



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 11 June 2024

by Thomas Courtney BA(Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 16 July 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/G5180/W/24/3340569

36 Chelsfield Road, Bromley, Orpington BR5 4DW

- 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 Ms Charlotte Meade against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Bromley.
 - The application Ref is DC/23/03355/FULL1.
 - The development proposed is roof and ground floor extensions to existing semi-detached bungalow and erection of attached three-bedroom chalet bungalow to form 2 three-bedroom chalet bungalows, with associated parking, relocated vehicular access and refuse and cycle stores.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. In the banner heading above, I have referred to the description of development used in the Council's decision notice and the appeal form. This is a more accurate description of the proposed development and I have determined the appeal on this basis.
3. The appellant has submitted a parking survey study with the appeal which was considered to be acceptable by the Highways Officers. The Council has had the opportunity to comment on the survey and has decided not to contest the proposal on highway grounds.

Main Issue

4. As the Council is not contesting the proposal on highway grounds, the main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of 36 Chelsfield Road and the surrounding area.

Reasons

5. The appeal site comprises a semi-detached bungalow located on a corner plot at the junction of Chelsfield Road and Northfield Avenue. It lies within an established residential area characterised mostly by a mix of semi-detached bungalows and two-storey properties. The appeal dwelling is in a line of four pairs of similarly designed semi-detached bungalows fronting Chelsfield Road. They feature hipped roofs, side entrances and front gables with mock-Tudor detailing.
6. The proposal would result in a significant elongation of the existing building and the creation of a new front gable. Although the proposed design and materials

would match the existing dwelling, the width, height and depth of the extensions would be considerable. Because of the proposal's size it would appreciably encroach into the space to the side of the host dwelling. Consequently, the overall scale of the proposed built form would fail to be subservient, and the resultant terrace would appear excessively large.

7. The appellant opines that the development would be set away from the boundary and that the existing side garden is an anomaly in the area. However, it is an attractive feature which contributes to the open feel of the streetscene. The development would erode the spaciousness of the corner plot and constitute a prominent and incongruous feature that would be easily visible to surrounding occupiers, pedestrians and passing vehicles.
8. Furthermore, the subdivision of the plot would lead to limited outside amenity space for the two resultant dwellings. Whilst the appellant contends the gardens would be appropriately sized, they would look comparatively small to those of the neighbouring bungalows on Chelsfield Road. Their constrained size would be out of keeping with the immediate surrounding area and would be indicative of overdevelopment and a cramped site.
9. The erection of a new dwelling would therefore form a short terrace which would jar with the existing built form. It would unacceptably disrupt the coherence and uniformity of the street scene.
10. Given this, the proposal would have an adverse effect on the character and appearance of 36 Chelsfield Road and the surrounding area. It would conflict with Policies 4 and 37 of the Bromley Local Plan (BLP) which together seek to ensure that new developments achieve a high standard of design and respect local character and spatial standards. It would also conflict with Policy 3 of the BLP insofar as it seeks to ensure garden land development has no unacceptable impact upon the character, appearance and context of an area in relation to scale, design and density. Furthermore, the development would conflict with the aims of paragraph 135 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the 'Framework') which seeks to ensure developments are well-designed and sympathetic to local character.

Planning Balance

11. The proposal is not in accordance with the aforementioned policies of the BLP, with the associated conflict reflecting harm to the character and appearance of the area. Because of the effect the proposal would have on the host property and the surrounding area, I have judged the magnitude of this harm as significant.
12. The Council concedes that there is currently a very significant level of undersupply of housing in the borough. Paragraph 11(d) of the Framework explains that in these circumstances, planning permission should be granted unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole.
13. The proposal would make a positive contribution to housing supply with associated social and economic benefits during the period of construction and once the dwellings are occupied. However, the scale of development proposed means the contribution of one additional dwelling to meeting housing need in

the borough of Bromley through a more efficient use of land in an urban area and the associated benefits would be limited.

14. The development conflicts with the development plan as a whole and should be refused unless other material considerations indicate otherwise. In the particular circumstances of this case, I have concluded that the adverse effect on the character and appearance of the area conflicts with policies of the Framework. The adverse impacts of the development would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the policies of the Framework taken as a whole. As a result, the presumption in favour of sustainable development does not apply.

Other Matters

15. Highways officers raised concerns relating to the proposed vehicular access to the front of the development and its impact on the pedestrian crossing on Chelsfield Road. However, as the appeal is being dismissed, there is no need to further consider this aspect of the proposal.

Conclusion

16. The proposal conflicts with the development plan and the material considerations, including the provisions of the Framework, do not indicate that the appeal should be decided other than in accordance with it.
17. For the reasons given above the appeal should be dismissed.

Thomas Courtney

INSPECTOR