
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 3 December 2019

by J Gibson BUEP MPIA

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 13 January 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/D5120/D/19/3236709

8 Ridgeway West, Sidcup DA15 8SD

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr W Knight against the decision of London Borough of Bexley Council.
 - The application Ref 19/01244/FUL, dated 23 May 2019, was refused by notice dated 18 July 2019.
 - The development proposed is a part single part two storey rear extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a part single part two storey rear extension at 8 Ridgeway West, Sidcup DA15 8SD in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 19/01244/FUL, dated 23 May 2019, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin no later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans: Location Plan and Existing Site Layout (Dwg No 8WR.001 PL01, dated May 2019); Context Image and Proposed Site Layout (Dwg No 8WR.001 PL02, dated May 2019); Existing Plans and Elevations (Dwg No 8WR.001 PL03, dated May 2019); Proposed Plans and Elevations (Dwg No 8WR.001 PL04).
 - 3) The external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall be constructed using external materials that match the existing materials and finished appearance of the original building.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are the effect of the proposed development on:
 - the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the surrounding area; and
 - the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers at 10 Ridgeway West with regard for outlook and light.

Reasons

Character and appearance

3. The appeal site is a terrace dwelling located on the northern side of Ridgeway West. The host dwelling is located mid-terrace and forms a terrace row of four dwellings. The street scene and the surrounding area are characterised by residential development which predominantly present a uniform pattern of terrace and semi-detached dwellings with long narrow rear gardens.
4. During my site visit I observed that the rear elevation of dwellings facing Ridgeway West had greater variation than from the street scene. The majority of visible dwellings benefitted from a rear extension, with differing designs, scales and mass at both the ground and first floor levels. Whilst varied, the extensions I observed maintained a subordinate and complimentary relationship to their host dwellings and neighbouring properties.
5. The appeal proposal appropriately responds to the surrounding character and appearance of neighbouring properties by continuing the design, scale and mass of nearby rear extensions. Specifically, the proposal would continue the built extent established by the neighbouring rear extension at 6 Ridgeway West at the ground floor level. The proposal would also achieve a more subordinate extension at the first floor level, to protect the living conditions of the occupants at 10 Ridgeway West.
6. I note that the depth of the proposed ground floor extension, and the roof design and setback of the proposed first floor extension from the common boundary with No 10 would not comply with the prescribed criteria in the Council's Design and Development Control Guideline 2 (DDCG 2) – Extensions to Houses (adopted 2004). Despite this, I am satisfied that the proposal has been designed in response to the established characteristics of the terrace row and the wider area, whilst protecting the living conditions of neighbouring occupants, consistent with the overarching principles of the DDCG 2.
7. I note the Council's representations on the difference between rear extensions on end of terrace dwellings compared to mid-terrace dwellings in the area. However, I observed examples of similar first floor extensions on mid-terrace dwellings during my site visit, along Ridgeway West and on surrounding streets. Notwithstanding this, in my judgement the proposed first floor extension would not equate to an unsympathetic addition to the host dwelling and terrace row, nor overdevelopment of the appeal site as suggested.
8. Accordingly, the proposal for a part single and part two storey rear extension would not harm the character and appearance of the host dwelling or surrounding area. It would therefore comply with Policies ENV39 and H9 of the Bexley Unitary Development Plan (adopted 2004) (UDP), and the associated DDCG 2 – Extensions to Houses (adopted 2004). These policies and guideline seek, amongst other things, to ensure that extensions to houses achieve good design which compliments the existing character and appearance of host dwellings and the surrounding area.

Living conditions

9. The proposed rear extension at both the ground and first floor levels would be located along the common boundary shared with No 10. No 10 adjoins the appeal site to the west and does not currently benefit from any form of rear extensions.
10. The Council have made specific reference to a bathroom window at No 10 being affected by the proposed rear extension on the appeal site. I note this concern, however the degree of outlook experienced from this window would already be limited by virtue of its design and intended function for privacy within the bathroom. Similarly, the level of daylight experienced by any window on the rear elevation of No 10 would be limited by virtue of the south facing orientation of the terrace row.
11. Whilst I note the scale, mass and proximity of the proposed rear extension, it remains consistent with the surrounding character and preserves a 45 degree field of view from the habitable windows of No 10. As such, I do not consider the proposal to result in any material harm as described by the Council.
12. Accordingly, the proposal for a part single and part two storey rear extension would not harm the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers at No 10 with regard for outlook and light. It would therefore comply with Policies CS01 and CS06 of the Bexley Core Strategy (adopted 2012), Policies ENV39 and H9 of the Bexley UDP (adopted 2004), and the associated DDCG 2 – Extensions to Houses (adopted 2004). These policies and guideline seek, amongst other things, to ensure that extensions to houses achieve good design whilst protecting the living conditions of occupants on neighbouring properties.

Conditions

13. The appeal is allowed subject to the standard three year time limit condition. It is necessary that the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans, for the avoidance of doubt and in the interest of certainty. A condition requiring the external surfaces of the development to match the existing building is necessary to preserve the character and appearance of the host dwelling and surrounding area. These conditions comply with advice in the Planning Practice Guidance and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Conclusion

14. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

J Gibson

INSPECTOR