
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 5 June 2017

by S Jones MA DipLP

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 26 July 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/W5780/W/17/3171784

39 Northbrook Road, Redbridge, Ilford IG1 3BP

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Ms Sridevi against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Redbridge.
 - The application Ref 5734/16, dated 28 November 2016, was refused by notice dated 3 February 2017.
 - The development proposed is conversion of house to 2 studio flats and 1x3 bedroom flats.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are:
 - Whether the property should be safeguarded as a single family occupied dwellinghouse and the effect of the proposal on the character of the surrounding area, including the living conditions of the occupants of neighbouring properties as a result of potential increased noise and disturbance.
 - The effect of the proposal on the living conditions of occupiers of the development with regard to amenity space.

Reasons

Whether the property should be safeguarded as a single family occupied dwellinghouse and the effect of the proposal on the character of the surrounding area, including the living conditions of the occupants of neighbouring properties as a result of potential increased noise and disturbance

3. The property is a large double fronted 6 bedroomed terrace in a residential suburban neighbourhood in central Ilford. It is located in an area characterised by similar terraces, with front and rear gardens, which mainly appear to be in use as flats or single family homes. It is well located, close to local facilities, including transport.
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4. While the two properties either side have been converted into flats, these were granted planning permission before the change in policy introduced in 2008 through Policy H2 of the Borough Wide Primary Policies Development Plan Document (BWPPDPD) which seeks to retain single family dwellings by only permitting them in Metropolitan or District Centres, or where the surrounding area comprises predominantly converted properties. The purpose of the policy appears to be to ensure the appropriate choice and mix of dwellings is maintained in the district and to control where family homes need to be retained.
5. The appeal site is not located in a Metropolitan or District Centre, and although there are other converted flats in the area, including surrounding properties on Northbrook Road, the area does not contain predominantly converted flats. As such the proposal would conflict with Policy H2.
6. It is clear from the evidence before me that the Council are also concerned in this case about the potential change to the character of the area a concentration of flats could bring about, as well as the effect on living conditions.
7. Despite the fact that it would deliver a different configuration of homes I note that the reconfiguration may not provide accommodation for any greater number of people than currently. Nevertheless, the property would change from being occupied by a single family to 3 separate households and this in my experience would be likely to lead to an increase in comings and goings. The impact of this would be magnified by virtue of there already being other converted properties nearby, thereby leading to a harmful concentration.
8. A move away from single family homes cumulatively would adversely impact the character of the area and be likely to expose it to increased noise and disruption from the increased comings and goings. This would be contrary to Policy SP3 of the Redbridge Core Strategy Development Plan Document, which requires development to respect the amenity of the locality generally.

Living Conditions

9. There is outdoor space allocated to the two ground floor flats. However, the largest 3 bedroom family sized flat, which the appellant contends would mitigate the loss of the family dwelling, would not have any outdoor amenity space. It could reasonably be said that this configuration and potential number of people would be likely to have a greater need of amenity space than the two studio flats. Moreover, the appeal site is located in an area identified in the Council's Core Strategy as having poor access to public open space. This makes the inclusion of a garden area for this larger flat all the more important.
10. While there might be difficulty in defining an arrangement for the flats so as to allow for amenity space to be allotted amongst each unit, the omission of amenity space to the 3 bedroom flat is clearly contrary to Policy BD4 of the BWPPDPD which requires its provision in this instance. It also fails to comply with Policy SP3 of the 2008 Redbridge Core Strategy Development Plan which refers to accessible space around buildings as a consideration and Policy 3.5 of the London Plan which seeks to secure high quality

development including appropriate space. For the same reasons, I conclude that the development would not comply with paragraph 17 of the National Planning Policy Framework or with its overarching principles in general in terms of providing a good standard of amenity and an improved local environment.

Other matters

11. The appellant argues that the proposal would provide affordable accommodation. Although smaller units might cost less than the whole property, low cost market housing does not fall within the definition of affordable housing set out in the glossary of the National Planning Policy Framework. Overall I have seen nothing to justify setting aside the policies I have referred to above.

Conclusion

12. For the reasons given above, and having regard to all other matters, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

S Jones

INSPECTOR