

DELEGATED APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Caversham Ward

App Ref: PL/25/1646 Householder planning permission

Address: 78B STAR ROAD, CAVERSHAM, READING, RG4 5BE

Proposal: Conversion of garage to residential use

Applicant: Mr A Crossley

Received date: 17/11/2025

Target Decision date (agreed extension): 30/01/2026

Case Officer: Sian Hickey

1. SITE DESCRIPTION

The application site comprises a mid-terraced property with a pitched roof and an integral garage. The surrounding area is predominantly residential. There is an area of hard standing at the front of the site and a garden at the rear. The property is not listed, nor is it located in a conservation area. The surrounding area is predominantly residential.

Site visit date: 18th December 2025

Site visit photos:



2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Planning permission is sought to convert the existing garage into habitable space to create a family room. The proposal includes removing the garage door and fitting a window with bricks below to match existing.

Plans/documents considered:

Drawing No. 502 B – Location and Block Plans received 21st January 2026

Drawing No. 500 B – Floor Plans and Elevations as Existing received 21st January 2026

Drawing No. 501 – Proposed Floor Plan and Elevations received 17th November 2025

Design Statement received 17th November 2025



3. CONSULTATIONS

A site notice was displayed at the front of the property by the case officer on 18th December 2025 for a period of 21 days. No letters of representation have been received at the time of writing this report.

RBC Transport

The site is located in Zone 2, Primary Core Area, of the Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD. This zone directly surrounds the Central Core and extends to walking distances of 2 kilometres from the centre of Reading.

The dimensions of the existing garage would have complied with the dimensions stated in the submitted plans attached to the decision notice which state 2.5m x 5.3m which are larger than a standard parking space. Condition 6 of the Decision also states:

- 9 The garage(s), hereby permitted, shall be used solely for the garaging of private motor vehicles, and no development, whether or not, permitted by the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995, shall be carried out in such a position as to restrict access to the garage(s). Reason: to enable the Local Planning Authority to control the use of such garages in the interests of amenity and road safety.

Highway authority would need a replacement parking space should the garage be lost. However, the frontage does not appear to be wide enough to accommodate 2 vehicles and there is insufficient length to facilitate a tandem parking arrangement.

Transport do not support this application for the reason stated above.

4. PLANNING HISTORY

PL/21/0408 - Proposed flat roof rear dormer above the existing side/rear single storey element of the property. GRANTED 11/05/2021

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)
TR5 (Car and Cycle Parking and Electric Vehicle)

SPD

Design Guide to House Extensions SPD 2021
Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD 2011

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 proposal does not involve enlarging the footprint of the existing dwelling and, therefore, there are no concerns in terms of the scale of the proposal. Whilst the proposal would alter the appearance of the dwelling slightly, by changing the garage door to a window, it is not considered that the proposal would detract from the original character and appearance of the property to an unacceptable degree. The materials and finishes would match those of the existing. The size, scale and placement of the proposed window is considered appropriate. Due to the small-scale nature of the proposed works, the development is not considered to be harmful to the street scene which is varied in nature.

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.

Due to the nature of the proposal (with no increase in size or scale) 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.

As there are no concerns on amenity grounds, the proposal therefore complies with policies H9 and CC8.

Transport matters

It is noted that the Transport Officer has advised that a replacement parking space should be provided if the garage is to be removed. However, on balance, given the limited size of the existing garage (which does not meet current standards), and its long-term non-use for vehicle parking, the proposal would not result in any additional on-street parking demand, as the existing situation would remain unchanged. The applicant confirmed in an email dated 28/01/2026 that the garage has not been used for parking since they purchased the property in October 2020, and that it is neither practical nor safe to do so.

In this case, planning officers consider the parking arrangements to be acceptable, as there would be no material change to the property's parking provision. While the Transport Officer's observations are acknowledged, planning officers have applied a different judgement based on the specific circumstances of this individual application.

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

Parking