The Planning Inspectorate

# Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 27 September 2022

**by J White BA (Hons) MA MRTPI**

**an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State**

**Decision date: 12 October 2022**

**Appeal Ref: APP/P0119/D/22/3302524**
**2 Ridgeway, Coalpit Heath, South Gloucestershire BS36 2PP**

- 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 Miss Hannah Gilchrist against the decision of South Gloucestershire Council.
- The application Ref P22/00689/HH, dated 9 February 2022, was refused by notice dated 13 April 2022.
- The development proposed is "single storey extension on existing ground floor kitchen and garage to provide bedroom space to the current 2 bedroom dwelling".

## Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed insofar as it relates to the first floor southeast side extension.

2. The appeal is allowed insofar as it relates to the first floor northwest side extension and planning permission is granted for the proposed first floor northwest side extension at 2 Ridgeway, Coalpit Heath, South Gloucestershire BS36 2PP in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref P22/00689/HH, dated 9 February 2022, and the plans submitted with it, so far as relevant to that part of the development hereby permitted and subject to the following conditions:

    1) The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this decision.

    2) The first floor side extension on the northwest elevation shall be implemented in accordance with the following plans:
    i) Site location plan
    ii) 00761 A – Existing floor plans
    iii) 00762 A – Floor plans proposed
    iv) 00763 A – South East and North East elevations existing
    v) 00764 A – South West and North West elevations existing
    vi) 00765 A – South West and North West elevations proposed
    vii) 00766 A – South East and North East elevations proposed
    viii) Block plan

    3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the extension hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.

## Preliminary Matters

3. The description of development, as stated on the application form, is set out in the banner heading above. The Council, on the decision notice, has described the development as the erection of first floor side extensions to form additional living accommodation. For the sake of clarity, this more accurately describes the proposal and the Council dealt with the development on this basis, and, accordingly, so have I.

4. I have taken the address in the banner heading from the planning application form. It is however noted that the site address on the householder planning appeal form also includes "Ridge Cottage" as the property name.

5. The proposed development relates to two separate extensions to the dwelling; one to either side at first floor level. The planning application received a split decision. The Council's decision notice does not explicitly say what element it has approved, although it is implicit given that the southeast side extension has been refused. Notwithstanding that, it is clear from the submissions that the appeal is only being made in respect of the southeast extension. However, as under s79(1)(b) of the 1990 Act, I may deal with the application as if it had been made to me in the first instance, i.e., the whole proposal is before me, and I am not restricted to dealing with only the elements in dispute.

6. Whilst I have considered the proposed northwest side extension, I have no basis to come to a different conclusion to the Council as to its acceptability. As such, I have focused my reasoning on the proposed southeast side extension. In this regard I am satisfied that the two parts of the proposed development comprising the southeast and northwest side extensions are clearly severable, both physically and functionally.

## Main Issue

7. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development upon the character and appearance of the existing building and the surrounding area.

## Reason

8. The appeal site is a two-storey detached dwelling positioned within a corner plot in a predominantly residential area. It has an M shaped roof over a central double span two storey section. A single storey element wraps around the front and the two sides of the central section.

9. The roof of the proposed southeast extension would have an asymmetrical design with a shallower roof pitch to the rear slope. This provides a deep single gable end that contrasts with the narrower gable ends of the existing building, and the proposed rear roof slope would sit higher than, and jar with, the valley roof form of the host building.

10. As such, despite the use of sympathetic materials, the form and massing of the proposed southeast extension would be at odds with the host building. As was observed on my site visit, the extension, whilst to one side, would be visible from the street to the southeast. From here the proposed southeast side extension would read as being at odds with the character of the host building and it would appear as an unduly dominant addition that would excessively diminish the character and appearance of the building.

11. The appellant has put to me that there are a variety of housing styles and roof designs locally, including asymmetrical roofs with varying degrees of roof pitch. However, from observations made on my site visit, such designs were complementary in terms of form, design and appearance to the relevant host buildings.

12. I have had regard to the appellant's suggestion that the faces of the extension could be clad in tiles to reduce its appearance. However, this is not the proposal before me and I do not have plans and details for cladding to allow me to properly consider such a proposal. In any case, it would be unlikely to overcome my fundamental concerns relating to the form and massing of the proposal.

13. Accordingly, I conclude on the main issue that the proposed first floor southeast side extension would harm the character and appearance of the existing building and the surrounding area. As such, regarding this issue, the development would fail the requirements of Policy CS1 of the South Gloucestershire Local Plan: Core Strategy and Policy PSP38 of the South Gloucestershire Local Plan: Policies, Sites and Places Plan, which amongst other things seek to ensure development respects the character and distinctiveness of the site and its surroundings. The development would also be contrary to the guidance within the South Gloucestershire Council Householder Design Guide, which supports principles of the aforementioned Local Plan policies.

*Other Matters*

14. I accept that the scheme has been carefully considered in relation to improving the energy efficiency of the dwelling and delivering additional living space that the appellant requires to meet family needs, as well as meeting the functional needs within the space proposed. I also acknowledge that the appellant considers that the proposal to extend and improve the quality of the existing roof is the most viable option. However, these matters do not outweigh my overriding concerns relating to the effect of the proposed southeast side extension upon the character and appearance of the building and the surrounding area.

15. I note that the appellant was not able to discuss the potential for an amended proposal with the Council before the application was determined. However, I also note that the appellant has since engaged in discussions with the Council to consider potential alternative designs. Notwithstanding this, I have determined the appeal on its merits based on the proposal before me relating to the plans upon which the Council made its decision.

16. The appellant highlights that the neighbours have not raised concern. However, I do not find that the lack of objection from neighbouring occupiers is sufficient to outweigh the overriding harm that I have found would be caused to the character and appearance of the existing building and the surrounding area.

**Conditions**

17. In respect of the proposed first floor northwest side extension, in addition to the standard time limit condition, I have specified the approved plans in the interest of certainty. In order to protect the character and appearance of the area, I have also imposed a condition requiring that materials to be used in the construction of the extension shall match those of the existing building. These

conditions are consistent with those that the Council has intended to attach in their decision notice relating to the first floor northwest side extension.

**Conclusion**

18. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal should be allowed insofar as it relates to the first floor northwest side extension, but the proposed first floor southeast side extension would fail to accord with the development plan as a whole, such that, the appeal in that regard should be dismissed.

*J White*

INSPECTOR