

Bromley Council Plans Sub Committee 1 - 22<sup>nd</sup> January

Agenda Item 4.3

26, Mayfield Avenue, Orpington, Kent, BR6 0AL

Madam Chairman

What I have to say this evening is fully supported by my two Ward colleagues Cllrs. Simon Fawthrop and Tony Owen. The former 'called in' this application and the latter is on the committee this evening. My comments are also supported by the existing residents in the road called Brookside.

This item relates to an application to build a detached two storey, four bedroom dwelling with integral garage and vehicular access, fronting onto Brookside, on garden land to the rear of 26 and 28, Mayfield Avenue.

Brookside is a fairly short narrow road, some four metres wide, culminating in a small turning area and a cul de sac. There are detached houses on either side of the road. I parked my car there this morning in the vicinity of where the crossover to the proposed property would be. It would have been impossible for anything larger than another car to get past my car without going onto the pavement

You will have noted from the report at the bottom of page 33, that opposite the application site nos.12 and 13, Brookside, were constructed in the late 1970's on part of the rear gardens of 22 and 24, Mayfield Avenue having been granted permission on appeal. However that permission in the 70's is now long outdated and was granted many years before the introduction of Bromley's own Unitary Development Plan of 2006 and the most recent London Plan which came into effect on the 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2011. This London Plan replaced an earlier London Plan of 2004, which was republished with amendments in 2008.

One of the objectives of the London Mayor's current London Plan was/is to greatly reduce the number of houses being built in back or rear gardens, commonly known as garden grabbing. Prior to 2011, back gardens were in the same brownfield category as derelict factories, disused railway sidings, etc. The 2011 London Plan removed rear gardens from that classification which removed the almost inevitable previous result that applications for developments in rear gardens would one way or another be approved and gave local councils more freedom in arriving at decisions. Although it is not impossible to obtain permission for such developments it is also Bromley Council's current general policy to resist such applications.

Mention is also made in the report, page 35, CONCLUSIONS, second paragraph, of an allegedly similar scheme in Westholme, the next side road along from Brookside. There are strong similarities in these two roads including length and width, but there the similarity ends as there are differences as to what was permitted in Westholme on appeal and what is proposed in the application being considered this evening for Brookside. I also visited Westholme and noted that three cars were parked on the right hand side of the road near the entrance from Mayfield Avenue. One of them

was parked half on the pavement. I got passed them, but again it would have been impossible for a larger vehicle to do so without going onto the pavement.

According to the developers of the scheme being considered this evening the appeal as regards Westholme was granted in November 2010. Again this was before the change of policy introduced by the London Plan in July 2011, and in any event the Appeal Inspector in that instance would have reached his/her decision based on the policies in vogue on the date the original application was refused by Bromley Council.

As you will have noted from the top of page 35 of the report, a previous application for a four bedroom house on this site was refused in 2008, on the grounds of 1) an overdevelopment of the site and out of character with the locality thereby detrimental to its visual amenities, contrary to policies H7 and BE1 of the Unitary Development Plan and 2) the proposal would give rise to an unacceptable degree of overlooking and loss of privacy to the occupiers of the adjoining properties, contrary to policy BE1 of the UDP.

I cannot see that much has altered since 2008 and would add to these two grounds the relevant policy in the London Plan 2011 and Bromley's own general policy.

I also have serious reservations concerning parking and the free movement of traffic in Brookside and indeed Westholme. My Ward colleague Cllr. Owen has had a dialogue over a lengthy period of time with the Environmental Department concerning this. I am at a loss to understand the Highway Engineer's comment.

This is quite clearly a rear garden development application and an overdevelopment of the site and I propose that the application is refused on grounds of the National Planning Policy Framework, the London Plan 2011 and policy BE1 of Bromley Council's Unitary Development Plan 2006.

Thank you

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Cllr. Petts Wood & Knoll  
London Borough of Bromley