



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 31 July 2025

by **P Burley BA (Hons) MPhil MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 5 September 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/T5720/W/25/3366867

26 Ridgeway Place, Wimbledon, London SW19 4EP

- 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 Alex Liu against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Merton.
 - The application Ref is 24/P2353.
 - The development proposed is described as 'demolition of existing dwelling for replacement dwelling including basement'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. Since the appeal application was determined, the Council has adopted a new local plan – the Merton Local Plan (November 2024) (MLP). I must determine this appeal in accordance with the policy in force at the time of my decision. Before determining this appeal I sought the views of the main parties in respect of this change in circumstances.

Main Issues

3. The main issues are:
 - the effect of the appeal scheme on the living conditions of the existing occupiers of 24 Ridgeway Place with specific regard to outlook; and
 - the effect of the appeal scheme on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

Living Conditions

4. The appellant has referred to a previous appeal decision in relation to the appeal site, noting that this lends support to the appeal scheme. It has also stated that a recently-approved development at 22 Ridgeway Place has a similar depth to the appeal scheme and that there is no reason to treat the scheme for 26 Ridgeway Place any differently, I have not been provided with details of those schemes to enable me to make an informed comparison. In any event, each development proposal must be considered on its own merits.
5. Ridgeway Place slopes downward from north-west to south-east and 24 Ridgeway Place is at a lower level than the appeal site. The appeal scheme would extend beyond the rear elevation of, and would step back away from, 24 Ridgeway Place

such that it would not result in a harmful effect in terms of daylight, sunlight or privacy.

6. Even with this step-back the bulk of the appeal scheme, combined with its higher elevation than and proximity to 24 Ridgeway Place, would result in a dominating and overbearing presence which would be harmful to the living conditions of the occupants of 24 Ridgeway Place. Therefore, I consider that the appeal scheme conflicts with MLP Policy D12.3 which seeks to minimise the impacts of developments on their surroundings, including in terms of outlook.

Character and Appearance

7. In relation to this reason for refusal the appellant has again referred to the development at 22 Ridgeway Place, arguing that it is more prominent than the appeal scheme and has a larger height, bulk and massing. Notwithstanding the different elevation of that site, the absence from the appeal submission of any information in relation to this scheme prevents me from making any comparison.
8. Ridgeway Place is characterised by a mixture of detached and semi-detached dwellinghouses in a range of styles and materials. The architectural style and materials proposed in the appeal scheme would be complementary to this context.
9. However, the scale and massing of the appeal scheme would be clearly at odds with its surroundings. It would be visually prominent when viewed from the south-east along Ridgeway Place. In closer range views, the depth of its south-eastern elevation would be clearly apparent in the gap between the appeal site and 24 Ridgeway Place, serving to emphasise the contrast in size and the visual dominance of the appeal scheme rather than displaying a domestic scale. Therefore, the appeal scheme conflicts with MLP Policy D12.3 which says that developments should follow a design-led approach that responds positively to the site's context and character.

Other Matters

10. The appellant has noted that the appeal scheme would incorporate measures to reduce energy consumption and minimise carbon emissions by using energy-efficient technologies, materials and storage systems. However, MLP Policy CC2.2 would require the appeal scheme to demonstrate compliance with the Mayor of London's net-zero carbon target in any event. Therefore, I consider that only a very small amount of positive weight should be attached to this consideration.
11. The appellant is also proposing a sustainable drainage system. The requirement for sustainable drainage systems in MLP Policy F15.9 relates only to major developments. As the appeal scheme is a minor development and therefore falls outside of the scope of this policy requirement, I attach a small amount of positive weight to the appellant's proposal which would be an environmental benefit.

Planning Balance

12. The appeal scheme involves the replacement of an existing dwellinghouse which would not result in an increase in housing supply and therefore this is a neutral consideration. The inclusion of a sustainable drainage system would be an environmental benefit to which I attach a small amount of positive weight. However, I consider that the negative weight arising from the impact of the appeal scheme on the living conditions of 24 Ridgeway Place and on the character and

appearance of the area clearly outweighs that positive weight and that the appeal scheme conflicts with the development plan when taken as a whole.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons given above the appeal should be dismissed.

P Burley

INSPECTOR