

In Solihull and many other UK towns, homeowners face a tricky dilemma: extend their property or move? The **Solihull price gap**—the ever-widening difference between existing home prices and the cost of a new house—is pushing more families to invest in extensions rather than face the uncertainty and expense of moving.

One popular option is converting a garage into additional living space. But if you live on a street with **no parking** or restricted **off street parking**, does a garage conversion backfire when it comes to resale? Let's dive into what buyers in Solihull prefer, what the *Office for National Statistics (ONS)* says about local price trends, and how to weigh the costs and benefits sensibly.

Understanding the Context: Solihull's Unique Housing Landscape

Before hammering those garage doors into walls, it's essential to grasp why many Solihull homeowners hesitate to sell and move:

- **Price Disparity:** The gap between what you could sell your current home for and the price of a similar or better property often means extending is financially more attractive than trading up.
- **Moving Costs:** Stamp duty, agency fees, legal costs, and surveyor charges add thousands to relocating—a cost that extended space can negate.
- **Planning and Neighbourhood Concerns:** Solihull is a patchwork of planning zones, some with conservation rules restricting new builds or expansions.

The *Office for National Statistics (ONS)* recently updated their May 2026 local house price breakdowns, confirming Solihull's house prices remain robust but expensive. Buyers are cautious and have clear expectations—especially around parking and outdoor space.

Garage Conversion Backfire: How Does Parking Affect Buyer Preferences in Solihull?

Garage conversions offer a tempting way to add space without increasing your property's footprint. However, Solihull buyers often have strong **off street parking expectations**. Since many local roads have limited or no parking, losing a garage can mean:

1. **Less secure or convenient parking options for homeowners and visitors.**
2. **Perceptions of parking stress, especially if on-street parking is restricted or heavily used.**
3. **A potential negative signal on resale, particularly if there's nowhere else to park safely.**

Buyer Preferences Solihull trend towards properties with at least one dedicated parking space, especially in areas without plentiful street parking. This preference can influence how much prospective buyers value a property and how much they might offer.

Several Checkatrade member tradespeople specialising in Solihull extensions have reported anecdotal evidence of "garage conversion backfire" scenarios—where the loss of off street parking outweighed the value added by the extra space.

What Solihull Council Tools Say About Garage Conversions

If you're considering this route, use local authority tools to assess feasibility and constraints:

- Solihull Council pre-application enquiry: Understand planning advice before committing.

- Planning application and permitted development checks: Confirm whether your garage conversion can be classed as permitted development or requires formal planning permission. This depends on size, road proximity, and property type.

Using these tools can highlight any planning or conservation area restrictions that might impact design, timelines, and costs—something often overlooked when budgeting.

Extension Costs: Single vs Two-Storey Options

When weighing a garage conversion versus an extension, it helps to sanity-check the costs per square metre. From my 12 years in residential estimation, here's the broad cost breakdown for Solihull in 2026 prices:

Type of Extension	Approximate Cost per m2 (Including VAT)	Typical Size Range (m2)	Key Considerations
Garage Conversion (Internal)	£1,200 – £1,600	10 – 20	Labour to insulate, flooring, walls, windows, wiring; no external foundations.
Single-Storey Rear Extension	£1,700 – £2,200	15 – 30	Foundations, roof, structural work; offers genuine space gain.
Two-Storey Extension	£2,400 – £3,000	20 – 40	Higher cost and planning risk; significant space increase and value add.

Note: Always add a 10-15% contingency to budgets to cover unknowns. Prices here include VAT—a must-check detail many quotes neglect, skewing real cost expectations.



Moving Costs That Add No Space—and Why They Hurt Your Pocket

Many homeowners underestimate the costs of moving, which solihullobserver.co can make extensions more appealing than they appear at first glance. Key costs include:



- **Stamp Duty Land Tax (SDLT):** In Solihull, this can easily reach thousands on a family home priced over £250,000.
- **Estate agent fees:** Typically 1-2% of the sale price.
- **Legal fees and surveys:** £1,000 – £2,000 depending on complexity.
- **Removal costs:** £500 – £1,000 based on volume and distance.

All these add up to tens of thousands of pounds with no actual increase in living space. Given the *ONS's* local house price reports, many Solihull families find it more financially prudent to extend, provided they don't lose critical amenities like parking.

What People Forget to Budget For in Garage Conversions and Extensions

Besides the obvious building and material costs, here's a quick sanity check of often forgotten expenses:

- **Planning and application fees:** Check the current Solihull Council fees; these vary by project size.
- **Architect or design fees:** For smooth planning applications and optimal space usage.
- **Utility upgrades:** Conversions sometimes require improving electrical or plumbing systems, pushing costs up.
- **Landscaping or driveway works:** Especially important if parking options change.
- **Temporary accommodation:** If your home is partially unusable during works.
- **VAT clarity:** Confirm whether builders' quotes include VAT—it can add 20% if missed.

Using Local Platforms and Trades to Get the Best Done

If you're serious about assessing whether a garage conversion is right for you—both financially and in terms of resale value—platforms like **MyJobQuote** and **Checkatrade** provide curated lists of vetted Solihull tradespeople. This ensures you get competitive, transparent quotes, including VAT and contingencies, backed by reviews from local customers.

Checking these quotes properly against the cost benchmarks above, and comparing with costs for single or two-storey extensions, helps avoid nasty surprises and “garage conversion backfire” regrets.

Final Thoughts: Balancing Space, Parking, and Buyer Appeal in Solihull

In roads with no parking, converting your garage to living space is not always the masterstroke it seems. Losing off street parking might undermine your property’s appeal, which in Solihull’s market is a critical buyer preference. However, if you can mitigate parking loss—say, by creating a driveway or ensuring permit parking options—you may benefit from the improved space without hampering resale.

Remember to use Solihull Council’s planning tools early, budget realistically (including VAT and contingencies), and understand moving costs that add no actual space. Tap into local verified tradeship via Checkatrade and MyJobQuote to get trustworthy advice and quotes.

Ultimately, whether a garage conversion backfires depends on your street’s parking situation, the scale of space gain, and how buyers balance these factors. Weighing your options alongside ONS latest price insights and local buyer sentiment will help you make a clear, confident choice.