
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 26 November 2019

by M Allen BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 2 January 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/F5540/W/19/3236270
101 Bulstrode Avenue, Hounslow TW3 3AE

- 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 R Chind against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Hounslow.
 - The application Ref 00170/101/P1, dated 10 April 2019, was refused by notice dated 27 June 2019.
 - The development proposed is the conversion of existing dwellinghouse (C3) to 2 self-contained flats (one x 2 bedroom and one studio flat).
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue raised in this case is whether or not the dwelling is suitable for conversion into two units having regard to local housing needs.

Reasons

3. The proposed scheme involves the conversion of a single house into two flats. Policy SC6 of the London Borough of Hounslow Local Plan (2015-2030) (the Local Plan) sets out the circumstances where the conversion of existing dwellings will be allowed. The net original internal floor area falls below that required by Policy SC6 to make the property suitable for conversion. The Council states that the floorspace of the property is approximately 100 square metres (sqm), whereas the policy requires properties to be of at least 130 sqm in order to be converted. The appellant accepts that the existing dwelling falls below the 130 sqm requirement.
4. Policy SC6 also requires that at least one family-sized unit is provided at ground floor level, except in locations not suitable for families. The Council state that a family-sized unit is considered to be, at a minimum, a two-bedroom, four-person unit. The scheme proposes a two-bedroom, three-person unit to the ground floor. Furthermore, no information has been submitted to show that the area within which the site is located is unsuitable for families.
5. Consequently, the dwelling is not suitable for conversion and the proposal would be contrary to Policy SC6 of the Local Plan, which seeks to ensure that the sub-division of housing stock contributes to housing supply without having an adverse impact on the character of an area or residents' amenity.

Other Matters

6. The appellant contends that there is a need within the Borough for one and two-bedroom properties and that the policy fails to take this into account. Whilst I note the information in respect of this need, I also note that there is a significant need for three-bedroom properties, which the proposal would result in the loss of. I also note that the scheme would provide additional housing, however this would be limited to a single additional unit only. As such, these matters are not sufficient to outweigh the conflict with policy I identify above.
7. Additionally, it is stated that at the time of the adoption of the Local Plan matters such as the re-development of Hounslow, "Brexit" and the proposal for an additional runway at Heathrow, were not considered. However, I do not have any substantive evidence before me to demonstrate that the Local Plan policies are deficient in addressing these matters. Moreover, a review of the Local Plan would be the appropriate means to address these strategic matters, rather than through departing from the policies of the development plan.
8. It is commented that the loss of a single dwelling from housing stock would not be harmful. This is however an argument that could be applied to many schemes with consequent, cumulative harm and as such this matter has little bearing on my decision. There is also reference to the quality of the accommodation that would be provided, this is not however sufficient reason to set aside the conflict with adopted policy.

Conclusion

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

Martin Allen

INSPECTOR