



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 14 May 2024

by Thomas Courtney BA(Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 31 MAY 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/G5180/D/24/3338341

153 Ridgeway Drive, Bromley, BR1 5DB

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr R DeSilva against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Bromley.
 - The application Ref is DC/23/03952/FULL6.
 - The development proposed is a single-storey rear, double-storey side extension, loft conversion and internal reconfiguration.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The Council's decision notice and the appeal form describe the development as follows: 'Demolition of garage to construct a single storey rear extension, double storey side extension, loft conversion with front/side rooflights and side and rear dormers and elevational alterations'. This is a more accurate description of the proposed development and I have determined the appeal on this basis.
3. The appellant also included the phrase 'This is a resubmission of application: DC/23/02911/FULL6' in their description of proposed works on their application form. This phrase is superfluous as it does not describe an act of development.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of 153 Ridgeway Drive and the surrounding area.

Reasons

5. The appeal site comprises a two-storey semi-detached dwelling which features a single storey side garage and a hipped roof. Ridgeway Drive is mostly characterised by semi-detached properties although there are also some detached dwellings as well as short blocks of terraced dwellings. The pattern of development on the side of the street within which the appeal site is located has a strong degree of consistency as it is typified by dwellings with linked single storey side garages. This creates a harmonious sense of spaciousness between the houses. Furthermore, the extensions in the area are subservient to their host dwellings.
6. The proposed two-storey side extension would have a slightly lower roof ridge line than the main roof and would be only marginally stepped back from the

front elevation. In light of this, it would not be subservient. Whilst the proposed roof form and pitch would match the existing, maintaining a degree of symmetry, the extension would appear bulky and dominant.

7. There are other side dormers visible on Ridgeway Drive, however, these appear to have been constructed within original roof slopes rather than within roof extensions. The side dormer would add further visual bulk to the roof and would be read as an incongruous addition.
8. There would be a 1 metre gap between the side extension and the common boundary with the neighbouring dwelling at No 151. However, the depth and width of the side extension at first floor level, and the amount of roofscape proposed would be disproportionate and out of character with the surrounding context. It would reduce the visual gap between the appeal dwelling and the neighbouring property, thus eroding the pleasant sense of spaciousness that characterises the street scene.
9. Furthermore, the loss of the side garage would disrupt the cohesive pattern of development that is distinctive in this part of Ridgeway Drive. The appellant states there have been other garage conversions in the vicinity. However, these developments either lie some distance away from the appeal site or are more discreet in appearance being only single storey in height. On this basis, I do not find these other developments have materially altered the character of the area nor are they directly comparable to the appeal scheme.
10. The development would harm the character and appearance of 153 Ridgeway Drive and the surrounding area. It would conflict with Policies D1 and D4 of the London Plan (2021), and Policies 6 and 37 of the Bromley Local Plan (2019) which, together, seek to ensure proposals are of a high standard of design and positively contribute to the existing street scene. Policy 6 specifically states that residential extensions should complement the host dwelling and respect space and gaps between buildings. The development would also not accord with Policy DG5 of the Urban Design Guide - Supplementary Planning Document (2023) which, amongst other things, seeks to ensure that extensions respond to character by adopting an appropriate design approach and are subservient in scale.

Other Matters

11. The reasons for refusal do not refer to any adverse impacts on the amenity of neighbours and the highways officer raised no objection to the loss of the garage for parking. An absence of harm with regards to these matters is a neutral factor that would not lend any weight in support of the appeal.

Conclusion

12. The proposal conflicts with the development plan and the material considerations do not indicate that the appeal should be decided other than in accordance with it.
13. For the reasons given above the appeal should be dismissed.

Thomas Courtney

INSPECTOR