

**ITEM 4.20 - (13/01204/FULL 1) - WILDERWOOD, WIDMORE GREEN, BROMLEY REPRESENTATIONS SUBMITTED BY WARD MEMBER COUNCILLOR KATE LYMER**

I and my ward colleagues strongly oppose this Application, as do neighbouring residents and the Sundridge Residents Association.

Widmore Green is an important gateway site to Bromley Town Centre, Sundridge Avenue Conservation Area and Sundridge, and local residents are passionate about preserving the character of Widmore Green which is one of the few public open spaces in the area. In the early 20th century when Widmore was a village it was the village green when horse and cart was the only means of transport. The horse trough is still in situ. About ten years ago the Council refurbished the green and were sympathetic to its historical significance and put in finger signposts reminiscent of the type of sign which would have been there in the early 20th century. They built flower beds to stop cars parking on the grass and wearing it away. The site of Wilderwood provides an important backdrop to this historical setting. Any development at the site should be ancillary to the setting of the green rather than dominant. This proposal does not achieve this.

Wilderwood was originally the site of one bungalow set back in the centre of the site. 2 thirds of the site was garden, with a beautiful sweep of front lawn which formed the backdrop for Widmore Green. It is unacceptable to replace a bungalow with a chalet bungalow plus 4 houses, a collections of sheds as well as 8 unsightly highly visible car parking spaces .

It is not the right location for a terrace of small houses. Paragraph 4 on page 126 states that "When considering the recently dismissed appeal, the Inspector stated that the proposed terrace dwellings would be reflective of properties on Plaistow Lane." But it is not. There are no terrace dwellings in Plaistow Lane in Bickley. Properties are all detached in large plots, including an Ernest Newton house. Therefore this proposal is totally against the spacial standard that exists in Plaistow Lane. There are no terraces of houses in the vicinity of Plaistow Lane and this would create an unacceptable precedent.

Additionally these houses would also have high roofs which provides the capacity for further development within the roof space. This would facilitate even more intensive over development of the site.

The proposed car parking facilities for 8 vehicles would be in an elevated location as the site slopes uphill. This which would be a highly obtrusive focal point for the development and highly visible from Widmore Green as well as on the elevated approach along Widmore Road towards Bromley. Consequently this remains an extremely inappropriate backdrop to Widmore Green.

In addition the latest scheme now introduces lines of refuse and recyclables collection points adjacent to the ramped entrance. These are likely to remain long-term refuse storage points as the houses are too far away uphill for the owners to keep their bins outside their homes. This would be unattractive and also encourage fly tipping.

There is a pedestrian pathway in front of this providing access to the housing. Between the path and the boundary there is a very narrow strip of land intended for new planting and screening behind boundary railings. Railings that we have not been given any details of other than their height. In practice such planting would be impractical if allowed to exceed a height of 1.5m or so. Access would become obstructed. This would therefore not provide adequate screening to the parking or the rubbish bins.

In this latest application in place of a pair of flats is a chalet style house, positioned exactly where a beautiful 150 year old horse chestnut tree originally was, which was ruthlessly chopped down last year. The chalet bungalow has a roof height nearly twice the height of the building itself, and consequently looks top heavy and bulky. The awkward sitting of this house to the front left corner of the site would still appear incongruous and bear no relationship to

the three single-storey shop properties fronting Widmore Road. The row of shops tapers to a point and does not impact adversely on Widmore Green to any great significance. The proposed house does.

Although the house is 50cm further back than the flats were, this is too close to the frontage with the Green. It would also be out of scale and character with the adjacent single storey commercial properties.

Overall I think this proposal should be refused on the following grounds: that it is a cramped overdevelopment of the site and not in line with special standards in the area. That it is out of character with the surrounding homes as there are no terraced homes in Plaistow Lane, despite what the last Inspector said according to our officer's report. That the chalet bungalow is incongruously placed, bears no relationship to the single storey strip of shops nearby, is too near the front of the green and of a bulky design. That the whole scheme is inappropriate, and that a car park and rows of rubbish bins is an unsightly backdrop for Widmore Green and consequently detrimental to the amenity of the residents in the area. Additionally there is insufficient room planned for adequate screening. And also that the development would erode established special standards in the vicinity which would lead to pressure for similar inappropriate cramped redevelopment. And lastly, replacing the front garden with a car park and flank walls of houses is a gross example of garden grabbing contrary to the London Plan.

In conclusion Bickley has lost a lot of its green space – with housing being built in back gardens and filling in gaps between houses with even more houses. The Bickley residents that have chosen to live in this area deserve our support to maintain the high standards of their surroundings. It would be a travesty for this much loved historical area of Bickley and entrance to our borough's capital if this application was approved.

(Policies H7, H8, BE1, London Plan).