

Heritage Statement

For

Two storey rear extension and changes to fenestration

At

Ridgeway House, The Ridgeway, Shorne, Gravesend, Kent, DA12 3LW

The proposal:

Ridgeway House has new owner, and they wish to make the house their forever home.

The current layout of the house only provides three bedrooms at first floor level within the main dwelling. With three children there is a need to provide an additional bedroom on the first floor of the property. Planning permission has been obtained with reference 20250549 in 2025 to alter the former coach house. While planning permission to alter the former coach house was previously obtained, the project proved economically unfeasible given the modest gain in usable space. We have therefore sought a more optimised approach that delivers the required additional bedroom and living space more effectively.

A two storey rear extension is now proposed. This creates a fourth bedroom in the main first floor of the property. The former bedroom 3 has been changed to a family bathroom and an ensuite serving bedroom 2. A new side window is to be provided to serve the bathroom. The former bathroom and ensuite will be converted to a bedroom.

At ground floor level, the extension allows an open plan living area to be created which caters for modern living.

The second floor of the property is one small room which has sloping ceilings, is poorly insulated with a maximum head height of 1.8m with an extremely steep staircase. Providing a new gentler staircase to this room was explored, but the required location of the staircase uses valuable first floor space and made the scheme more disjointed and unacceptably reduced room sizes. This room is now to be used for storage and accessed by a loft hatch.

The chimney breast at ground floor level is to be removed in order to create the open plan area. It is to be removed at first floor level so as to allow an ensuite to be created for bedroom 2. So as to preserve the appearance of the building and conservation area the chimney is to be retained above roof level.

The former coach house is to remain as existing. This area provides space for a utility room at ground floor level and a flexible space at first floor level which may be used as an office.

The rear extension is 5m deep and 5.95m wide. It is 3.5m away from the East corner of the house so as to ensure it does not affect the amenity of the neighbour and so the living room and bedroom 3 have doors/window facing to the rear. The extension has been kept 215mm away from the West corner of the main house so as to ensure that the original form of the property is retained. The roof will be pitched and hipped on all sides to match the existing dwelling. The ridge height will be 400mm lower than the main house so as to remain subservient.

The two-storey rear extension will be finished with brick walls and slate roof covering to match the existing dwelling. The new and altered windows on the flank elevation are designed to match existing. The new doors to the dining area are to be of white aluminium as wide timber doors have a tendency to warp and swell. The windows to the extension are to be either white painted timber or white aluminium. Being located at the rear of the property this will not affect the street scene or wider conservation area. The new flank windows serving the bathroom and wc/boot room are to be white painted timber to match the main property.

In the previous application the conservation officer requested that the existing dormer window on the former coach house be replaced to match that granted consent on the former application. This window is to be replaced as requested and will match the approved plan JD/09C.

As the rear extension encroaches into the existing patio, the patio is to be extended in depth and widened so as to be in proportion to the house. As the rear garden is higher than the patio, the existing patio retaining wall will be adjusted. The retaining walls will be terraced so as to avoid a single high wall which would have also required guarding to prevent falls. The combination of the curved retaining walls and terracing will ensure the walls do not look harsh and provides an opportunity for low height planting / herbs and vegetables between the walls, creating a pleasant external environment.

The site is located within Chestnut Green Conservation Area and supplementary planning document appraisal has been studied.

The document identifies and defines the special architectural and historic interest for which Chestnut Green Conservation Area merits designation. It also identifies the positive features that should be protected and highlights the negative factors that detract from its character and appearance.

Ridgeway House is identified as having a positive contribution to the conservation area. From the street scene, the front elevation is viewable with limited views of the flank elevations. The rear elevation cannot be seen. No alterations are proposed to the front elevation.

In summary, the proposed alterations not only enhance and preserve the conservation area, but create a well-designed family home that will be suitable for the owners for many years to come.