

DELEGATED APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Redlands Ward

App Ref: PL/26/0247 Householder planning permission

Address: 22 WELLSWOOD GARDENS, READING, RG1 5BF

Proposal: 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.

Applicant: Mr J Lobo

Received date: 23/02/2026

Target Decision date: 12/05/2026 (EoT)

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. 20 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 22 Wellswood Gardens, taken 20/03/2026

2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

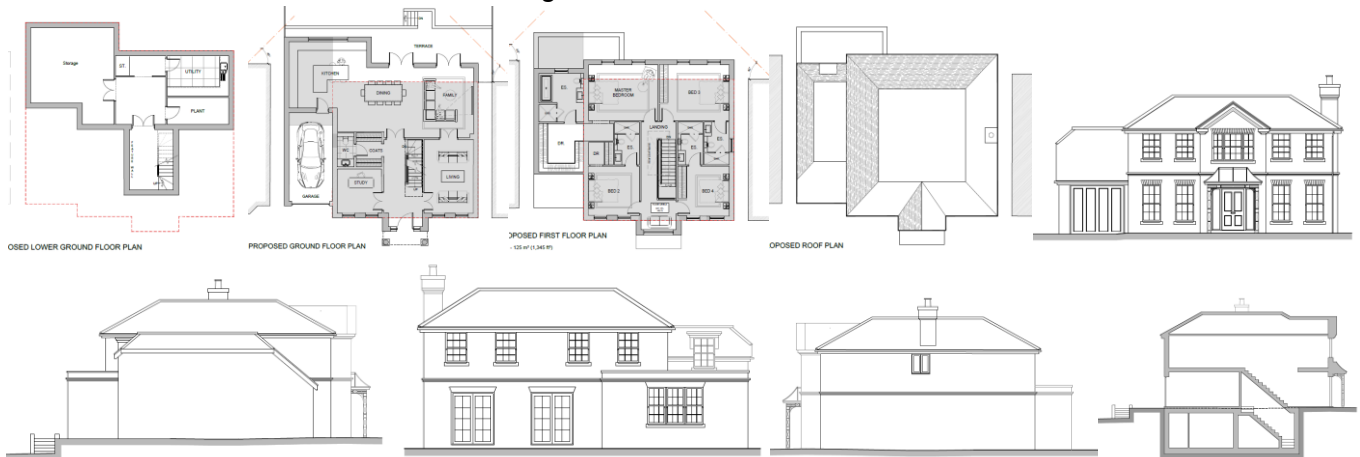
The proposal comprises a two-storey side and rear extension, infilling the area in front of the existing garage. The overall height of the proposed two-storey side extension is of ca 5.2m incorporating a cat slide roof, roughly the same height as the eave height of the main house. It also includes a single-storey rear extension, which would share the same rear building line as the existing garage, a lower ground floor extension and a two-storey front projection. The development includes the construction of the associated rear steps and alterations to the fenestration regarding windows and doors. Relevant landscaping would

also be changed to the front to facilitate the two-storey front projection along with the front porch. The proposal would create a larger 4-bed family dwelling house upon the completion of the application.

As stated on the application form, the proposed materials include red brick with stone detailing to match the existing dwelling. The roof would be finished in natural slate, also to match the existing. The proposed windows and doors would differ from the existing; the windows would be white timber Georgian sash windows, and, except for the proposed dark panelled front door, the doors would be white timber.



Existing Floor Plans and Elevations



Proposed Floor Plans and Elevations

Plans/Documents Considered:

- Drawing No. 25-J4763-LP01 – Location Plan, received 23/02/2026.
- Drawing No. 25-J4763-003 – Existing Floor Plans, received 23/02/2026.
- Drawing No. 25-J4763-004 – Existing Elevations, received 23/02/2026.
- Protected species survey – Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment, ref: CE5105, prepared by chase ecological consultancy, received 23/02/2026.
- Tree Constraints Plan, dated 11/2025, received 23/02/2026.
- Drawing No. 25-J4763_005 Rev A – Proposed Floor Plans, received 01/05/2026.
- Drawing No. 25-J4763_006 Rev A – Proposed Elevations, received 01/05/2026.
- Drawing No. 25-J4763_002 Rev B – Proposed Site Layout, received 06/05/2026.
- Drawing No. 25-J4763-001 – Existing Site Layout, received 06/05/2026.

3. PLANNING HISTORIES

- 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

dwelling, 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:

32. i) The design of buildings on Plots 21, 22, 23, and 24 submitted in respect of the 'Appearance' and 'Scale' Reserved Matters shall not include north facing windows within the roof, or at second floor level or higher.
ii) 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 north facing windows within the roof, or at second floor level or higher, shall be provided within Plots 21, 22, 23, and 24 at any time.
Reason. To prevent an unacceptable overlooking of properties in Cadogan Place taking into account the topography of the site and the scale of the proposed buildings. In accordance with Policy CS15 (Location, Accessibility, Density and Housing Mix) of the Reading Borough LDF Core Strategy 2008 and Policy DM4 (Safeguarding Amenity) of the Sites and Detailed Policies Document 2012.

- PL/14/0428 - Application for approval of reserved matters following outline approval. (12/01008/OUT) Approved 16/10/2014.
- PL/25/1136 (PRE) - 2 storey side and rear extension. 2 storey front extension and lower ground rear extension with internal alterations. Advice given 23/09/2025, and in summary, the proposed scheme as submitted for this pre-application enquiry is unlikely to be supported because of the overall scale, design, impact on neighbours, impact on street scene, and over development of the site.



Proposed Site Plan and Elevations submitted under Pre-application

4. CONSULTATIONS

- RBC Trees - Planning Natural Environment – no objection.

I note that the extensions don't result in any increase in footprint and will be on the existing terrace, hence do not directly impact the important trees to the rear.

I don't think it would be appropriate to require tree protection in the rear garden as I assume family access will be desired throughout construction, however we do need to ensure that the rear garden is not impacted by development related activity, hence the specific (non-standard) condition would be appropriate.

These terraces are much higher above ground level than the garden so the normal concerns about potential increases of the patio area as a result of the extension on the existing, i.e. to compensate, is a lesser concern in this case. Informative I26 relating to PD rights and TPO trees would still be prudent if this is approved.

As mentioned at pre-app, the front extension would appear to need the removal of the existing landscaping. Hence, clarity is required on what soft landscape areas are to be lost (these formed part of the approved landscaping for Wellswood Gardens) and how it will be mitigated.

- RBC Transport Development Control – no objection.

As part of the proposed works, the garage is to be brought forward. It is recommended that the internal dimensions of a single garage are 7000mm long x 3000mm wide to allow easy access to/from each vehicle and sufficient storage to the rear to accommodate a bicycle. The length of the garage does not meet this standard, however, the new garage is comparable to the existing one. Although not illustrated, there is additional on-site parking available.

There are no Transport objections to this application as the proposed works do not change parking provision or impact the highway. Suggested condition as follows:

Vehicle Parking (As Specified)

- RBC Ecology Consultations – no objection, subject to a condition.

The site comprises a two-storey detached house with a garage located in a residential area of Reading. The proposals include a 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 through 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 a 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.

- 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 original proposal was not considered to fully address the issues raised in the pre-application advice. The proposed two-storey side extension would result in the loss of the gap with No. 24 Wellswood Gardens, leading to a terraced appearance when viewed visually. In addition, the two-storey front projection was proposed at the same height as the main building, which is considered dominant and harmful to the character of the main house. The proposal also includes one habitable room within the proposed lower ground floor that does not benefit from a window. Clarification regarding the front landscaping would be required as the proposed front projection would extend a little bit into the grassed area. Overall, the original proposal was not considered acceptable.

Following communication with the agent, revised plans were submitted; please refer to the drawings/documents listed in the "Plans/Documents Considered" section above. A detailed assessment is provided in the Appraisal section below.

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

EN12: Biodiversity and the Green Network

TR5: Car And Cycle Parking and Electric Vehicle Charging

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.

Overall, the proposal would result in a significant change to the character and appearance of the existing dwelling, as it would reorganise the fenestration through alterations to the arrangement of windows and doors, and would introduce both a two-storey front central projection and a two-storey side extension. However, the proposal as a whole is not considered to detract from the character of the local environment or the streetscene, as some neighbouring properties also feature two-storey front projections. Also, the proposed arrangement of new windows would be symmetrical and proportionate in relation to the central front projection, which would contribute to a coherent and balanced appearance.

In addition, it is acknowledged that the proposed two-storey side extension would result in the loss of the gap to No. 24 Wellswood Gardens. Owing to the extension being the same width as the existing garage, the design incorporates a significant set-down from the ridgeline of the main roof and a setback from the principal frontage, together with a catslide roof form. This approach would serve to mitigate potential

terracing effects. In this regard, it is also noted that the Wellswood Gardens neighbourhood is characterised by relatively narrow gaps between detached properties.

Furthermore, the proposed two-storey side extension would appear visually subservient to the main dwelling due to its smaller scale and recessed roof form, in accordance with the House Design Guide for House Extensions 2021. Therefore, it is not considered that the loss of the gap would result in such harm to the character and appearance of the area as to warrant a refusal on this basis.

Finally, the proposed single-storey rear extension is modest in scale and would be entirely situated on top of the existing raised platform. The introduction of the lower ground floor would be accessed solely via an internal staircase and would not result in alterations to the external appearance of the rear elevation. Both elements would be invisible from the street. As such, the proposal is not considered to result in any harmful impact on the character and appearance of the host dwelling or the wider streetscene.



Rear View of 22 Wellswood Garden, taken 20/03/2026

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.

There are no identified risks in terms of loss of sunlight or daylight to the habitable rooms of neighbouring properties. The proposal would not extend beyond the 45-degree line taken from the centre point of the closest habitable room windows of both No. 24 and No. 20, and therefore complies with the guidance set out in the House Design Guide to House Extensions 2021.

It is noted that there is a first-floor side window on the eastern elevation of No. 24, which serves a bathroom and is obscurely glazed. In addition, the existing first-floor east-facing window at the application property faces a blank wall at No. 20. As such, the proposal would not result in any harmful impacts in terms of loss of light or loss of privacy.

The proposed two-storey side extension is significantly smaller than the main dwelling and would be the same width as the existing attached side garage. As such, any overbearing impact on No. 24 is considered limited, particularly when compared with the existing layout arrangement.

As the overall development would not extend beyond the existing raised platform, the level of private outdoor space would remain unchanged following the completion of the development.

Conditions would be imposed to restrict access to the flat roof of the new single-storey rear extension and to control the introduction of any new openings or windows within the side elevations without prior approval from the local planning authority.

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.

Wellswood Gardens is covered by TPO Area 16/12. As the proposed development would be confined entirely within the existing raised platform and would not directly affect the trees adjacent to the rear boundary of the site, no tree-related concerns are identified. Nevertheless, a condition would be imposed to restrict construction activities within the rear garden area outside the existing terraced platform, in order to avoid any potential harm to the protected trees.

The introduction of the front projection and the front porch would result in a partial loss of front landscaping, a revised landscaping arrangement is, therefore, required. A condition would be imposed to secure its detailed design and layout.

Ecology

Policy EN12 requires that on all sites, development should not result in a net loss of biodiversity and geodiversity and should provide a net gain for biodiversity wherever possible.

A Bat Survey Report (Chase Ecology, dated 03/02/2026, ref: CE5101) has been submitted and reviewed by the RBC Ecology consultee, who has confirmed that there are no objections to the application on bat related grounds.

However, it is noted that the original development of Wellswood Gardens included the provision of dark corridors in order to maintain ecological connectivity and to protect commuting and foraging bats, as well as to provide valuable habitat for other nocturnal wildlife species. As such, conditions would be imposed to secure a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) and to ensure that no external lighting is installed post-construction that could cause light spill into the adjacent woodland corridor. This would help to maintain dark connectivity for bats and other nocturnal wildlife, in accordance with Policy EN12 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

Transport

Policy TR5 states that development should provide car parking and cycle parking that is appropriate to the accessibility of locations within the Borough to sustainable transport facilities, particularly public transport.

The proposal would bring the garage forward, while retaining the same size as the existing structure. Although it does not meet the current parking standards, the Transport team has confirmed that it would be acceptable, as there is additional on-site parking available and the proposal would not alter parking provision or result in any adverse impact on the highway network.

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
- Hours Of Construction/Demolition
- Construction Works restricted to the existing terrace
- **(PRE-COMMENCEMENT)** Construction Environmental Management Plan (To Be Submitted)
- Landscaping Small Scale (To Be Approved)
- Vehicle Parking (As Specified)
- Materials (As Specified)
- No External Lighting
- No New Openings
- Use of Roof Restricted