



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 7 October 2019

by Adrian Caines BSc(Hons) MSc TP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 10 October 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/Q5300/W/19/3231512

43 Coniscliffe Road, Southgate N13 5NP

- 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 Mr Victor Qiu against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Enfield.
 - The application Ref 18/04381/FUL, dated 11 November 2018, was refused by notice dated 18 March 2019.
 - The development proposed is described as 'conversions existing end terrace house into two single bedroom flats.'
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. Notwithstanding the description of the proposal on the appeal form, I have used the description as it appears on the original application form.
3. The spelling of the appellant's surname in the banner heading is as it appears on the original application form.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the development on the Borough's supply of family housing.

Reasons

5. Policy DMD5 of Enfield's Development Management Document 2014 (DMD) deals specifically with "Residential Conversions". Although it sets out some specific criteria that all conversions must meet (such as preventing clustering and meeting the London Plan space standards), it also seeks to protect family accommodation, which comprises 3+ bedrooms. Any proposal for conversion of existing family units requires compensatory family sized accommodation within the development. This requirement must be met irrespective of whether the criteria in the first part of the Policy are satisfied.
6. Policy DMD5 is also required to be read in conjunction with Core Policy 5 of The Enfield Plan Core Strategy 2010-2025 (CS), which seeks to ensure provision of a range of housing sizes to meet local need. The explanatory text under paragraphs 5.40 and 5.41 indicates that Enfield's Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA), in respect of the supply to need ratio, showed a particular shortage for larger family accommodation.

7. The proposal seeks to convert a four-bedroom property into two one-bedroom flats. It would therefore result in the loss of a family sized dwelling, for which, on the evidence before me, there is an identified need. Moreover, as neither flat would provide three bedrooms, the proposal would not provide any compensatory family sized accommodation. Consequently, even though it would not infringe the clustering and other specific criteria, the proposal is contrary to Policy DMD5 of the DMD.
8. The appellant asserts that the Enfield SHMA is out of date and that regard should be given to the emerging new Enfield and London Plans. However, there is no evidence before me that any relevant policies in the emerging plans are at a stage where they can be given significant weight in this appeal. In addition, whilst I acknowledge that the proposal would add to the mix of smaller units and housing supply in Enfield and be appropriate in density terms, I have not been provided with any substantive evidence that there is no longer a greater need for family housing in the Borough. From the information that is before me, retaining existing family dwelling stock is an essential element of providing enough family housing in the Borough.
9. For the reasons given, the proposal would adversely affect the supply of family housing in the Borough. It would therefore be contrary to Policy DMD5 of the DMD and Core Policy 5 of the CS, which seek to meet identified housing need and prevent the loss of family housing due to a recognised shortage of such accommodation in the Borough. I was also referred to Core Policy 30 of the CS, but as this primarily deals with character and appearance, it is not relevant to the main issue in this appeal and I find no conflict with it.

Other Matters

10. I note that whilst it appears that planning permission was granted for a similar proposal in 2008, which has now expired, it would have pre-dated the current development plan and was therefore not subject to the same policy considerations that I must judge this appeal against, such that I give it very limited, non-determinative weight in my considerations.
11. As I have found conflict with development plan policies for the reasons given, the proposal would not constitute sustainable development in the terms of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Conclusion

12. The proposal would create an additional residential unit and add to the mix of house sizes in the Borough. However, these modest benefits do not outweigh the adverse effect on the supply of family housing in the Borough and the proposal's failure to comply with the policies of the adopted development plan.
13. I therefore conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Adrian Caines

INSPECTOR