



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 17 June 2025

by N Bowden BA(Hons) Dip TP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 1st July 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/B5480/W/25/3359114

R/O 15 & 17 Homeway, Romford, RM3 0HD

- 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 H & M Property Holdings Limited against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Havering.
 - The application Ref is P0767.24.
 - The development proposed is the demolition of existing outbuilding and construction of 2 new dwellings with private amenity and off street car parking.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are:
 - 1) the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area,
 - 2) the effect of the proposed development on trees and other ecological interests, and
 - 3) whether access to the site is sufficient to provide adequate refuse collection.

Reasons

Character and appearance

3. The appeal site is set within a suburban area which is characterised, almost exclusively, by post war residential development. Homes are in a variety of styles but are commonly in the form of detached and semi-detached houses and bungalows. To the north, along Colchester Road, some have been converted to incorporate commercial uses but nevertheless, retain a domestic scale and overall appearance. With the exception of a few small cul-de-sacs, homes address through-streets and benefit from front gardens although the majority are used for parking vehicles.
4. The proposal comprises a pair of semi-detached bungalows together with new accesses and parking areas to the side. The design of the bungalows, in and of themselves, would not be at odds with surrounding buildings, reflecting the general style and proportions of many neighbouring buildings.

5. However, the proposed bungalows would be set on a relatively shallow site. The bungalows would be set very close to the boundary with Willow Way. Whilst the status of this road and precise boundary remains unclear, it is quite apparent that the front walls of the proposed bungalows would be set very close to the front of the site. This is at odds with the position of other buildings within the locality which all have a greater set-back from the road. Equally, the depth of the gardens to the rear is comparatively small by reference to the majority of surrounding gardens.
6. Overall, the plot sizes are markedly smaller than surrounding homes. Whilst there are some examples of similarly sized plots along Homeway and Greenway, these are set along existing street frontages. Indeed, even these smallest of examples are more commodious than the plot sizes proposed in this instance. This is further evidenced on the appeal site through the use of vehicle parking and front doors being set to the side of the proposed bungalows. I have also considered the presence of the chalet bungalows on the opposing side of Willow Way. Again however, I must highlight that these benefit from a set-back from the road and substantially deeper rear gardens.
7. It follows that due to the smaller plot size, depth and resultant position of the homes along a section of road which does not feature this form of development, that the proposal would be detrimental to the character and appearance of the area. It would appear cramped and distinctly at odds with the more generous plot sizes in the area that give the locality its character. It therefore fails to comply with policies 10, 7 and 26 of the Havering Local Plan 2016-2031 (HLP) and provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) insofar as it would not be of a high quality design.

Trees and ecology

8. The appeal site is largely laid to grass in addition to outbuildings (including one the subject of an enforcement notice¹). However, the north and eastern boundaries are also well vegetated. This includes a number of mature trees towards the north and a large, vegetated area along Willow Way.
9. It is not apparent from the evidence which (if any) of these exist on the application site. However regardless of this, it is likely that works to construct the proposed bungalows would fall within at least part of the root protection areas of the mature trees and would likely result in the loss, or partial loss, of the vegetated margin along Willow Way. No Arboricultural Assessment or Preliminary Ecological Appraisal has been undertaken to support the appeal, and there remains minimal detail as to the effects of the proposed development upon these features.
10. Accordingly, it is not possible to determine the effect of the proposed development upon the nearby trees or upon any ecological interests. It seems likely that there would be some adverse effects. For these reasons the proposal therefore fails to comply with policy 26 of the HLP and the Framework.

Refuse collection

11. The site would be accessed by way of an unmade, or unformed road. This is presently laid to an informal gravel type surface and is blocked at one end (onto Homeway) to prevent through vehicle traffic. Accordingly, direct kerbside collection

¹ Council ref: ENF/843/16 PINS ref: APP/B5480/C/24/3350278

of refuse would not be possible. Having regard to the Havering Waste Management Practice Planning Guidance (HWMPPG), kerbside collection could not be achieved in any case due to the narrow road width and the manner of construction.

12. The appellant has identified that other homes that address Willow Way have their refuse collected from the kerb but the bins have to be dragged to the junction with Colchester Road. Conversely, the Council observes that bins should be collected from Colchester Road. In either scenario, this is clearly a sub-optimal situation and the proposal would only serve to perpetuate this by adding new homes to this substandard arrangement.
13. It has been nominated that separate refuse storage could be made available at 17 Homeway and refuse collected from this point. Whilst this may present a slightly better solution, I have no details of this scheme. In any event, such an arrangement would also likely have a bin drag distance in excess of 25 metres and thus exceed the guidelines of the HWMPPG.
14. As such, the proposal would not provide adequate refuse collection and thus conflicts with policy 35 of the HLP insofar as it would not provide convenient and safe access to manage waste.

Other Matters

15. My attention has been drawn to an extant enforcement notice which is presently the subject of a s174 appeal. However, as this relates to a different matter, albeit on the same site, and that this proposal is to be dismissed, I do not need to consider this further here.

Planning Balance and Conclusion

16. The proposal does incorporate the provision of two additional dwellings which represents a benefit to the overall supply of homes. In this regard, the Council accepts that the Housing Delivery Test Result for Havering for 2023 is 61% indicating that the delivery of housing was substantially below the housing requirement over the previous three years. Moreover, the Council accepts that it can only demonstrate a 3.4 year supply of deliverable housing land. Therefore, in accordance with paragraph 11 d) ii. of the Framework, this means granting permission unless the adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits.
17. In this instance, I have already concluded that the development would be detrimental to the character and appearance of the area, has insufficient evidence to determine whether there would be any adverse effects upon trees and local ecology and fails to make adequate refuse collection arrangements. I have therefore had particular regard to paragraphs 135 and 139 of the Framework, which (inter alia) promote development that will function well and add to the overall quality of the area and establish or maintain a strong sense of place. Being mindful of my conclusions above, I find that the adverse effects significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits and thus the provisions of 11 d) ii. of the Framework do not apply.
18. This notwithstanding, I do accept that the proposal would not be detrimental to neighbours or the future occupants living conditions, would not result in adverse

drainage or flooding effects and would be in a sustainable location. These however, along with other neutral considerations, weigh neither for, nor against, the proposed development.

19. The proposal conflicts with the development plan and the material considerations do not indicate that the appeal should be decided other than in accordance with it. Therefore, for the reasons given above the appeal should be dismissed.

N Bowden

INSPECTOR