

DELEGATED APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Coley Ward

App Ref: PL/25/0974 Householder planning permission

Address: 157 COLEY AVENUE, READING, RG1 6FL

Proposal: Single storey extension to existing garage. Conversion of garage to domestic use

Applicant: Mr Susheel Kumar Tyagi

Received date: 08/07/2025

Target Decision date: 11/09/2025 (agreed extension)

Case Officer: Sian Hickey

1. SITE DESCRIPTION

The application site comprises a three-storey semi-detached property with a detached garage at the side/rear of the application site. The surrounding area is predominantly residential. Berkshire Independent Hospital is located opposite the front of the site.

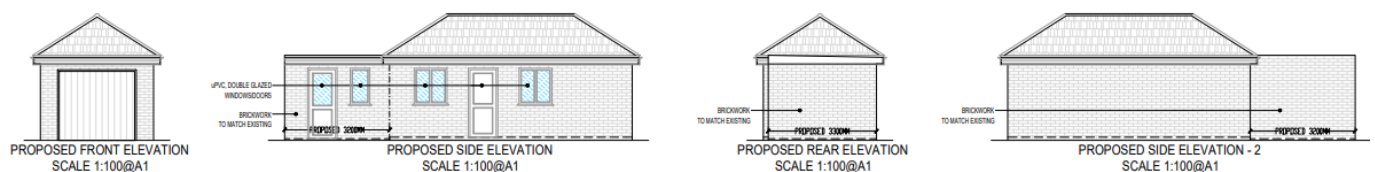
Site visit date: 19th August 2025

Site visit photos:



2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Planning permission is sought to convert the existing garage into habitable space to create a gym/office with a shower room. The proposal also includes extending the existing garage by adding a 3.2m flat roofed extension to the rear of the garage for garden storage.



Plans/documents considered:

Drawing No. 157CA/26062025/REV-B – Existing and Proposed Floor Plans and Elevations, Location and Block Plans

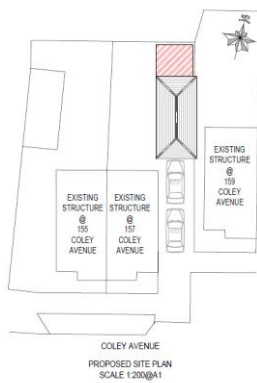
Planning Statement

3. CONSULTATIONS

A site notice was displayed at the front of the property by the case officer on 29th July 2025 for a period of 21 days. No letters of representation have been received at the time of writing this report.

RBC Transport

The loss of the garage will result in the loss of a parking space. Submitted block plan illustrates that 2 parking spaces on tandem formation are proposed (see below extract of submitted plan).



The length of the available space for the proposed parking layout is approximately 8.8m which would not be sufficient to accommodate 2 vehicles in the proposed formation. In accordance with the Councils Parking Standards and Design SPD a parking space should be 5m in length (minimum we could accept would be 4.8M); therefore the minimum length we would accept is 9.6m. No part of a vehicle should overhang on to the footway as this would obstruct pedestrian movement and cause an obstruction.

The existing garage has been provided at 7m x 3m and so complies with the latest standards to ensure that it provides a parking space and therefore the proposal would reduce the number of spaces provided on site, therefore Transport would not support this application as the proposed layout does not allow for the required number of spaces and could lead to on street parking which would not be acceptable.

It should also be noted that the original decision notice for this development states:

7. Vehicle parking in accordance with approved plans

No dwelling shall be occupied until the relevant vehicle parking space(s) for that dwelling has/have been provided in accordance with the approved plan. The space(s) shall thereafter be kept available for parking at all times.

Reason: To ensure that the development is provided with adequate parking facilities in order to reduce the likelihood of roadside parking which could be a danger to other road users in accordance with Core Strategy Policy CS24 and Sites and Detailed Policies document Policy DM12.

4. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

PL/15/1173 - Residential development consisting of 71 residential dwellings (20 apartments) with associated landscaping, open space, parking and access following the demolition of the existing office buildings. (Amended scheme). PERMITTED SUBJECT TO LEGAL AGREEMENT 04/04/2016.

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
National Planning Practice Guidance

Reading Borough Local Plan (2019)

CC7 (Design and the Public Realm)
CC8 (Safeguarding Amenity)
H9 (House Extensions and Ancillary Accommodation)
H10 (Private and Communal Outdoor Space)
TR5 (Car and Cycle Parking and Electric Vehicle)

SPD

Design Guide to House Extensions SPD 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. The submission version of the Local Plan was submitted on 9th May 2025.

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 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 determination of this planning application 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 garage extension is considered acceptable in terms of scale and is considered subservient to the application site. In terms of design, the extension will be brick built, with bricks to match those of the existing garage. The extension would have one door and one window facing into the garden. The extension is at the rear of the site and would be concealed by the existing garage building, the development would therefore not be visible from the street scene.

A garage door will remain in the front elevation of the existing garage building, and therefore, in terms of the impact on the character and appearance to the front of the site, the situation will not be any different to that of the existing.

Other garages within the vicinity have been converted, and therefore this development is not uncommon for the area.

Overall, the proposals are not considered to cause harm to the character of the existing dwelling or the wider area and therefore complies with policies H9 and CC7.

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.

The proposed flat roofed rear extension is single storey in nature and considered appropriate in terms of scale, therefore, it is not considered that the proposal would cause significant detrimental harm to neighbouring amenity.

The neighbour most likely to be affected by the proposal is 159 Coley Avenue, however, the existing garage is already in situ along the shared boundary with this neighbour and the existing structure impinges the line of light from the midpoint of the window of the closest habitable room. The proposed extension is significantly lower than the existing garage and the plans show it would be set off the boundary with this neighbour. Therefore, it is considered that although there may be some additional impact from the

proposal, it is not considered to be significantly different to the existing arrangement, and not so significantly detrimental to warrant refusal on this basis.

With regards to the neighbouring properties at the rear of the site, these houses are located on higher ground, and the proposed extension would not exceed the height of the rear boundary wall and fences. Therefore, there are no harmful amenity impacts envisaged for the occupiers of the properties at the rear.

There is a sufficient distance between the proposed development and number 156 Coley Avenue.

Overall, it is not considered that the proposal would result in any significant amenity concerns with regards to overbearing effects, loss of sunlight/daylight, overlooking or loss of privacy.

A condition is attached to this permission to ensure that the use of the proposed garage extension and the converted garage will remain ancillary to the main dwelling at 157 Coley Avenue.

Transport matters

It is acknowledged that the Transport Officers observations state that the driveway should be a minimum of 9.6m to accommodate two vehicles.

During a site visit carried out by the planning officer on 19th August 2025, it was noted that two cars were parked on the existing driveway with a very minimal overhang onto the pavement (image below).



On balance, given the location of the driveway and the surrounding pavement area, and considering that this is not a through road, and there are nearby parking spaces, it is considered that the existing driveway is adequate to accommodate two vehicles. Additionally, as the proposal does not reduce the size of the garage, future occupants of the property will retain the option to reinstate it for garage use if desired.

In this instance, planning officers are content with the parking provision following the loss of the garage as it is evident that the applicants currently park two cars on the driveway. Whilst acknowledging the Transport observations, planning officers have chosen to take a different approach owing to the specific circumstances of this individual case.

Other matters

The proposals do not affect the roof of the main dwelling so it is unlikely that bats will be affected by the proposals.

No substantial trees fall within 15m of the proposed development.

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 - GRANT

Recommended Conditions:

Time Limit

Materials

Approved Plans

Ancillary Use