



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 4 April, 2025

by A.Graham BA(hons) MAued IHBC

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 08 May 2025.

Appeal Ref: APP/C4615/D/25/3359573

39 Redlake Drive, Stourbridge DY9 0RX

- 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 Bal Singh against the decision of Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council.
 - The application Ref is: P24/0887.
 - The application is for first floor side/rear extension with rear balcony.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal upon the character and appearance of the area.

Procedural Matter

3. The description of development used in the heading above differs from that used on the original application form and instead is that used by the Council on their Decision Notice that I consider better reflects the nature of the development proposed.
4. Since the determination of this application a revised National Planning Policy Framework (The Framework) was published on 12 December 2024 (updated 7 February 2025) whose main focus was not directly relevant to this appeal. Nevertheless, I have determined this appeal in accordance with the revised provisions within the Framework.

Reasons

5. The appeal property is a two storey detached house of red brick. The property is of three bays with a linear single storey double garage extending the side and is set back within its own front garden and driveway setting. The property is of a large scale suburban scale similar to many on the surrounding estate roads. I saw on my site visit that although there is a variety of architectural styles nearby, there is a general consistency in terms of architectural treatment that is typical of loosely Arts and Crafts inspired late 20th century residential development of this type. As a result, many houses sport Mock Tudor features such as exposed timberwork and simple, well proportioned gables. I also noted

the spaciousness between and around dwellings that contribute to the strong landscape led backdrop to many properties.

6. The proposal before me seeks permission to build over the existing single storey double garage so as to create two extra bedrooms to the property. The scheme would present a strong gable to the front and would partially set back behind the front façade of the principal elevation. The proposed gable would be rendered with a single standard window prior to a generous glazed element that would extend up to the ridge of the new gable. To the rear the gable would be similarly glazed but would be set back from the existing rear ground floor so as to create a balcony.
7. In assessing this proposal I am aware of the Council's Urban Design Policy S6 of the Dudley Borough Development Strategy which reflects the Framework in its desire to seek high quality new development which is responsive to the character and appearance of an area. This is reflected in Policy L1 as well as within the council's residential Design Guide SPD that emphasises the need for development to be related and often subservient to the host property.
8. As noted above, the property is a very wide house already, as are several of its neighbours. This enables the visual break in the built development over the existing single storey double garage to be all the more noticeable and important. It is over this single storey structure for instance that trees can be seen and this break provides a positive glimpse to landscape beyond.
9. Through this proposal however this gap between dwellings would be largely blocked and the result, when seen in the context of the appeal property and its neighbours, would be of a relative linear mass of development relieved only by the large coniferous type trees between this site and its neighbour at number 41. This would constitute a harmful increase in first floor built form along this stretch of Redlake Drive.
10. Further to this the proposed gable would lack the finesse of other examples nearby being of a relatively poor proportion that fails to respond effectively to the wider context of the area. This proportion is made worse by the inclusion of an adjacent window next to the frontage gable which would create a highly unbalanced appearance overall. Ultimately, although the glazed gable aesthetic could be made to work in such an extension, the overall design is poorly related to its context, neither would the extension appear subservient simply due to it being slightly set back, indeed, the extension would have the effect of dominating this front elevation through its overall form, glazed appearance and materials.

Other Matters

11. The Appellant has advanced a fall back position with regards the potential for the site to be developed under Permitted Development rights as adopted by the Council. Although I have considered the potential of this occurring it does not alter the fact that the proposal would represent a poor design response. Moreover, any proposed scheme under the Local Development Order (LDO) would preclude some important elements of this scheme including the proposed materials and the balcony to the rear. In weighing up the likelihood of such a scheme advancing I give this some weight, however it does not change the fact

that such a solution would present a poor design response for the reasons that I have identified above.

12. Ultimately, although there is a potential solution to create an extension here that is of good design, the proposal before me would not contribute in a positive manner to the character and appearance of the area and it would be contrary to the above development plan policies aswell as those aspirations for good design as advanced in the Council's Urban Design and Residential Design Guide SPD and the Framework. As such this appeal must fail.

Conclusion

13. As such, for the reasons given above, and taking into account of all other matters raised, I dismiss the appeal.

A Graham

INSPECTOR