

COMBINED DELEGATED APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Coley ward

App Ref: PL/25/1767 Full & PL/25/1768 Lbc

Address: 42 BATH ROAD, READING, RG1 6PG

Proposal: Construction of new lift to existing building. Removal of one tree and planting of new trees.

Applicant: Mr Matthew Wilson

Received date: 09/12/2025

Target Decision date: 06/04/2026 (EOT)

Case Officer: Marcelina Rejwerska

1. SITE DESCRIPTION

The application site comprises the Beacher Hall Nursing Home on the north side of the A4155 Bath Road, which is a major artery route between the Reading town centre and west Reading. The main building of the site is Grade II listed, although the proposed development relates to a modern extension which does not affect the fabric of the historic building itself.

The immediate surrounding area comprises mostly residential properties in mixed designs and styles, reflecting the historic and modern development of this area. The site is just outside the Downshire Square conservation area and hosts a number of trees protected by TPO 62/06. The site is also within an Air Quality Management Area.



Figure 1 Photo of the front of the site taken by case officer by 8 January 2026.

2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Planning permission and listed building consent are sought for a side extension to host an elevator shaft on the west side of the building, which as previously stated, is a modern extension to the listed building, and does not affect the original historic fabric. The agent has confirmed that a study of the layout of the nursing home suggests that this is the only suitable location for the elevator shaft which avoids compromising the fire safety for residents and staff on site. There is a footpath which runs alongside the

west of the building – this is proposed to be adjusted to accommodate the extension, as the footpath is used as a fire escape route from the rear of the site to the front.

TPO tree T11 is proposed to be removed due to its proximity to the development.



2.1. Information submitted:

Design, Access & Heritage Statement
Tree Survey Rev A, dated December 2025
AL(9)900 Site Location Plan
AL(0)002A Elevations Proposed and Existing
AL(0)001B Plans Existing and Proposed
Received 9 December 2025

AL(9)901A Site Plan Existing and Proposed
GHA/DS/666160:26 Arboricultural Impact Assessment, GHA Trees, dated 17 February 2026
Tree Protection Plan Rev B, dated February 2026
Received 18 February 2026

AL(9)902 Footpath as Proposed
Received 25 March 2026

3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

PL/25/0925 – Pre-application advice for new stretcher lift positioned in same location as previously approved lift. Advice given regarding tree protections.

PL/23/0007 - Removal and replacement of existing set of double doors which are situated within the grade II listed part of the building. Refurbishment of the whole 69 bedroom care home, including decoration, new floor finishes, furniture and sanitary ware. Application permitted.

PL/16/0463 - Proposed fire suppression sprinkler installation to nursing home including listed part of building. Application permitted.

PL/16/0062 - Amendments to service lift shaft previously approved under application ref: 141717/LBC. LBC granted.

PL/16/0038 - Application for a non-material amendment following a grant of planning permission (141716). Slight amendment to lift shaft. NMA agreed.

PL/14/1724 - Certificate of Lawfulness for proposed works to a listed building. Certificate granted.

PL/14/1716 - Installation of new service lift to existing building. Application permitted but not implemented.

PL/14/1717 - Installation of new service lift to existing building. LBC granted.

PL/95/0549 - Refurbishment and conversion of existing house and three storey extension to provide 70 bed nursing home. Application permitted.

PL/95/0570 - Proposed nursing home. Existing main house to be retained and re-furbished. New 3 storey extensions to side and rear (Listed Building Consent). Application permitted.

4. CONSULTATIONS

The following were consulted:

- RBC Conservation Officer – No objection.
- RBC Natural Environment – Revisions and clarification requested. Revised documents considered acceptable subject to conditions.

Site notices were also erected at the front of the site. No letters of representation were received.

5. LEGAL AND PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

Section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires the LPA to have special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting or any features of special interest which it possesses.

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that proposals be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Material considerations include relevant policies in the National Planning Policy framework (NPPF) - among them

the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'. However, the NPPF does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making (NPPF paragraph 12).

National Policy and Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework

National Planning Practice Guidance

Conservation Principles Policies and Guidance, Historic England 2008

HEAG125 Listed Buildings and Curtilage

HEAG304 Listed Building Consent

Reading Borough Local Plan (2019)

CC1: PRESUMPTION IN FAVOUR OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

CC7: DESIGN AND THE PUBLIC REALM

EN1: PROTECTION AND ENHANCEMENT OF THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

EN6: NEW DEVELOPMENT IN A HISTORIC CONTEXT

EN14: TREES, WOODLAND AND HEDGES

Local Plan Update

The current version of the Local Plan (adopted in November 2019) turned five years old on Tuesday 5th November 2024. The Local Plan was reviewed in March 2023 and around half of the policies in the plan are considered still up to date. However, the rest need to be considered for updating to reflect changing circumstances and national policy. A consultation version of the draft updated version of the Local Plan was published on 6th November 2024.

Although there is a five-year period for carrying out a review of a plan after it is adopted, nothing in the NPPF or elsewhere says that policies automatically become “out of date” when they are five years old. It is a matter of planning judgement rather than legal fact whether a plan or policies within it are out-of-date. This will depend on whether they have been overtaken by things that have happened since the plan was adopted, either on the ground or through changes in national policy, for example.

Officer advice in respect of the Local Plan policies pertinent to this application listed above is that they remain in accordance with national policy and that the objectives of those policies remains very similar in the draft updated Local Plan. Therefore, they can continue to be afforded weight in the appraisal below and are not considered to be ‘out of date’.

Equality Act 2010:

In determining this application, the Council is required to have regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. However, there is no indication or evidence (including from consultation on the application) that the protected groups identified by the Act have or will have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to this particular planning application. Therefore, in terms of the key equalities protected characteristics it is considered there would be no significant adverse impacts as a result of the development.

6. APPRAISAL

Design and heritage

Policy EN1 states “Applications which affect Listed Buildings will not have an adverse impact on those elements which contribute to their special architectural or historic interest including, where appropriate, their settings.” Policy CC7 also requires high quality design.

The proposed development was previously granted permission in 2014 with a minor difference to the total height of the lift shaft granted under a 2016 NMA application. The original permission has not been

implemented and has now expired. The overall form is simple, and the location is fairly obscured from principal front views of the site. There would be minimal impact on the listed curtilage of Grade II listed 42 Bath Road and no direct or harmful impact on the setting of the adjacent listed Water Tower and Downshire Conservation Area. The existing west wing is modern, and the proposed extension would face the 2000s building blocks. As such, the design is considered acceptable.

Trees and landscaping

Policy EN14 (Trees, Hedges and Woodland) states “Individual trees, groups of trees, hedges and woodlands will be protected from damage or removal where they are of importance, and Reading’s vegetation cover will be extended.” The site is also within an Air Quality Management Area where retaining and planting trees is of particular importance.

The proposal includes the removal of one ‘C’ category Sycamore tree (T3 of AIA; T11 of the TPO). The tree is not of high quality and is not a constraint for the development with sufficient mitigation for its removal in place. It has been proposed to mitigate the loss of this tree through the replanting of three replacement trees, which is positive and acceptable mitigation. The species of the replacement planting of 3 Silver Birch trees offers limited diversity, however, this is recommended to be dealt with via a condition to secure further details of the proposed planting.

The footpath running alongside the west side of the site is to be realigned. Revised plans have been submitted to demonstrate the extent of the works, and the submitted AIA includes the details of the methodology. This is considered appropriate for the scale of the works.

Overall, the proposal is considered acceptable in terms of its impact on existing trees.

7. CONCLUSION

The application has been assessed in line with national and locally adopted policies and is considered to be in accordance with those policies.

8. RECOMMENDATION

GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION
GRANT LISTED BUILDING CONSENT

Recommended conditions FULL:

1. Time limit (standard)
2. Approved plans
3. Materials to match
4. Arboricultural method statement and tree protection as specified
5. Details of proposed planting to be submitted prior to first use of the lift

Recommended conditions LBC:

1. Time limit (standard)
2. Approved plans
3. Materials to match