
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 29 January 2020

by Andrew McGlone BSc MCD MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 6 February 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/U5930/W/19/3240679

30 and 32 Inks Green, Chingford E4 9EL

- 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 Maciek Halat against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Waltham Forest.
 - The application Ref 191604, dated 13 May 2019, was refused by notice dated 25 July 2019.
 - The development proposed is the conversion of 2no dwellinghouses into 1no dwellinghouse. No external alterations proposed.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are the effect of the proposed development on: (i) the provision of large family sized dwellings in the Borough; and (ii) the character and appearance of the area and the Ropers Field Conservation Area (RFCA).

Reasons

Large family sized dwellings

3. Policy CS2 of the Core Strategy (CS) seeks to facilitate sustainable housing growth by: maximising the number of quality homes in the Borough by: resisting the unjustified net loss of residential accommodation; and by creating an economically mixed and balanced community by seeking a range of home sizes and tenures in new development. The Council will prioritise the need for larger homes (3 bedrooms or more) in new developments and resist the loss of any existing larger homes.
4. I understand that the appellant and his family have lived in the area for some time and that they would like to stay in the area, but extra space is needed for their growing family. If, as the appellant suggests, there is not an abundance of 5 bedroom units in the area and the Borough, the appellant's aspirations carry positive weight in favour of the proposal given that CS paragraph 5.20 outlines the Council's aspiration to deliver housing types and sizes that provide adequate choice and meet the changing needs of local residents.
5. The Council have identified the need for larger homes (3 bedrooms or more) and as a result resist the loss of any existing larger homes to tackle the outward migration of young households, particularly those with middle and higher incomes, out of the Borough as they have been unable to find

appropriate sized homes to meet their needs. The appellant's evidence only supports the need for larger homes to be retained even if the Council is able to demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites.

6. Given that the dwellings each offer 4 bedrooms, they are suitable for family housing. Hence, the proposal would result in the loss of a larger home in the Borough. Although the proposal would not change the quantum of residential floor space available, the appeal scheme has not justified the net loss of the two existing homes. Thus, the proposal would not maximise the number of quality homes in the Borough.
7. While the appellant's circumstances carry positive weight, and the provision of a larger home would meet the changing need of an existing family, these matters do not outweigh the development plan's approach to tackling an identified issue insofar as resisting the unjustified net loss of any existing larger homes. As such, I conclude, on this issue, that the proposed development would have a significant effect on the provision of large family sized dwellings in the Borough. The proposal would conflict with CS Policy CS2 which seeks to resist the unjustified net loss of residential accommodation; and prioritise the need for larger homes (3 bedrooms or more) in new developments and resist the loss of any existing larger homes.
8. The Council on this issue also refer to Policy DM6 of the Development Management Policies Local Plan (Local Plan) which seeks to control the sub-division of larger homes into smaller homes. However, the proposal does not seek to create a smaller home as it would result in two larger homes becoming a single larger home. Thus, Local Plan Policy DM6 is not relevant to the appeal scheme.

Character and appearance

9. The RFCA is characterised by two-storey hipped roofed semi-detached dwellings set within a suburban setting. Almost exclusively, the RFCA is characterised by residential dwellings which display a strong uniformity driven by the three types of designs, which only vary in terms of their roofs. Properties within the RFCA benefit from off-street parking and a modest garden to the front, with a larger private garden to the rear that is enclosed by boundary treatments. Landscaping softens and supplements the built form which is set back from the road and regularly spaced from neighbouring properties. To the north is the wooded, Larkwood Park.
10. As no external changes are proposed to the elevations of the dwellings, they would keep their own entrances and existing window openings. Internal alterations to the room layouts would take place, but no changes to the access arrangements are proposed.
11. A single detached dwelling may not have been part of the original plans for the area, but this is not to say that there can never be any change. Although the two dwellings would, in their function, become a single dwelling, there would be no change to the appearance of the two dwellings or the layout of the front gardens/driveways. In this regard, the proposal would preserve the garden suburban principle of the RFCA.
12. However, there are no details before me confirming whether the existing rear gardens would become a single garden or they would stay as two separate entities. It is likely that they would function as a single garden. While the

quantum of garden space would not change, and there is limited visibility of the rear gardens from the road, the planned character of the estate, which is based on semi-detached dwellings within a garden suburban setting, would be likely to be uncharacteristically changed, which would erode a contributing factor of the RFCA's special interest.

13. On this issue, I conclude that the proposed development would not preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the RFCA. Thus, conflict would arise with CS Policy CS12 and Local Plan policies DM28 and DM29. These, among other things, seek to promote the conservation, enhancement and enjoyment of the Borough's heritage assets and their settings by only permitting development in conservation areas which preserves or enhances the character or appearance of the area, having regard to local character and context.

Conclusion

14. For the reasons set out above, I conclude that the appeal is dismissed.

Andrew McGlone

INSPECTOR