

**Delegated Report
62, Bracken Drive, Chigwell, IG7 5RD
EPF/1910/24**

Site Description

The application site comprises a detached bungalow with integrated garage, sited on the south side of Bracken Drive. Bracken Drive is predominantly made up of bungalows, many of which have been extended into the roof to create chalet bungalows.

The application site is not within a Conservation area and is not within the boundaries of the Metropolitan Green Belt. There are TPO'd trees on and adjacent to the site.

Proposal

The application proposes demolishing the existing single-storey bungalow and constructing a replacement 4-bedroom chalet bungalow with mansard roof and dormers.

A replacement integrated garage would be similarly sited as existing and the proposal would make use of the existing driveway/car parking spaces.

Whilst reduced slightly, the existing amenity space to the front and rear of the dwelling would remain.

New bin and bicycle storage is proposed to the front and rear of the site respectively.

Pre-application advice was provided by the council in 2024 which raised concerns around the design of the replacement dwelling. This application seeks to address such concerns.

Policies applied

- NPPF December 2024
- Epping Forest District Local Plan 2011 - 2033

Relevant Planning History

PRE/0169/24 - Demolish the existing dwelling and make a new chalet bungalow – Advice given.

EPF/0764/10 - Extension of time limit on EPF/0529/07 (First floor extension with front and rear dormer windows. - Revised application) - Approve with Conditions.

EPF/0529/07 - First floor extension with front and rear dormer windows. (Revised application) - Approve with Conditions.

EPF/2258/06 - First floor extension – Refuse:

1. *The proposed development, by virtue of the design of the roof and dormer windows, would result in a bulky feature that would be out of keeping with the character and appearance of the dwelling and the wider street scene, contrary to Policy DBE10 of the Local Plan.*

Consultation and Representations

Number of neighbours Consulted: 14. 2 responses received from:

- **60 Bracken Drive COMMENT:**

"The proposed depth of rear extension is projecting beyond both neighbouring properties and the new building occupies more than half the area of the rear garden. If this application is approved as submitted then this would set a precedent for other applications in future in this road.

The proposed building should have a minimum gap of 900mm from existing site boundaries with neighbouring properties.

The glazing to the proposed side elevation dormer windows should be obscured and windows unopenable.

The timber fence to side boundary with no. 60 Bracken Drive is in disrepair and should be renewed /replaced in conjunction with the proposed development."

- **64 Bracken Drive OBJECTION:**

"Overshadowing: The proposed extension projects 2 meters beyond our existing rear building line. This will result in significant overshadowing of our rear bedroom window, particularly during the winter and spring months when the sun's angle is lower.

Tree Protection: The proposed piling work at the rear of the extension, adjacent to our property, poses a potential risk to our protected oak tree (closest to the proposed development) subject to a Tree Preservation Order (TPO). We are concerned that the piling may damage or compromise the tree's root system, potentially leading to tree weakening, heave/subsidence risks, or a decline in the tree's overall health.

Party Wall Agreement: We require a formal Party Wall Agreement to be established between our properties to address any potential impact of the proposed works on our property or shared boundary."

CHIGWELL PARISH COUNCIL – OBJECTION: *The Parish Council OBJECTS on the grounds of poor design, an overly bulky appearance and damaging to the host building The Parish Council OBJECTS on the grounds of a loss of a bungalow.*

EFDC LAND DRAINAGE – NO OBJECTION subject to conditions/informatives.

EFDC CONTAMINATED LAND - NO OBJECTION subject to conditions/informatives.

EFDC TREES & LANDSCAPE - NO OBJECTION subject to conditions/informatives.

LONDON BOROUGH OF REDBRIDGE – NO COMMENTS.

Planning Considerations

The main planning considerations in relation to this application are: -

- a) Principle of the Development
- b) Character & Appearance
- c) Neighbouring Amenities
- d) Standard of Accommodation
- e) Highway safety/Parking
- f) Epping Forest Special Area of Conservation

Principle of Development

The needs of those with accessibility requirements, including older people, can be supported by bungalow accommodation. Information contained in the Council's Authority Monitoring Reports show that there has been a gradual erosion of the district's existing stock of bungalows. The council considers that bungalows can play an important role because of their potential ease of adaptation such that they can provide choice for people with accessibility requirements, including the current and future needs of older people. Thus, Policy H1 of the EFDC Local Plan resists the loss of bungalows and specialist accommodation.

Whilst the Local Plan defines a bungalow as a house having only one storey, a bungalow can have accommodation in the roof-space served by accompanying roof-lights and dormer windows. This means that replacing the existing bungalow with a chalet bungalow does not result in the loss of that bungalow and the principle of this development is therefore acceptable.

Character and Appearance

Policy DM9(A) of the Local Plan requires that all new development must achieve a high

quality of design and contribute to the distinctive character and amenity of the local area; they must relate positively to their context and make a positive contribution to a place.

Since the scheme's pre-application, the proposed replacement bungalow has been reduced in scale. However, the use of a mansard roof provides a top-heavy appearance which is exacerbated by the number and scale of the dormers. Thus, the proposal remains bulky and would appear over dominant in the street scene.

The proposal represents poor design and fails to relate positively to the site's context contrary to policy DM9 of the Local Plan.

Neighbouring Amenities

Policy DM9(E) of the Local Plan requires that development proposals take account of the privacy and amenity of the development's occupiers and neighbours, and integrate occupier comfort and wellbeing within the design and layout.

The main properties to consider for this application are:

60 Bracken Drive - bungalow sited adjacent to the east of the site

The occupant(s) of this property raised the following concerns:

- the rear of the replacement dwelling would project beyond their property
- the replacement dwelling would occupy more than half the area of the rear garden setting a precedent for other applications on Bracken Drive
- the replacement dwelling would sit less than 900mm from the shared boundary
- glazing to the proposed side elevation dormer windows should be obscured and windows unopenable
- the timber boundary fence should be renewed /replaced.

Officer response:

- whilst the replacement dwelling would protrude 4.5m further than the original dwelling at No.60 Bracken Drive, a glass structure sits to the rear of No.60 which the new dwelling would project minimally further than thus having little impact upon visual amenity. Further, this, together with the orientation of the properties, means that the proposal would not materially impact neighbouring amenities with regards loss of daylight/sunlight or overshadowing.
- the footprint of the dwelling vs garden is assessed within the following 'standard of accommodation' section. Each application is assessed on its own merit and consequently the outcome of one proposal would not prejudice the outcome of another.
- the proposal provides a gap on both sides of the replacement dwelling, unlike the existing dwelling.
- the proposed side dormers serve en suites and will therefore be conditioned to contain obscure glazing.
- matters relating to the maintenance and/or replacement of a boundary fence is not material to the planning application.

64 Bracken Drive bungalow sited adjacent to the west of the site

The occupant(s) of this property objected to the proposal of the following reasons:

- overshadowing: The proposed extension projects 2 meters beyond our existing rear building line. This will result in significant overshadowing of our rear bedroom window, particularly during the winter and spring months when the sun's angle is lower.
- Tree Protection: The proposed piling work at the rear of the extension, adjacent to our property, poses a potential risk to our protected oak tree (closest to the proposed development) subject to a Tree Preservation Order (TPO). We are concerned that the piling may damage or compromise the tree's root system, potentially leading to tree weakening, heave/subsidence risks, or a decline in the tree's overall health.
- Party Wall Agreement: We require a formal Party Wall Agreement to be established between our properties to address any potential impact of the proposed works on our

property or shared boundary.

Officer response:

- the proposed replacement dwelling would protrude 3.8m further rearwards than this property and may create a small level of overshadowing as the sun rises in the east, however this not considered to have a materially harmful impact upon neighbouring amenities which would warrant refusal of this application.
- EFDC's Trees & Landscape officer has assessed the application and is satisfied with the proposal subject to conditions.
- party wall agreements should be sought by the neighbour and is not a material planning matter.

The proposal is not considered to create a material loss of daylight/sunlight or overshadowing for these neighbours. It would not have a negative impact upon visual amenity or result in a loss of privacy/create overlooking and therefore complies with policy DM9(E) of the Local Plan.

Standard of Accommodation

Policy DM10 of the Local Plan requires that all new housing development meets or exceeds the minimum internal space standards set out in the latest Nationally Described Space Standards. The proposed replacement dwelling exceeds these standards and the requirements of the Essex Design Guide in terms of private amenity space. All habitable rooms would receive a good level of daylight and sunlight and the proposal is therefore acceptable in this respect.

Highway safety/Parking

Existing pedestrian and vehicular access would remain and 2no. car parking spaces are proposed at the front of the site which is acceptable.

Epping Forest Special Area of Conservation

As a replacement single family dwelling, the proposal would not have an increased impact upon the Epping Forest SAC.

Conclusion

The proposal would have a harmful impact upon character and appearance; the application is therefore recommended for refusal.