
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 19 April 2022

by E Grierson BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 11 May 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/D5120/W/21/3281372

244 Bedonwell Road, Bexleyheath DA7 5PZ

- 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 G S Singh against the decision of London Borough of Bexley.
 - The application Ref 21/00335/FUL, dated 2 February 2021, was refused by notice dated 26 May 2021.
 - The development proposed is the construction of a one bed bungalow at rear land of no. 244 Bedonwell Road.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues in the appeal are:
 - the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the surrounding area, and
 - whether the proposed development would provide satisfactory living conditions for the future occupiers, with reference to the provision of internal space and external amenity space.

Reasons

Character and Appearance

3. The appeal site is located to the rear of the property at 244 Bedonwell Road, within the rear part of the garden which is at a lower ground level and adjacent to Stream Way. It is currently occupied by a single garage outbuilding, steps up to the host property and an unkept grassed area. Construction has also begun on the appeal site for a building which is in a similar location to the appeal proposal but smaller in size.
4. The proposed dwelling would be located directly adjacent to Stream Way and would therefore be a highly visible addition within the streetscene. Although benefiting from a street frontage, its single storey detached nature and angled positioning would not follow the form or pattern of the existing terrace dwellings on Stream Way. It would also be much larger than existing outbuildings within the rear gardens of the properties on Bedonwell Road. Therefore, the proposal would appear disjointed from and at odds with the other properties surrounding it. Due to this and its visibility from the public realm, the proposed development would be to the detriment of the character and appearance of the area.

5. The proposal may be modest in design with materials that are similar to the surrounding buildings. However, compared to the small and constricted nature of the appeal site, the proposed dwelling would appear overly large and cramped within its surroundings, particularly when viewed against the retaining walls separating the property from the neighbouring sites.
6. Consequently, the proposed development would result in harm to the character and appearance of the surrounding area and would conflict with Policies H3, H8 and ENV39 of the Bexley Council Unitary Development Plan (2004), Policies CS01 and CS04 of the Bexley Core Strategy (2012) and Policy D3 of The London Plan (2021). These policies collectively seek to ensure new residential development is compatible with, and has no adverse effects on, the character and appearance of the area, with a high standard of design and a form and layout which enhances the local context and positively responds to local distinctiveness.

Living Conditions

7. Policy D6 of The London Plan (2021) and Standard 26 of The London Plan Housing Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) (2016) requires a minimum of 5m² private outdoor space for 1-2 person dwellings. Although this has not been identified on the submitted plans, the appellant has indicated that the area of land to the south of the proposed dwelling would provide a garden space measuring 5.2m x 1.2m. However, it is noted that the proposed plans show that this space is also to be used for cycle and waste storage. Therefore, due to these competing uses, it has not been sufficiently demonstrated that this area would provide the minimum required garden space, as detailed above, or the adequate usable amenity space as required by Policy H6 of the Bexley Council Unitary Development Plan (2004).
8. The appellant suggests that by stating that residential development should *normally* provide adequate usable on-site amenity space, within Policy H6, external amenity space is desirable but not imperative. However, whilst not intended to accommodate a family, this type of development would still be expected to provide some usable garden space to ensure suitable living conditions for the future occupier. It is also necessary for the development to meet the minimum standards required by other policies as detailed above. The nearby open space at Abbey Wood would not be sufficient to outweigh this requirement, as it would not provide private amenity space for the occupant.
9. The proposed dwelling would provide a total internal floor area of 39m². Policy D6 states that for a 1 bedroom, 1 person dwelling the minimum gross internal floor area required is 39m². As such, the proposed development would meet this requirement and provide sufficient internal space for the future occupier.
10. Therefore, whilst the provision of internal space would be sufficient, due to the absence of suitable external amenity space, the proposed development would not provide satisfactory living conditions for future occupiers. It would therefore conflict with the relevant sections of Policy D6 of The London Plan (2021) and Policy H6 of the Bexley Council Unitary Development Plan (2004) for the reason set out above.
11. The proposed development would also conflict with The London Plan Housing Supplementary Planning Guidance (2016) and the Bexley Council Design for Living Supplementary Planning Document (2006). These state that outdoor

amenity space is a core feature of a decent standard of home and should be of practical shape and utility to ensure the space offers good amenity.

Other Matters

12. It is noted that the proposal would provide one additional dwelling, along with the social and economic benefits which arise from this. However, due to the minimal nature of the proposed development, as a 1 bedroom, 1 person dwelling, these benefits would not be sufficient to outweigh the harm that I have identified.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons given above and having had regard to all other matters raised, the proposal would conflict with the development plan taken as a whole and I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

E Grierson

INSPECTOR