

APPEAL BY MR ROBERT NEWTON-CROSS AGAINST THE DECISION OF THE COUNCIL TO REFUSE OUTLINE PLANNING PERMISSION FOR A TWO/THREE BEDROOM CHALET STYLE BUNGALOW AT LAND BEHIND NO.5 PINWOOD DRIVE, ASHLEY HEATH.

<u>Application Number</u>	14/00053/OUT
<u>Officer Recommendation</u>	Approval
<u>LPA's Decision</u>	Refused by Planning Committee, contrary to officer recommendation, on 3 April 2014
<u>Appeal Decision</u>	Dismissed
<u>Date of Appeal Decision</u>	11 March 2015

In determining the appeal the Inspector set out the main issue to be the effect on the character and appearance of the area. He noted that:

- Pinewood Drive is a private, tree lined street where properties are set back from the road behind landscaped frontages. The area is characterised by large detached houses and bungalows, of varying designs and styles interspersed with open green spaces and established tree and hedgerow planting. Such features combined with the generous landscaped plots create a sense of spaciousness which contributes significantly to the open, landscaped character of this mature residential area.
- Due to the irregular shape of the land in question the footprint of the new dwelling would involve the development of a significant proportion of the plot. The extended driveway and provision of a parking and turning area would add to the urbanising impact of the scheme. As such, the building to plot ratio would be significantly higher than that of surrounding dwellings. It would therefore result in a cramped form of development which would detract from the established structure and layout of the area, which is defined by large detached properties, set in spacious landscaped plots.
- The Council's concern that the approval of this proposal could be used in support of such similar schemes is a realistic and specific as there are various open spaces to the side and rear of properties in Pinewood Drive which could potentially be built on and seriously erode the character and appearance of the area. Allowing the appeal would make it more difficult to resist further planning applications for similar developments, and such a cumulative effect would exacerbate the harm identified.
- In the absence of a 5 year housing supply it was necessary to weigh the benefits of the development against harm in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (Framework). In this case the benefits of the appeal scheme were the small contribution towards addressing the current shortfall in housing supply within the Borough. In addition, the site's accessible location close to shops, services and public transport nodes added to its sustainability credentials.
- The Inspector found that the benefits referred to did not substantially and demonstrably outweigh the harm that would be caused to the character and appearance of the area. Consequently, the proposal would not represent sustainable development in the context of the Framework's policies.
- The Inspector's attention was drawn to an appeal decision from 2005 also for the erection of a dwelling on the site. Although the Inspector has found that policies concerning the protection of the countryside are out of date, and the current scheme would not impact on any trees of significant amenity value, he reached a similar conclusion on the proposals impact on the character and appearance of the area. Accordingly, the appeal was dismissed.

Recommendation

That the decision be noted.