Huimin Chen

From: Cathy Holwill (RBC Ecology Consultations)

CC:

Date: 26 March 2026

Re: Planning application ref: PL/26/0247

Address: 22 WELLSWOOD GARDENS, READING, RG1 5BF

Description: Erection of a two-storey side and rear extension with single-storey element, full-height front portico, roof alterations, internal reconfiguration, formation of a subterranean lower ground floor and associated fenestration alterations

The site comprises a two storey detached house with garage located in a residential area of Reading. The proposals include large two storey side extension which will extend over the garage. The proposal also include a small rear storey extension which will extend over the existing patio (but to a lesser degree than originally y proposed). In addition, a subterranean lower ground floor will be created.

The site was subject to pre application advice - 25/1136 [*2 storey side and rear extension. 2 storey front extension and lower ground rear extension with internal alterations*] for which we advised a bat survey was undertaken prior to submitting a full application.

The Bat Survey report (Chase Ecology, 3/2/2026, ref: CE5101) has been undertaken to the appropriate standard and concludes that the building is unlikely to host roosting bats. As such, since the proposals are unlikely to affect bats or other protected species, there are no objections to this application on bat related grounds.

Other issues:

The original development plans for this location included the provision of dark corridors to maintain ecological connectivity and to protect commuting and foraging bats as well as providing valuable habitat for other nocturnal wildlife species. The current scheme will introduce the amount of light entering the woodland strip though the inclusion of additional windows, potentially causing light spill into this sensitive area – this is likely to undermine the function of this corridor leading to disturbance of bats and other wildlife.

While the plans do not show this area as directly impacted, it seems very likely that the construction works will require access and working within the rear garden. This could lead to disturbance to the buffer planting strip (including trees) that contribute to the existing wildlife corridor. As such, any impacts will need to be minimised or avoided entirely and the applicant will need to ensure that the construction works do not impact upon the RPAs of existing trees within the garden or the buffer area to the north of the site.

A precautionary working method of working will need to be implemented during works which can be secured through condition requiring a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) for Biodiversity to ensure that these features are protected and are not adversely affected by the proposal.

In addition, a condition should be set to ensure that no external lighting is installed post-construction that could cause light spill into the woodland corridor, therefore helping to maintain dark connectivity for bats and other nocturnal wildlife.