

# Memo

**To:** Huimin Chen, Planning

**From:** Amy Daly, Assistant Natural Environment Officer, Planning

**CC:**

**Date:** 14<sup>th</sup> October 2026

**Re:** Consultation on an Application

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**Planning Application Ref: PL/26/1159**

**Application Type: Householder planning permission**

**Address: 8 Wincroft Road, Caversham, Reading, RG4 7HH**

**Proposal: Proposed garden room**

The site is located in Caversham, a naturally verdant area of the Borough of which trees and soft landscaping contribute to its character. There are trees both on and adjacent to the site, including those subject to Tree Preservation Orders. TPO 23/07 is applicable to 1 & 2 Lawson Drive and 15A & 17 Conisboro Avenue; 1 Lawson Drive adjoining to the rear of the site. TPO 247/06 is applicable to the adjacent property of 10 Wincroft Road to the west of the site (also covering 12 & 14 Wincroft Road).

With reference to the **BS5837 – Arboricultural Report, dated August 2026, by David Randall Tree Consultancy**, I note the following:

Section **3.3 Trees**, demonstrates that no tree removals are required which is positive.

Section **3.6 Recommended Tree Works and Tree Protection Plan**, demonstrates that that no tree pruning is required which is also positive.

To justify not using protective fencing for the construction, it is stated that '*The installation of protective fencing is not considered practical due to the small, enclosed nature of the domestic rear garden and the limited scale of the proposed development. The proposal comprises a lightweight modular timber structure constructed on ground screw foundations, resulting in a low-impact construction methodology with a relatively small working area. The retained trees within the application site are located within established planting beds, which naturally discourage construction access and provide a degree of physical protection*'. The **Tree Constraints and Protection Plan, dated August 2026**, states '*All planting beds shall be treated as exclusion zones throughout the construction period. No excavation, changes in soil level, trafficking, storage of materials or washout activities shall occur within these areas*'. I will agree this is fine given what is stated

regarding planting beds acting as existing protection and forming construction exclusion zones, with ground protection being used where RPAs extent past these existing/acting protective measures. It should also be noted that the protected trees adjacent to the site will be protected by existing boundary treatment between adjoining properties.

Section **4.0 Arboricultural Method Statement**, details that the garden room will be constructed using ground screws (minimising excavation within RPAs of T006 & T007; both subject to TPO 23/07). Section **3.2 The Site**, also states '*The structure will be elevated to provide a minimum 100mm clearance beneath the floor, maintaining air circulation and allowing natural water infiltration where the footprint overlaps Root Protection Areas*'. This methodology is accepted as it minimises excavation within RPAs and allows for gaseous exchange and water permeability within the trees' rooting environment.

**Installation of Ground Screws** within Section **4.0**, states the following:

*Prior to installation of each screw, the proposed location shall be marked out and investigated by an experienced installer using a suitable metal bar or similar hand tool. The tool shall be inserted/probed progressively into the ground to identify the presence and approximate location of woody roots within the immediate installation zone.*

*Where a woody root 25mm or greater in diameter is encountered, the proposed screw location shall be relocated to the nearest practicable position that avoids the root, whilst maintaining the required structural support for the proposed structure. Roots shall not be severed, crushed or otherwise damaged to facilitate installation.*

*Once a suitable location has been confirmed, the installer shall form the pilot hole using the specified installation method, taking care to avoid identified roots. The ground screw shall then be installed to the required depth of approximately 1,050 mm.*

*If a root not identified during the initial investigation is encountered during pilot-hole formation or screw installation, works at that location shall cease and the screw shall be repositioned to avoid the root.*

I can confirm I am happy with the above. The electrical service trench is located outside of RPAs which is fine.

The canopy of two of the protected trees at 1 Lawson Drive (T006 & T007) are in close proximity to the garden room which may increase the future pressure to prune the trees. However, as they are protected and any works would be subject to formal consent from the LPA, we have a level of control over what works would be reasonable to undertake to them to prevent future conflict. I assume the applicant has considered that potential conflict between the tree canopies and the garden room may arise in the future, requiring clearance pruning, along with potential tree-related nuisance. The future pressure to prune the trees is not a reasonable objection – the canopies are not currently conflicting with the garden room, albeit I hope the applicant has considered the above as it will be taken into account when determining future works to protected trees, should they be required. Shading arcs have not been shown on the plans, but with the garden room being surrounded by trees in the north and east directions, considering light availability is advised.

I note that the existing shed within RPAs, as shown in the TPP, has been stated it has been removed, so not covering demolition within the Arboricultural Report is fine.

With reference to the **Proposed Garden Room, June 2026, Drawing No. 01, Rev C**, I note the elevations do not show the garden room being built 100mm above ground level, so this requires amendment to reflect the foundations demonstrated in the **Arboricultural Report**. The use of ground screws is detailed in the 'base' section and shown on the **Proposed Landscape Plan**, so this is fine. The **Proposed Landscape Plan** also requires amendment to show accurate tree coverage, including the trees to the rear of the garden but omitting the protected tree at 10 Wincroft Road (T7 Lawson Cypress of TPO 247/06), as it is no longer there.

To conclude, I have no objection to the application subject to Condition L7A (compliance the AIA/AMS & TPP) being applied (see wording below) and amendments to the **Proposed Garden Room** plan. Enhancements to the soft landscaping are encouraged as with any development to mitigate the impact, but I will leave you to assess whether it is reasonable to request this.

Please include Condition L7A as follows:

*Protective measures, including ground protection, supervision and working procedures shall be carried out in accordance with the BS5837 – Arboricultural Report, dated August 2026, by David Randall Tree Consultancy, and the associated Tree Constraints and Protection Plan, dated August 2026. Any deviation from the works prescribed or methods agreed in the report will require prior written approval from the Local Planning Authority.*

*REASON: In order to ensure that reasonable measures are taken to safeguard trees in the interests of local amenity and the enhancement of the development itself in accordance with Policy EN14 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.*