

---

# Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 3 July 2019

**by Andrew Bremford BSc (Hons) MRICS**

**an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State**

**Decision date: 25 July 2019**

---

**Appeal Ref: APP/G5180/W/19/3228165**  
**32 Lower Gravel Road, Bromley BR2 8LJ**

- 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 Xhebexhia against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Bromley.
  - The application Ref DC/19/00940/FULL1, dated 22 February 2019, was refused by notice dated 24 April 2019.
  - The development proposed is construction of new attached two-bedroomed house.
- 

## Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

## Main Issues

2. The main issues are (i) the effect of the proposed development upon the character and appearance of the area; and (ii) whether or not there would be adequate external amenity space for occupiers of both the existing dwelling on the site and the proposed dwelling.

## Reasons

### *Character and appearance*

3. The appeal property is a two-storey semi-detached dwelling positioned on a prominent corner plot at the junction of Lower Gravel Road and Ribston Close. The building is typical of the development in Lower Gravel Road, the street-scene of which is generally characterised by mostly evenly spaced pairs of semi-detached properties aligned in an ordered manner, with front entrances facing Lower Gravel Road. The proposed dwelling would be attached to the south west elevation of the host property with its front entrance facing Ribston Road. Thus, it would result in the formation of a terrace of three properties, with its front entrance at odds with neighbouring properties, thereby disrupting the established pattern of development as described above.
4. The side elevations of the host property and No 26 Lower Gravel Road, located on the opposite side of the road junction, are set well back from their respective boundaries with Ribston Close. Consequently, there is a reasonably balanced and spacious appearance in terms of the connection between the road and the dwellings. Moreover, the somewhat lengthy and overall generously sized side and rear garden area of the appeal site, bounded by Ribston Close, in combination with the rear garden areas of the properties on the opposite side of the Close, contribute positively to a sense of openness and space at this

prominent road junction. The proposed development would sub-divide the plot creating two relatively narrow parcels of land which, in combination with the position of the proposed two-storey dwelling, would detract from the existing spacious layout of development at the road junction and would unbalance the aforementioned connection between the road and the dwellings.

5. I note that the host dwelling benefits from a recent planning permission<sup>1</sup> for a side and rear extension of similar scale, mass and design to the appeal proposal. The appellant contends that there is little difference between the consented development and the appeal proposal and hence that planning permission should not be withheld. However, there are differences between the two developments including the formation of a porch on the side elevation with its entrance facing Ribston Close. Furthermore, the appeal proposal includes the sub-division of the existing plot. Such proposals would seek to emphasise and draw attention to the creation of a terrace of three dwellings which would be at odds with the prevailing type, character and appearance of properties in the immediate locality. Furthermore, and notwithstanding the existence of the planning permission for an extension to the host dwelling, the proposed dwelling would undoubtedly have the effect of detracting from the otherwise open and spacious character of the area which are distinctive and positive attributes.
6. For the reasons outlined above, I conclude that the proposed development would cause significant harm to the character and appearance of the area. Consequently, it would not accord with Policies 3, 4 and 37 of the London Borough of Bromley Local Plan 2019 (LP) which, amongst other things, set out to ensure that developments respect the character, appearance and context of the surrounding area. The Council has referred to Policy 1 of the LP in its refusal notice, but this is not directly relevant to any of the main issues as it relates to housing supply.

#### *Living conditions*

7. The proposed development would result in a loss of garden space for occupiers of No 32. However, given the reasonably generous size of the existing plot of No 32, even after taking into account the footprint of the existing and proposed dwelling and space set aside for car parking, the resultant size of the garden of both No 32 and the appeal site as shown on the submitted 'Roof and Block Plan', would be proportionate in size, practical and useable.
8. Whilst I accept that the resultant respective garden areas would be smaller than some belonging to neighbouring properties in the area, taking into account that both No 32 and the appeal dwelling would be 2 bedroom properties, I do not consider the resultant amenity spaces would be so small as to justify withholding planning permission.
9. For the above reasons, I conclude that the external amenity space for both the existing dwelling and the proposed dwelling would be adequate and therefore acceptable in living conditions terms. Consequently, the proposal would accord with Policy 4 of the LP, which requires that new development provides sufficient external private amenity space.

---

<sup>1</sup> Ref 18/04298/FULL6

## **Conclusion**

10. In conclusion, whilst the proposal would not cause harm to the living conditions of the occupiers of No 32 and the proposed dwelling in terms of the resultant external amenity spaces, this would not overcome the significant harm that would be caused to the character and appearance of the area. Therefore, and taking into account all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

*Andrew Bremford*

INSPECTOR