



Pre Planning Application Assessment Report

GARAGE CONVERSION

29 Rose Glen, Rush Green Romford, RM7 0SL

Planning Approval Was Given for This Project
Barking & Dagenham Planners Ref: 25/00062/HSE
Draw Plans created the design plans and submitted the application.

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Introduction and Site Context

29 Rose Glen is a two-storey residential property located in Rush Green, Romford, within the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham. The surrounding area is predominantly residential, characterized by similar terraced houses built in a post-war era. The subject property is an end-of-terrace dwelling that includes a single-storey attached garage to the side of the house. There is no record of any previous planning permissions on this property. The proposal under consideration is to convert the existing side garage into a habitable room (to be used as a bedroom with an ensuite for an elderly relative), to construct a single-storey side extension, and to install a new ground-floor window in the front elevation. All new construction materials are intended to match the original building, including brickwork, roof tiles, and window style, which will help the extensions blend with the existing house.

Planning Policy Context

In assessing this proposal, the relevant planning policies from Barking and Dagenham's Local Plan and associated guidance have been considered. The key local planning policies include:

- **Policy BP8 – Protecting Residential Amenity:** This policy (from the Borough Wide Development Policies DPD, 2011) seeks to ensure that developments (including house extensions) do not harm the living conditions of neighbouring residents. Extensions should not result in undue overlooking, loss of light, or other adverse impacts on privacy and amenity of adjacent homes.
- **Policy BP11 – Urban Design:** This policy requires that all development, including residential extensions, achieve a high standard of design that respects the character of the area. Extensions and alterations should be sympathetic to the existing building in terms of scale, form, and materials, and should positively contribute to the *street scene*.

In addition, the Council's adopted Residential Extensions and Alterations Supplementary Planning Document (SPD, 2012) provides detailed guidance for householder developments. This SPD elaborates on Policies BP8 and BP11, setting out design criteria and best practices for extensions such as side additions and garage conversions. Key guidance from the SPD relevant to this proposal includes ensuring extensions remain subordinate to the original house, using matching

external materials, protecting neighbours' amenity (e.g. by not breaching a 45-degree line from adjacent windows), and avoiding the loss of off-street parking where possible. The SPD emphasizes that front-facing alterations (like new windows or extensions) must respect the existing house's architectural features and the character of the surrounding street.



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Parking standards are also a consideration under local and London Plan policies. Barking and Dagenham generally applies the London Plan maximum parking standards, which for a three-bedroom dwelling in an outer London location typically allow up to 1–1.5 car spaces. There is an underlying aim to prevent excessive on-street parking stress. The Council's guidance notes that if a development would remove an existing off-street parking space (such as a garage) in an area of high parking demand, the impact will be scrutinized and could be grounds for refusal unless mitigated. Therefore, the provision of sufficient parking is an important factor in this assessment (see Parking and Access below).

Design and Impact on the Street Scene

Scale and Integration: The proposed single-storey side extension and garage conversion should be designed to integrate harmoniously with the existing house

and the street scene. According to the Council's design guidance, side extensions have the potential to significantly alter the appearance of a house, so it is essential that the extension is sympathetic in form, roof treatment, detailing, and materials to the host dwelling. In this case, the side extension is only one storey high and will infill the area to the side of the house (currently occupied by the garage). To maintain a cohesive look, the extension's front wall will align with the front elevation of the existing house, so that it does not project forward or back from the main building line. This helps the extension appear as a natural part of the house and preserves the rhythm of the terrace. The roof design of the extension should ideally continue the same style as the main roof – for example, if the house has a pitched tiled roof, the extension should also have a pitched roof with matching tiles. The use of a flat roof on a prominent side extension is generally discouraged by the Council, as it can look incongruous; a pitched roof will ensure the new addition is in keeping with the original architectural style. All external finishes will match the existing building (brick type, pointing, roofing, etc.), which is a positive aspect of the proposal and will be likely required by condition to ensure the appearance is unified.

Design of the New Front Window: A key visual change is the replacement of the garage door on the front elevation with a domestic-style window. This new ground-floor window must be carefully designed to match the house's existing window style and proportions. It should align with the existing front windows (for instance, if other ground-floor windows have a certain height or sill level, the new window should follow the same pattern). Using a matching frame design (material, color, and grille pattern if any) will make the conversion appear purpose-built. The brickwork used to infill around the new window (after removing the garage door) should be tooth-bonded and blended with the original brick façade so that there is no obvious visual "patch." The SPD specifically notes that changes to the front of a house should *reflect the original detailing* – here, the position and design of the new window will be important in preserving the character of the house.

As shown in the example image above, converting a garage door into a well-proportioned window can actually enhance the dwelling's appearance when done in keeping with the original design. In the context of Rose Glen, many houses have an integrated garage on the ground floor; converting one into a living space with a window will alter the façade, but if executed with matching materials and style, it should blend in with the residential character of the street. Rather than a blank garage door, a window can add visual interest and natural surveillance to the street.

Streetscape impact: The overall impact on the street scene is expected to be neutral

to positive, provided the design details are handled well. The house will still read as part of the same terrace, and the extension will not add significant bulk or height visible from the front. The continuity of the building line and the use of identical materials will ensure the extension does not draw undue attention. It will be important to avoid any elements that appear overly dominant or out of character – for example, the Council would not support an ornate or oversized window out of alignment with others, or any front projection that disrupts the uniformity of the terrace.



Example of a garage conversion where the former garage door was replaced by a window matching the house's style. Ensuring that a new front window aligns with existing windows and uses matching materials (brickwork, frame, and sill) helps maintain a harmonious appearance in the street scene.

Corner Plot Considerations: (If No.29 is situated on a corner or at the end of a cul-de-sac with an open side aspect, the following applies.) Corner plots in this borough are particularly prominent and often have open space at the side that contributes to the area's character. In such cases, the Council's guidance is that side extensions should not extend beyond the established building lines of the adjacent streets. An extension that infringes into a corner open space or projects in front of the neighbouring house on the side street could be seen as overly intrusive. Therefore, if 29 Rose Glen occupies a corner position, the side extension should be set back appropriately from any side boundary adjacent to the highway and kept within the lines of existing development. This will preserve the open feel at the street corner

and avoid a “cramped” appearance. From the information given, the extension is single-storey and replacing an existing structure (the garage), so it is unlikely to further encroach on any open space beyond what is there now. Nonetheless, maintaining a set-in distance from the side boundary (usually around 1 metre for a single-storey side extension on a corner, if applicable) would show regard for the open character of the area. In summary, the design approach for this proposal – aligning with the house front, matching the roof and materials, and carefully installing a front window – should ensure the development is visually acceptable and does not harm the street scene. The extension and alterations, in principle, comply with Policy BP11 (Urban Design) as they respect the appearance of the host building and the wider terrace.

Residential Amenity Considerations

Impact on Neighbouring Properties: The proposed garage conversion and side extension are not expected to adversely affect the amenity of adjacent residents. Being single storey in nature, the side extension will have a limited height and mass. It will replace or expand upon the footprint of the existing garage, which is at ground level. As such, it should not cause any significant loss of light or overshadowing to the adjoining house in the terrace (No. 31 Rose Glen, if numbering is sequential) or to any other nearby properties. Typically, when assessing light impact, the Council uses a 45-degree rule from the nearest neighbouring windows to ensure extensions do not project too far out. In this case, the extension is to the side of the house, not to the rear, so it will not protrude beyond the rear wall of the neighbouring house. This means the usual concern of a rear extension blocking sunlight to a back window does not arise. The side neighbour (if any) would either be a house set forward along the side street or an open space; either way, a modest single-storey structure should not be overbearing. The ensuite bathroom within the extension will likely have a side-facing window (for ventilation) or a rooflight – if any side window faces toward a neighbour’s property, it should be obscure-glazed to protect privacy (this is a standard requirement for windows serving bathrooms or toilets). However, if the side boundary of No.29 faces a public area or street, privacy impacts are negligible. There will be no additional storeys added, so privacy and overlooking are minimal. The new bedroom will gain a front-facing window; front windows look onto the public street, which is typical for any house and not a privacy concern for neighbours (front elevations are already visible to passers-by). There are no new windows proposed on the rear elevation as part of this conversion, so the rear neighbour’s privacy remains unchanged. In terms of noise or disturbance: the use of the space is changing from a garage (which might occasionally have vehicle noise) to a bedroom for a family member, which is a *quieter residential use*. This should not introduce any

new noise issues – in fact, it could reduce any noise associated with car storage or garage work.

Amenity of Future Occupants: The conversion will create a ground-floor bedroom with an ensuite, specifically to benefit an elderly relative. This has positive implications for the occupants' amenity, as it provides accessible living space. The new habitable room will need to have adequate natural light and ventilation – the front window will ensure daylight and outlook for the occupant. The room's size and layout will be subject to building regulations and (if applicable) internal space standards, but from a planning perspective it appears to provide a useful addition to the family dwelling. Ensuring a level threshold or easy access to this room from the main entrance could be considered (for the comfort of the elderly resident), although this is beyond strict planning requirements and more of an accessibility consideration. It's noted that the works are internal to the family's use of the house (no separate dwelling is being created), so the proposal is for an ancillary residential use. Planning would treat this as part of the existing single household. It may be prudent to ensure that the new bedroom remains internally connected to the main house (which it will, via a door where the former back of the garage was), to avoid any perception of it being a self-contained annex. As presented, the plans do not suggest any independent access or separate occupancy, so no additional conditions (e.g. restricting it from becoming a separate unit) should be necessary beyond the standard use of the dwellinghouse.

Outdoor Amenity Space: The extension is confined to the side of the property and does not extend into the rear garden. Therefore, the existing rear garden (private amenity space for the occupants) will be largely unaffected. The Council's policies typically seek to ensure sufficient garden space remains after extensions – a general guideline is that no more than 50% of the garden should be built over by extensions and outbuildings. In this case, since the extension occupies the side and likely part of the front (garage area), the rear garden is untouched, and well above 50% of the original garden area will remain open. The occupants will continue to enjoy a standard back garden for recreation, which means the *amenity space standards* are comfortably met.

One consideration is access to the rear garden for maintenance or bin movement. Currently, the garage might provide a route from the front to the rear (if there was a door from the garage to the garden). Once converted, if the extension occupies the full width to the boundary, external side access could be lost. Many terraced properties rely on moving garden bins or equipment through the house or via a rear alley if one exists. In the case of No.29, if it's end-of-terrace, it might have had a side gate or route. If the new extension covers that path, the owners will need to bring

bins through the house or store them at the front. This is a relatively minor issue and more of a convenience factor than a planning harm. From the planning officer's perspective, as long as bins can be stored in a way that's not detrimental to the street (e.g. not permanently left in front in a cluttered manner), there is no breach of policy. It would be advisable to ensure that any required refuse storage is sensitively located (perhaps an alcove at the front or space in the redesigned garage-front area) so that the scheme does not lead to unsightly bins on the forecourt – maintaining street scene quality. Overall, the amenity impacts of the proposal are limited and considered acceptable. The development complies with Policy BP8 (Residential Amenity) by safeguarding neighbours' living conditions and providing good living standards for the occupiers.

Parking and Access

Parking Provision: The conversion of the garage into living accommodation will result in the loss of one off-street parking space (the garage itself). In many residential areas, especially in this borough, on-street parking is in high demand, and the Council is cautious about developments that could worsen parking congestion. The relevant local guidance states that if the loss of a garage would significantly impact on-street parking in an area of known high demand, the planning authority may resist the proposal. Therefore, it is important to demonstrate that adequate parking will remain available for the dwelling.

In this case, No.29 likely has a driveway or hardstanding in front of the garage. If that is of sufficient length and size (generally about 5 metres deep to accommodate a car without overhanging the footway), it can continue to be used to park a vehicle. Many houses in Rose Glen appear to have short front gardens or driveways for one car. If the existing driveway can comfortably fit a car, then the property will retain at least one off-street parking space despite the garage conversion. This typically satisfies the requirement for a three-bedroom house, as planning policy would commonly expect 1–2 parking spaces for a house of this size in an outer London location. Retaining one space should mitigate the impact of losing the garage. It should be noted that in practice garages are often underused for car parking (many are used for storage), so the actual effect on parking demand may be negligible if the residents already park on the drive or street. Nonetheless, from a policy standpoint we must assume the garage counted as a parking space.

If the property does not currently have a front driveway, or the drive is too short to use (for example, if the garage was flush to the pavement), then the proposal would remove the only off-street parking provision. In that scenario, the applicants should consider creating a new parking space within their front garden to compensate.

Converting part of the front yard to a permeable hardstanding for parking would require adherence to sustainable drainage requirements (permitted development allows new hard surfacing under 5m² or if permeable materials are used). Any new or widened *dropped kerb* would need permission from the Council's highways department. These measures, if needed, could be part of the proposal to ensure at least one car can be parked off-road. Parking standards from the London Plan treat 1 off-street space as generally sufficient for a 3-bedroom unit in a moderately accessible area, so achieving this would make the scheme acceptable in transport terms. It is recommended that the formal planning application includes clarification of parking arrangements – for instance, a site plan showing a car parked on the existing drive – to reassure the Council that on-street parking will not be unduly impacted. Given that Rose Glen is not within a controlled parking zone (as far as known) and appears to be a suburban street, the addition of one extra car on the road (if it came to that) would probably be absorbed, but it's preferable to show that the existing off-street space will be used.

Highway Safety: The new front window will replace the garage door, but no new doors or accesses onto the highway are proposed. Therefore, there is no change to the vehicular access point (which remains the existing driveway and crossover if present). Sight lines at the driveway would remain as existing. As long as any parked car is fully off the footpath, there are no highway safety issues anticipated. The slight intensification of residential use (one extra bedroom) is unlikely to generate significantly more traffic than the existing 3-bedroom house. The street will remain used primarily by residents and visitors as currently.

Access for Disabled Occupant: The proposal specifically mentions the room is for an elderly relative, implying a need for ease of access. On the planning side, the main entrance to the house stays unchanged. Internally, the layout will be rearranged so that the former garage is accessible from within the house (likely via a new door from the hallway or living area). It would be wise for the design to ensure a level floor and possibly a level threshold at the main entrance, to accommodate any mobility issues – this would be looked at under Building Regulations Part M (accessible and adaptable dwellings). Planning does not require existing homes to retrofit full disabled access, but since this is a development aimed at providing ground-floor living space, the applicant should seize the opportunity to incorporate age-friendly design (wider doorways, flush thresholds, grab rails in the ensuite, etc.). The planning authority would certainly welcome that the extension improves living conditions for an elderly family member, as this aligns with broader objectives to support adaptable housing for an aging population.

Construction and Servicing: During construction, the contractors will likely use the driveway or front of the property for materials and works – a minor point, but any grant of permission may include an informative about not obstructing the highway or the need for considerate construction practices. Post-construction, servicing of the property (refuse collection, emergency access) remains as existing. The house will still be a single-family dwelling, so the usual arrangements for rubbish (weekly bin collection from the curb) and emergency access (front door reachable from street) are unaffected. If anything, having a bedroom at ground floor could be beneficial in emergencies (easier evacuation), but again that's a building control matter (means of escape window etc., which the new window will likely serve as one).

In summary, with at least one off-street parking space retained and no new hazards introduced, the parking and access aspects of the proposal are likely to comply with the Council's standards (Policy BR9 regarding parking and London Plan transport policies). The key is to ensure that the loss of the garage does not lead to parking stress – this can be managed by using the front drive. The development is small in scale, so it does not trigger any requirement for a transport statement or similar; it is a typical householder development from a highway's perspective.

Likely Planning Issues and Requirements

Based on the above analysis, the main planning issues for this proposal, and the associated requirements to address them, can be summarized as follows:

- **Design and Appearance:** The Council will require that the side extension and alterations appear seamless with the existing dwelling. This means using *matching materials* (which the proposal confirms) and a compatible design. A pitched roof on the extension, aligned eaves and roof ridge (if applicable) or a slight set-down to remain subordinate, and replicated architectural details (e.g. any decorative brick coursing or window lintels) will be important details. The new front window must match the style and height of the house's other windows – ideally, it should look as if it has always been part of the house. Any brick infill in the former garage opening should be tooth-tooth bonded and indistinguishable once complete. The Council may impose a planning condition that all external finishes match those of the existing house.
- **Street Scene Impact:** To protect the street scene, the extension should not project beyond the front or side building lines, nor should it infill any open character space if at a corner. It appears the extension is kept within the envelope of the current building footprint (aside from extending to the side boundary which is acceptable if it's the end of the terrace). The design should avoid causing a terracing effect or the appearance of continuous massing with any neighbouring building – since this is an end terrace, that is not an issue on

the detached side. If it were semi-detached, we'd say set back a bit, but here maintaining the terrace form is fine. No part of the extension will be forward of the existing house front, so the front building line is respected. The street scene impact of replacing a garage door with a window is minor and can be positive; still, the Council will check that the result does not look odd compared to other nearby houses. (If many houses on Rose Glen have similar conversions, it may even be seen as a common improvement in the area.)

- **Residential Amenity:** The proposal should ensure no undue harm to neighbours. Given the scale, this primarily means ensuring the extension doesn't block light or views unreasonably. From the provided information, it complies with the usual guidelines (it's not overly deep or tall). The design should include obscure glazing to any bathroom window and possibly a modesty screen if a side window faces directly toward a neighbor's window at close distance (though unlikely here). Construction working hours should be standard (typically conditioned to weekdays and Saturday mornings only, no loud work on Sundays) to minimize disturbance, but that is temporary. Overall, lasting amenity issues are not anticipated.
- **Parking Provision:** A critical requirement will be demonstrating adequate parking. At least one off-street parking space should be retained on-site. If currently there is none besides the garage, the applicant should create one (subject to highways approval for a dropped kerb if not existing). The application might be asked to show a plan of the front garden indicating a car parking space and how vehicles access it. If a new hardstand is to be built, it should be permeable or have drainage to soft ground as per sustainable drainage rules (the Council often checks this for front garden parking). Failure to address parking could risk a refusal under policy, especially if the street is known to be congested. However, since matching materials and design are relatively straightforward to get right, parking is often the main issue councils' flag for garage conversions. In pre-app responses for similar developments, officers have required evidence or commitment that off-street parking is maintained.
- **Permitted Development Rights and Conditions:** It is noted that normally converting a garage internally to living space *can* be permitted development (not needing planning permission) if you do not alter the external appearance significantly. In this case, the addition of a new front window and the side extension definitely trigger the need for a planning application. Also, some garages in planned estates were given with conditions that they must be retained for parking – we assume no such condition applies here since no

previous permissions, but it will be double-checked during the application. The Council will review any past planning approvals for the estate to ensure converting the garage doesn't contravene an earlier agreement. Assuming none, it's straightforward. After completion, the Council may remove "permitted development rights" for further alterations on the extension (sometimes a condition to prevent future uncontrolled changes, although for a single-storey extension this is less common).

- **Building Regulations and Other Consents:** While not a planning issue per se, it's worth noting that Building Regulation approval will be required for the garage conversion and extension. This ensures the new bedroom has proper insulation, damp-proofing, means of escape (the new window will likely need to be an egress window), and that the foundations of the new extension are adequate. Early engagement with Building Control (either the Council's or an Approved Inspector) is recommended to smooth the building warrant process. From a planning perspective, the design should not preclude meeting building standards (for example, the window chosen should be sizeable enough for emergency egress, the drainage for the ensuite needs to be planned, etc.).

No heritage or environmental constraints apply to this site as far as known – the property is not in a conservation area, nor is it a listed building, and no protected trees or flood risk zones are indicated in this locale. Therefore, the assessment is focused on standard residential planning considerations as outlined above.

Conclusion and Principle of Acceptability

Principle: The proposed development – converting an attached garage to living space, adding a single-storey side extension, and altering the front facade with a new window – is generally acceptable in principle under the Borough's planning policies. The use remains residential (no change of use class) and the scale of the extension is modest. The Council supports homeowners adapting and extending their properties for improved living accommodation, so long as it doesn't harm neighbours or the character of the area. In this case, providing a ground-floor bedroom and ensuite for an elderly family member can be seen as a beneficial home improvement that enables multi-generational living and accessibility, which aligns with social objectives as well.

Design & Character: With the commitment to matching materials and a

sympathetic design, the extension should appear as a natural part of the house. This will uphold the character of Rose Glen and meet the design expectations of Policy BP11 and the SPD. The new front window, if properly executed, will not detract from the street – on the contrary, it can enhance the visual interest of the house and is likely to be supported, since it avoids leaving a blank garage frontage and contributes to passive surveillance of the street. The Council will likely condition that the development be built in accordance with the submitted plans and using identical external finishes. Providing those conditions are adhered to, there should be no design grounds for refusal.

Amenity: The proposal does not appear to cause any unacceptable impact on neighbours. It remains within the envelope of what is typically allowed for house extensions (one storey, not excessively large). There have been numerous approvals in the borough for similar garage conversions and side extensions on end-of-terrace or semi-detached properties, which set a positive precedent. As long as the extension is built to the dimensions indicated (not overly tall and not protruding beyond the rear of the neighbour's house), it should comfortably satisfy Policy BP8 regarding neighbourly development. We anticipate no objections on privacy or daylight grounds given the site layout. The new accommodation will improve living standards for the occupants, and no separate dwelling is created (thus avoiding any policy issues about intensification or needing additional amenity space).

Parking: The one area that requires clear resolution is parking. To ensure a smooth approval, the application should demonstrate adequate off-street parking is retained. It would be prudent for the applicant to explicitly state (and show on plans) that the front driveway will be used for parking a vehicle. If necessary, they should commit to any minor alterations (like extending hardstanding) to make this feasible. Provided this is addressed, the Highways and Transport officers are unlikely to object. Without such provision, there is a risk that planning officers could view the loss of a parking space negatively. Given the typical plot layout on Rose Glen, it is expected that retaining one space is achievable. Many similar garage conversions in Barking & Dagenham have been permitted where at least one parking space on the property remained. In summary, as long as parking arrangements are sorted, the proposal accords with the intent of local parking policies and should not be refused on transport grounds.

Recommendation: It is recommended that the design moves forward incorporating the considerations outlined in this assessment. Prior to submitting a formal planning application, the following actions would be wise:

- Prepare elevation drawings showing the front of the house with the new window in place, ensuring it mirrors the style of the existing windows. This

visual will help the planner and any neighbours understand that the change is in keeping.

- Include a site/block plan showing a car parked on the driveway (with dimensions) to evidence off-street parking retention.
- Consider any feedback from immediate neighbours informally – while not strictly required for a pre-app, having neighbours on board (especially the attached neighbour at No.31) can ease the process. If the neighbour has concerns (for example about construction disturbance), you can plan to address those in advance.
- Ensure the materials specified (bricks, tiles, window frame color) exactly match or are the closest possible match to the existing. If the existing bricks are no longer available, a very close alternative should be used on any new wall sections.
- Plan construction details such that the finished appearance is neat: e.g., where the garage door was removed, the new brickwork and any base infill should align flush with the original front wall, and the plinth or damp-course detailing should continue through, so it looks seamless.

Conclusion: In principle, the conversion of the garage to living space with an accompanying side extension appears acceptable under planning policies. There are clear benefits to the homeowner with minimal drawbacks to the community. The design just needs to be executed in accordance with Council guidelines to ensure a high-quality result. No major planning obstacles are evident at this stage. The likely outcome, if the application is well-prepared addressing the points above, is an approval of planning permission for the development. The addition of a front window is specifically likely to be acceptable – it is a common alteration in such conversions and, when done to match the house, does not harm the appearance; in fact, it often makes the dwelling look more balanced. We would expect the planning officer to attach standard conditions (matching materials, adherence to plans, hours of work for construction, etc.) but overall to support the scheme as long as there are no unforeseen issues.

This pre-application assessment should give the Applicant confidence to proceed to a full planning application, incorporating any refinements mentioned. It will be important to reference the relevant policies (BP8, BP11, and the SPD) in any planning, design, and access statement to demonstrate compliance. The development at 29 Rose Glen can thus be seen as acceptable in principle, subject to the detailed

considerations above, and is likely to receive a favourable recommendation from planning officers.

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