

Planning Applications Committee

07 October 2026



Reading
Borough Council
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Title	PLANNING APPLICATION REPORT
Ward	Tilehurst Ward
Planning Application Reference:	PL/26/0783 Full planning permission
Site Address:	5 CONWY CLOSE, TILEHURST, READING, RG30 4JB
Proposed Development	Change of use from a domestic integral single garage into living accommodation.
Applicant	Reading Borough Council
Report author	Huimin Chen
Deadline:	16 October 2026 (EoT)
Recommendations	Approval with conditions
Conditions	1. <i>TL1 – Time Limit – Three Years</i> 2. <i>AP1 – Approved Plans</i> 3. <i>Materials (to match)</i>
Informatives	1. <i>IF1 – Positive and Proactive Working – approval</i> 2. <i>IF5 – Terms</i> 3. <i>IF7 – Complaints about Construction</i>

1. Executive summary

- 1.1. The proposal is to support the provision of an accessible family accommodation as part of the Council's housing stock. The proposal is considered acceptable in terms of its effect on the character and appearance of the area and the effect on neighbouring amenity.
- 1.2. The proposal is recommended for approval subject to the conditions as outlined above.

2. Introduction and site description

- 2.1. The application seeks full planning permission for the conversion of the internal garage to provide an accessible living room or lounge to create ground floor family space to support accessible family accommodation.
- 2.2. The application is referred to Committee because it has been submitted by the Council's Housing Property Services team.
- 2.3. The application site consists of a 3-storey semi-detached dwellinghouse. The property is part of a small development of council stock properties constructed in 2018, located adjacent to the Thames Valley School, the Meadway Sports Centre and the Avenue Special School. The property has 4 bedrooms along with living accommodation and an internal garage, over 3 floors. The adjoining and neighbouring properties are also council-owned housing stock. The property has existing parking spaces in front of the property.
- 2.4. Location Plan



2.5. Site Photograph



3. The Proposal

- 3.1. The proposal does not include any extended aspect of the original build. The property has an integral garage with an internal door connection. The proposed conversion of the integral garage is to provide an accessible living room to create a ground floor family space. The existing up and over garage door will remain in situ albeit permanently fixed in place with insulated wall panel behind, this will keep the façade unchanged. In addition, an insulated wall panel would also be installed to the north-westerly wall of the existing garage. A 4-pane side window would be installed to the south elevation of the existing

garage to provide natural light to the proposed living room, with a width of approximately 1.8m and overall height of approximately 95cm. The bottom sill of this window would be approximately 1.1m away from the ground floor, while the header height is 2.1m.

3.2. The following plans would be considered:

- Location plan dated and received 12/6/2026.
- Drawing no. 1102 HTA elevations and sections rev P1, as existing, received 12/6/2026.
- Existing floor plan, received 10/7/2026.
- Site location plan, dated 3/1/2023, received 21/7/2026.
- Side elevation drawing, as proposed, received 24/7/2026.
- Plan view of ground floor layout proposal, as proposed, received 24/7/2026.
- Document for parking provision, dated and received 02/09/2026.
- Covering letter, dated 3/1/2023, received 12/6/2026.

4. Planning history

- 4.1. PL/16/1390 - Residential development comprising 57 dwellings, vehicular, cycle and pedestrian access, parking, and hard and soft landscaping and open space at land off Conwy Close. Permitted subject to Legal Agreement, 15/12/2016.
- 4.2. PL/17/1537 – Minor alterations to appearance and layout of planning permission 161390. Agreed 06/12/2017.
- 4.3. PL/18/0179 – Non-material Amendment to 161390 Block 3 to change parking layout and change windows to doors. Agreed 13/04/2018.
- 4.4. PL/24/1212 – Proposed conversion of the integral garage is to provide a wheelchair accessible wetroom and structural works to create an open plan ground floor family space. Approved 07/11/2024.

5. Consultations

5.1. The following consultation responses were received:

RBC Transport Development Control

5.2. Proposal will result in the loss of the garage to provide ancillary accommodation; this will result in the loss of a parking space.

Plans have not been provided illustrating a revised parking layout for 2 vehicles which would be required. Aerial images would appear to suggest that there is adequate width on the front drive to facilitate 2 vehicles; a shared vehicle crossing already is in place.

There are no Transport objections to this application; however, revised plans illustrating 2 parking spaces will be required.

Planning officer's note: Following the submission, on 2 September 2026, of a document for parking provision illustrating two parking spaces to the front of the property, the Transport team confirmed that the proposal is considered acceptable without the need to impose a condition for vehicle parking. It is also evident from the site visit that there is sufficient space for two vehicles to park within the site.

Public/local consultation

5.3. A site notice was displayed near the application site. The 21-day consultation period was from 17 August 2026 to 7 September 2026. No letters of representation have been received.

6. Legal context

6.1. 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) – ‘*proposals should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development*’. However, the NPPF does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making (NPPF policies S3 to S4).

- 6.2. Accordingly, the latest NPPF and the following development plan policies and supplementary planning guidance are relevant:

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2026

- Chapter 14: Achieving Well-Designed Places
 - Policy DP3 – Key Principles for Well-Designed Places
- Chapter 15: Promoting sustainable transport
 - Policy TR4 – Street design, access and parking
- Chapter 17: Pollution, Public Protection and Security
 - Policy P3 – Living Conditions and Pollution

National Planning Practice Guidance 2014 onwards

Reading Borough Council 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 Charging)

CC2 (Sustainable Design and Construction)

Local Plan Update

- 6.3. 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 consultation version of the draft updated version of the Local Plan was published on 6th November 2024.
- 6.4. 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.
- 6.5. Officer advice in respect of the Local Plan policies pertinent to this proposal listed above, is that they remain in accordance with national policy and that the objectives of those policies remain very similar in the draft updated Local Plan. Therefore, they can continue to be afforded weight in the advice given below and are not considered to be ‘out of date’.

7. Appraisal

- 7.1. The main considerations are:

- Character and Appearance
- Residential Amenity
- Transport
- Sustainable Design and Construction

Character and Appearance

- 7.2. 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.
- 7.3. Policy DP3 of National Planning Policy Framework 2026 requires that development proposals should respond to their context (the history, character and features of their site and its setting), so that they integrate with and enhance their surroundings; such as through the arrangement of development plots and buildings, the use of materials and architectural features, and the restoration, reuse and integration of heritage assets.
- 7.4. Officers consider the conversion of the integral garage to provide a ground floor living room to support accessible family accommodation is acceptable. The existing garage door will be retained, meaning the property will have the same look and feel as the adjoining neighbour at 3 Conwy Close and the neighbouring semi-detached properties of the same age and character. Officers consider the proposed window to the south elevation would fit with the existing character and would not disrupt the existing architecture and is therefore acceptable in terms of character and appearance.
- 7.5. The proposal is considered compliant with policies H9 & CC7 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019 and Policy DP3 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2026.

Residential Amenity

- 7.6. Policy H9 states that an extension will be acceptable where it does not result in an overbearing impact on neighbours. 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.
- 7.7. Policy P3 of National Planning Policy Framework 2026 also states that development proposals should be appropriate for their location, taking into account the likely effects (including cumulative effects) of living conditions and the natural environment, whether these effects are on or off-site; and whether this is as a result of the development itself or the product of preexisting conditions in its vicinity.
- 7.8. The proposed window to the west elevation is not considered harmful to residential amenity as it would be directly facing the 1.8m height boundary fencing with No.7 Conwy Close and would not result in loss of privacy to neighbours.
- 7.9. The outlook from the window and the daylight received would be constrained by the boundary fence and adjacent house. However this arrangement cannot be altered and the benefits of providing the additional living accommodation are considered to outweigh any harm to the amenity of occupiers of the existing dwelling.
- 7.10. The proposal is considered compliant with policies H9 & CC8 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019 and Policy P3 of National Planning Policy Framework 2026.

Transport

- 7.11. The Highway Authority was consulted as the proposal includes converting the integral garage. The submitted drawings and site visit confirm that the property benefits from a large block paved driveway offering parking for 2 vehicles. The Highway Authority has no objections.
- 7.12. Officers consider the proposal will be compliant with Policy TR5 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019 and Policy TR4 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2026.

Sustainable Design and Construction

- 7.13. Policy CC2 states that proposals for new development, including the construction of new buildings and the redevelopment and refurbishment of existing building stock, will be acceptable where the design of buildings and site layouts use energy, water, minerals,

materials and other natural resources appropriately, efficiently and with care and take account of the effects of climate change.

- 7.14. Whilst the above policy is not directly applicable to this type of application, officers note that the proposal includes constructing a section of insulated wall behind the garage door façade to help reduce the home's energy consumption.
- 7.15. Officers consider the proposal will be compliant with policy CC2 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

8. Equality implications

- 8.1. Under the Equality Act 2010, Section 149, a public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to—
 - eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
 - advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
 - foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- 8.2. The key equalities protected characteristics include age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation. It is considered that there is no indication or evidence that the protected groups have or will have different needs, experiences, issues, and priorities in relation to this particular application.

9. Health Implications

- 9.1. The proposed development principally involves the conversion of the existing integral garage to provide accessible ground-floor living accommodation. The external appearance of the dwelling would remain largely unchanged. The proposal is not considered to give rise to any adverse implications for physical, mental or social well-being. Rather, the provision of accessible ground-floor living accommodation would improve the accessibility and functionality of the dwelling and is considered to have positive health and well-being implications for its occupants.

10. Conclusion and Planning Balance

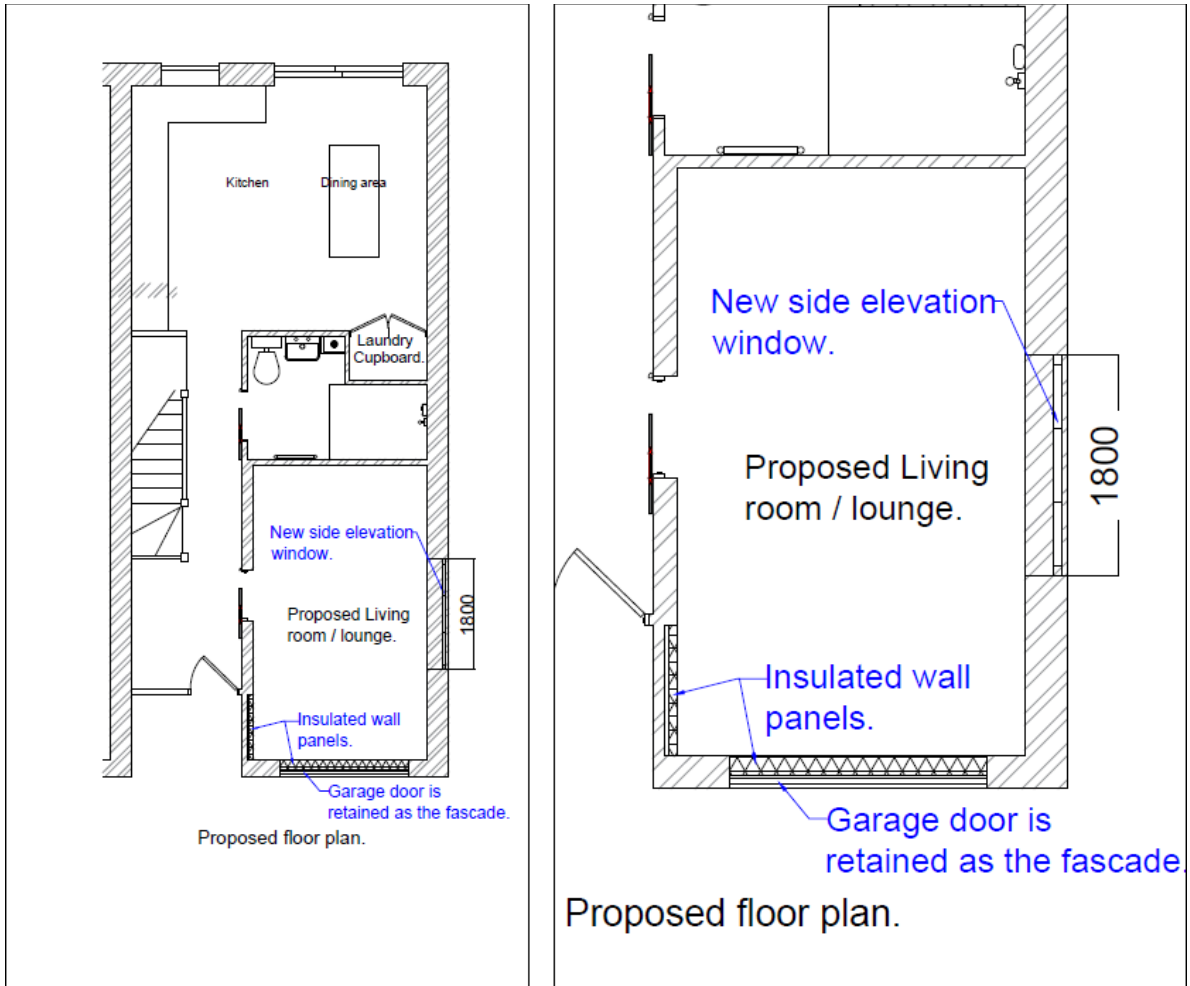
- 10.1. This application is required to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise, as per Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
- 10.2. Any harmful impacts of the proposed development are required to be weighed against the benefits in the context of national and local planning policies, as detailed in the appraisal above. Having gone through this process, officers consider that the proposed garage conversion to provide an accessible ground-floor living room would not result in harm to the living conditions of occupiers of neighbouring houses. The somewhat restricted outlook and daylight serving the new living room is considered to be outweighed by the benefits of improved accessibility and liveability for occupiers of the existing dwelling. The proposals would not adversely affect the character and appearance of the host dwelling or the wider area. As such, this application is recommended for Approval subject to conditions.

Plans & Appendices

Plans



Site Layout Plan



Proposed Side (South) Elevation – No Changes to Other Elevations

