

If you've been weighing up whether to move or extend your home in Solihull, you're not alone. With house prices on the rise and the local property market evolving rapidly, many homeowners are keen to add space rather than uproot their lives. But as you might have discovered, permitted development rights — the “fast-track” way to extend without full planning permission — are restricted in several parts of Solihull. This blog post unpacks why these restrictions exist, what they mean for your extension plans, and how to navigate the process smoothly.

The Solihull Price Gap: Why Extend Instead of Move?

According to the Office for National Statistics (ONS), the Solihull housing market remains relatively expensive compared with neighbouring boroughs and the wider West Midlands. The **May 2026 local house price breakdown** reveals a significant price gap: moving to a larger property often means a much higher upfront cost and the typical expenses associated with buying and selling.

- Stamp duty and conveyancing fees can easily add thousands to moving costs.
- Estate agent fees, mortgage arrangement fees, and removal costs further increase out-of-pocket expenses.
- Higher price volatility and uncertainty can make moving a stressful decision.

In contrast, extending your existing home allows you to add vital square footage and tailor your living space to your needs—often at a fraction of the cost of moving. But whether you can benefit from the convenience of permitted development rights varies greatly depending on where you live in Solihull.

What Is Permitted Development and Why Is It Restricted?

Permitted development (PD) rights grant you certain freedoms to alter your home without a full planning application. This is intended to streamline minor changes, such as single-storey rear extensions or loft conversions, provided the work meets specified conditions.

However, in Solihull, parts of the borough have **Article 4 directions** in place. These directions remove or restrict permitted development rights, often to preserve the character of conservation areas or to manage local infrastructure demands. As a result, even seemingly modest projects might require a full *planning application*, complete with fees, plans, and potentially longer wait times.

Conservation Area Permitted Development

Solihull boasts several conservation areas—districts recognised for their historic or architectural significance. Properties within these zones experience tighter controls to prevent unsympathetic changes that might erode their special character.

1. Permitted development rights for extensions and other alterations can be limited or removed entirely.
2. External materials, design, and scale are scrutinised more closely.
3. Even replacement windows or small rear extensions might trigger the need for planning permission.

If your home lies within a conservation area, always double-check with Solihull Council's pre-application enquiry service before committing to building work.

Article 4 Direction: What Does It Mean for Homeowners?

An **Article 4 direction** is a local government tool that removes specific permitted development rights in targeted areas. In Solihull, these have been deployed strategically in neighbourhoods where unplanned extensions could undermine local amenity or strain services.



When an Article 4 direction applies, even routine projects that once slid under the radar now need formal approval. Homeowners should prepare for:

- Submitting a full planning application with detailed drawings and heritage assessments if required.
- Longer decision times and possible need for amendments following council feedback.
- Potential objections from neighbours or conservation officers.

Failing to obtain necessary permission can lead to costly enforcement actions and even demolition orders.

Extension Costs by Size and Type in Solihull

Understanding costs upfront is vital. Thanks to estimates from tradespeople aggregated on MyJobQuote and reviews on Checkatrade, we have a clearer view of typical extension costs in Solihull.

Extension Type	Approximate Size (sqm)	Average Cost (£ per sqm)	Total Estimated Cost (£)	VAT Included?
Single-storey rear extension	20-30	£1,800 - £2,300	£36,000 - £69,000	Yes (confirm with builder)
Two-storey side extension	40-60	£2,200 - £2,800	£88,000 - £168,000	Yes (confirm with builder)

Important note: Always sanity-check quotes based on cost per square metre and confirm whether VAT is included. Some builders add VAT on top, which can push your budget higher.

What People Forget to Budget For

- **Planning application fees:** In Solihull, a householder planning application typically costs around £206, but larger projects or conservation-sensitive work may incur higher fees.
- **Contingency funds:** Always allocate 10-15% extra for unexpected site issues or specification changes.
- **Party wall agreements:** If your extension affects shared walls, legal agreements and surveys may be necessary.

- **Professional fees:** Architect, structural engineer, and building control fees often add 8-12% to your total project cost.
- **Landscaping and external works:** Driveways, fencing, and garden regrading can unexpectedly inflate your budget.

Moving Costs That Add No Space: Why Extending Could Be More Cost-Effective

When considering moving, it's easy to overlook fees that add up without increasing your usable living space. These include:

- **Stamp Duty Land Tax (SDLT):** For purchases above £250,000, SDLT rates escalate quickly. A £400,000 home costs around £10,000 in SDLT alone.
- **Estate agent fees:** Typically 1-3% of sale price, meaning a £300,000 home costs £3,000-9,000 in fees.
- **Mortgage arrangement and valuation fees:** Can total £1,000 or more.
- **Removal costs:** Often exceeding £1,000, particularly for larger households.
- **Stamp duty on a new property, plus fees to sell your current one.**

For many Solihull homeowners, these costs can easily match or surpass a modest extension budget. Extending your home means avoiding these one-off expenses and gaining tailor-made space, making it a financially savvy decision.

Navigating Solihull's Planning Landscape: Useful Tools and Resources

Before you rush into building work, here are some crucial tools and services [mybuilder day rate birmingham](#) to ensure your project complies with local regulations:

- Solihull Council pre-application enquiry: Get informal advice and feedback from planning officers before submitting a formal application.
- Planning application portal: Submit your application online and track progress.
- Permitted development checks: Use the national Planning Portal tool to see if your planned extension qualifies for PD rights.
- Checkatrade and MyJobQuote: Find vetted local tradespeople and get competitive quotes.

Final Thoughts

Permitted development rights offer a convenient route for many Solihull homeowners to extend their properties—but only if you're not in a conservation area or subject to an Article 4 direction. These restrictions are in place to protect the borough's unique character and infrastructure but often mean a full planning application is required, with all its associated costs and timescales.

With rising local house prices and significant moving costs that don't add space, opting to extend can be a cost-effective, lifestyle-friendly solution—provided you understand the planning constraints and budget properly. Start by using Solihull Council's pre-application enquiry and trusted trade platforms like MyJobQuote and Checkatrade to get your project off on the right footing.

Remember: always sanity-check your costs per square metre, factor in the hidden extras, and confirm whether VAT and fees are included in quotes. Ignoring these details can turn a straightforward extension into a financial headache.

Good luck with your Solihull home project!

