
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 7 January 2020

by R Norman BA (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 30 January 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/W5780/W/19/3239317

36 Aberdour Road, Goodmayes, Ilford IG3 9SB

- 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 Razaq, Wellwood Investments against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Redbridge.
 - The application Ref 1961/19, dated 7 May 2019, was refused by notice dated 7 August 2019.
 - The development proposed is described as the change of use of a single residential dwelling (C3) into a 7no bedroom house of multiple occupation.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. The description of development in the heading above has been taken from the planning application form. However, in Part E of the appeal form it is stated that the description of development has not changed but, nevertheless, a different wording has been entered. Neither of the main parties has provided written confirmation that a revised description of development has been agreed. Accordingly, I have used the one given on the original application.
3. The Emerging Draft London Plan is at an advanced stage following the publication of the Panel report. However, the Policies of the adopted London Plan remain relevant and I have considered the appeal on this basis.

Main Issues

4. The main issues are the effect of the development on:
 - the provision of family homes in the area; and
 - the living conditions of nearby occupiers.

Reasons

Provision of Family Homes

5. The appeal site comprises a mid-terraced, two storey dwelling located on Aberdour Road. It has a large driveway to the front and a private area of garden to the rear. The surrounding area is reasonably uniform in appearance and comprises of rows of terraced properties in residential use. The proposed

development would change the use of the property from its current C3 dwelling use to a house of multiple occupation (HMO) comprising of 7 bedrooms. There would be a large shared kitchen area and each bedroom would have its own en-suite facilities.

6. Policy LP6 of the Redbridge Local Plan 2015 – 2030 (2018) (Local Plan) states that the conversion of larger homes into smaller self-contained units will only be supported where they are located in a Metropolitan, District or Local Centre, the dwelling has a gross internal floor space which exceeds 180 square metres where three or more units are proposed, appropriate car and cycle parking provision is provided, there would not be significant loss of character or amenity and the national space standards are met.
7. The appeal site is located outside of any Metropolitan, District or Local Centre, being around 800 metres away from the Goodmayes District Centre. Accordingly, this fails to accord with Policy LP6 (a). I note the Appellant highlights the location of the appeal site in relation to the local centres of Goodmayes, Seven Kings and Becontree and that this results in pressure for houses in multiple occupation. However, I have limited evidence of the demand for houses in multiple occupation in the areas outside of the designated local centres and therefore I have little to suggest that such properties could not be accommodated within the designated areas.
8. Policy LP6 (f) also states that conversions should provide at least 1 larger family sized home on the ground floor with access to a dedicated rear garden. The Appellant identifies that the ground floor of the property would be retained as a three bedroomed dwelling with access to a dedicated amenity area. However, the submitted information shows that although there are three bedrooms on the ground floor, these each have their own separate en-suites and would utilise the shared kitchen which would serve the upstairs bedrooms also. It therefore appears that these bedrooms would provide individual accommodation and would not be occupied as a family unit.
9. The Appellant advises that the property is no longer viable as a single dwelling resulting in the building being under-utilised however I have been provided with little evidence to suggest why the property is no longer viable for its extant use. Accordingly, I give this limited weight in my consideration of the proposal.
10. Whilst paragraphs 117 and 118 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2019) requires the effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, decisions should be made on the basis of the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In this instance, it has not been sufficiently demonstrated that there are material considerations which would justify a departure from the adopted policies of the development plan. I note the requirements of the London Plan to provide a choice of homes which meet a variety of requirements. Nevertheless, the Council have identified areas within Policy LP6 where smaller homes, conversions and HMOs can be suitably accommodated in proximity to public transport and local facilities, and the appeal site is not located within any of these designated areas.
11. Accordingly, the proposal would result in the loss of a family home in an area which is not designated for such purposes. It therefore fails to comply with Policies LP5 and LP6 of the Local Plan which seek to focus on the provision of larger family sized homes, amongst other things.

Living Conditions

12. The appeal property is set within a predominantly residential area and comprises a mid-terraced, two storey dwelling. The dwelling originally formed a large family home which I acknowledge would provide accommodation for a number of family members at any one time.
13. However, the proposed change of use would provide 7 individual bedrooms, some of which would be double bedrooms able to accommodate more than one person. The Council have identified that up to 11 residents could be accommodated within the property at any one time and I find this to be a reasonable estimate. Accordingly, this would give rise to a significant increase in activity over and above that expected from a family home.
14. Furthermore, the occupiers would be likely to be unrelated to one another and would lead separate lives which would be very likely to result in more comings and goings and related noise and disturbance than if the property was occupied by a single family.
15. Consequently, I find that the proposed change of use would result in increased levels of noise and disturbance as a result of the potential number of unrelated occupiers, which would be at odds with the residential nature of the area and neighbouring living conditions. It would therefore fail to comply with Policies LP6 and LP26 of the Local Plan. Collectively these seek to ensure that development does not result in adverse impacts upon the amenity of neighbouring occupiers, amongst other things.

Other Matters

16. I have had regard to the examples of other similar developments in the area. However, I have limited information about their histories, but inevitably their contexts would differ to that of the scheme before me, and so they do not lead me to a different view in this case. Furthermore, the Council have identified why these examples are not wholly comparable to the appeal proposal and accordingly I give these limited weight in my consideration of the appeal.
17. I note the high standard of works carried out within the property. I have also carefully considered that the conversion would not change the state or condition of the building or create any additional entrances and that the property is within proximity to one local bus stop. However, these considerations are not sufficient to outweigh the policy conflict in this instance.

Conclusion

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

R Norman

INSPECTOR