

DELEGATED APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Redlands Ward

App Ref: PL/26/0122 Householder planning permission

Address: 26 Wellswood Gardens, READING, RG1 5BF

Proposal: Proposed Single storey Rear and a garage conversion.

Applicant: Mr Rabindra Kumar Panda

Received date: 30/01/2026

Target Decision date: 30/04/2026

Case Officer: Huimin Chen

1. SITE DESCRIPTION

The site is located at the cul-de-sac of Wellswood Gardens, off Upper Redlands Road, and comprises a two-storey detached dwelling, identical to No. 24 Wellswood Gardens. Owing to the significant level difference between the dwelling and the rear garden, an upper platform and steps provide access between the internal and external areas.

The property is subject to an Article 4 Direction, which removes permitted development rights for the change of use from a C3 dwellinghouse to a C4 small HMO. The site also lies within Area TPO 16/12, which covers the trees within the rear buffer zone forming part of the landscaped setting secured as part of the original development.



Front and Rear views of 26 Wellswood Gardens, taken 20/03/2026

2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

The planning application seeks permission for a single-storey rear extension with a mono-pitched roof, along with a garage conversion. The proposed rear extension would be constructed entirely over the existing concrete patio and would measure approximately 2.9 m in depth, with an eaves height of approximately 2.5 m and an overall height of 3.45 m. Steps are proposed as part of the development to provide access to the rear garden. The extension would be reconfigured with the existing kitchen and dining area. All proposed materials would be similar to those of the existing dwelling.

With regard to the garage conversion, it is proposed to divide the space into a storage area and a gym, with the introduction of a new side door.



Existing and proposed floor plans and elevations submitted

Plans/documents considered:

- Drawing No. P1710-01A Location Plan (and Block Plan), dated 16/04/2026.
- Drawing No. P1710-03A Plans and Elevations, dated 16/04/2026.
- V2 Tree Report (AIA), BS5837:2012 Tree Survey and Arboricultural Impact Assessment, dated 21st April 2026, ref: GHA/DS/160403:26a, along with Arboricultural Impact Plan.
- Tree Protection Plan Rev A, dated April 2026.
Received 21/04/2026.

Planning Officer's note: The agent submitted the same Drawing No. P1710-01A and Drawing No. P1710-03A on 17/04/2026, which were the plans reviewed by the Natural Environment Officers in relation to tree concerns. The Planning Officer confirms that the two plans received on 17/04/2026 and 21/04/2026 are identical.

3. PLANNING HISTORY

- PL/12/1820 (OUT) - Outline application (access only) for the demolition of all existing buildings, halls of residence and associated buildings and the redevelopment of the site to provide 34 dwellings, open space, landscaping, accesses to Upper Redlands Road and all associated works.

Permitted subject to Legal Agreement, 22/02/2013. PD rights as follows were removed under this permission:

23. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (or any order revoking, re-enacting or modifying that Order), no extensions, outbuildings, swimming or other pools, or hard surfaces shall be constructed or provided within plots 14 - 34 other than those approved under this permission.

Reason. To prevent harm to trees within and adjacent to the site caused by uncontrolled development in accordance with Policies CS38 (Trees, Hedges and Woodlands) and CS7 of the Reading Borough LDF Core Strategy 2008 and Policy DM4 (Safeguarding Amenity) of the Sites and Detailed Policies Document 2012.

- Application for approval of reserved matters following outline approval. (12/01008/OUT) **Approved 16/10/2014.**

4. CONSULTATIONS

- RBC Transport Development Control – No objection.

The proposal will result in the loss of the existing integral garage and, therefore, the loss of parking. Submitted block plan illustrates the provision of 3 off street parking spaces, which is in accordance with the Council's current parking standards.

There are no Transport objections to this application.

Suggested condition: Vehicle Parking (As Specified)

- RBC Planning Natural Environment – Object.

The comments relating to trees are extensive; they can be summarised as follows: The consultation raises concerns about the proposed rear extension and creation of new steps down on the lawn at 26 Wellswood Gardens, which is within a Tree Preservation Order area. The extension would project beyond the existing patio, reducing garden space and bringing living accommodation closer to tall protected trees. The submitted arboricultural report is considered basic and inaccurate, with estimated root protection areas and insufficient assessment of impacts. Although development appears outside the stated RPAs, there is concern that reduced garden space and closer proximity to trees could lead to future pressure for pruning or removal, contrary to policy. A reduction in the depth of the extension to align with the existing patio is suggested as a potential mitigation.



Original proposed floor plans submitted, 30/01/2026

The revised plans reduced the depth of the proposed single-storey rear extension to approximately 2.9 m, to be constructed entirely over the existing patio. Following this amendment, the Natural Environment Officer raised no further objections, subject to standard condition L7A requiring development in accordance with BS5837:2012 TREE SURVEY AND ARBORICULTURAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT (AIA) Dated: 4th March 2026, reference: GHA/DS/160403:26 and associated Tree Protection Plan dated March 2026.

Planning Officer's note: The agent subsequently submitted an updated Arboricultural Impact Assessment (V2 Tree Report (AIA), BS5837:2012 Tree Survey and Arboricultural Impact Assessment, dated 21st April 2026, Ref: GHA/DS/160403:26a, together with an associated Tree Protection Plan dated 21 April 2026). The delegated report, therefore, takes the latest submitted AIA into consideration.

- A site notice was displayed near the application site. The 21-day consultation period was from 20/03/2026 to 10/04/2026. No letters of representation have been received.



Site Photo

Communication with agent:

The originally submitted proposal extended beyond the side elevation of the host property. In the context of the surrounding area, the development was considered to result in an overbearing impact and an increased sense of enclosure to No. 24 Wellswood Gardens. Taking all issues into account, including concerns relating to trees, the agent was advised to reduce the proposed width and depth in order to achieve a positive outcome.

The revised plans are detailed in the *Plans/Documents Considered* section of this report.

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.

5. LEGAL AND PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

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'. The following local and national planning policy and guidance is relevant to this application:

National Policy

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

National Planning Policy Guidance 2014 onwards

Reading Borough Council Local Plan (2019)

CC7: Design and the Public Realm

CC8: Safeguarding Amenity

H9: House Extensions and Ancillary Accommodation

H10: Private and Communal Outdoor Space

EN14: Trees, Hedges and Woodland

SPD

Design Guide to House Extensions Supplementary Planning Document (2021)

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 pre-submission draft was submitted to the Secretary of State on the 9th of May 2025 and is currently at examination.

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’.

6. APPRAISAL

Character and Appearance

Policy H9 states that an extension to a house will be acceptable where it respects the character of the house in terms of scale, location, materials and design and respects the character and pattern of neighbouring properties and the street as a whole in terms of scale, location, materials and design, and any important existing building line. Policy CC7 also sets out relevant considerations for design.

The proposed single-storey rear extension is considered acceptable in terms of character and appearance, by virtue of its modest scale and use of matching materials. The extension would not be visible from the street scene and, as such, would not result in any harm to the public realm.

Residential Amenity

Policy H9 states that an extension will be acceptable where it does not result in an overbearing impact on neighbours. Policy H10 seeks to ensure that the amenity of gardens and other outdoor areas are not compromised. Policy CC8 states an extension to a house will be acceptable where it will not cause a significant detrimental impact to the living environment of existing or new residential properties. Policy H9 also requires that ancillary accommodation will only be acceptable where it would not be capable of operating as a separate dwelling which could be let or sold separately.

No unacceptable impacts are identified in terms of privacy, overbearing effect, or loss of light to neighbouring properties as no side windows are proposed in the rear extension, and the extension, at

approximately 2.9 m in depth, would not breach the 60-degree guideline taken from the centre line of the nearest habitable room windows/doors of adjoining properties.

Whilst one side window is proposed within the existing garage, this would be at ground-floor level and would directly face the blank wall of No. 24 Wellswood Gardens, resulting in no loss of privacy. Furthermore, the detached nature of the dwelling and the reasonable separation distances to both boundaries ensure that no overbearing impacts would arise. Adequate private outdoor amenity space would be retained following completion of the development.

Trees

Policy EN14 requires that 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 proposed single-storey rear extension would be wholly sited on the existing raised patio, with new steps providing access to the lawn within the rear garden. The development would be located outside the Root Protection Areas of the protected trees. A planning condition would be imposed to secure the installation of protective fencing during construction to prevent any harm to retained trees. Accordingly, the proposal is considered to comply with Policy EN14 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

7. CONCLUSION

The proposed development has been assessed as set out above and is considered to be acceptable on that basis, subject to the following conditions.

8. RECOMMENDATION

Approve with conditions

Time Limit

Approved Plans

Materials (To match)

No New Openings

Vehicle Parking (As Specified)

Arboricultural Method Statement (As Specified)