



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 5 September 2022

by Andrew McGlone BSc MCD MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 14th September 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/W5780/W/21/3284139

2 Chapelmount Road, Woodford Green, IG8 8HW

- 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 Mrs Lisa Vearer against the decision of London Borough of Redbridge.
 - The application Ref 2025/21, dated 10 May 2021, was refused by notice dated 22 July 2021.
 - The development proposed is the erection of one 1 x bedroom single dwelling house on a vacant plot with associated landscaping, car parking, waste / refuse storage and amenity space.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues in this case are whether the proposed development would:
(a) provide a high standard of accommodation for future occupants in terms of outlook, privacy and external amenity space; and (b) preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Woodford Bridge Conservation Area.

Reasons

3. The appeal site is a vacant parcel of land next to a two-storey end terrace property within an area characterised by two-storey residential properties of a similar style and design. Hard surfacing, which provides car parking facilities for nearby residential properties, is to the north and south of the site.

Living conditions

4. The proposed open plan kitchen/living area would be served by a window to the front elevation and patio doors leading into the side garden. The former would have an outlook of the communal parking area, the latter of the garden and the proposed boundary wall. Although both openings would be of a good size, they would not provide a high standard of outlook for future occupants. The tall boundary wall would be directly in front of, and close to, the patio doors, which would cause a harmful outlook. However, due to the enclosed nature of the garden no harm would be caused to future occupants' privacy.
5. A small strip of landscaping is proposed in front of the window to the front elevation, but the outlook from it would be harmful to future occupants' living conditions due to the proximity of those spaces and vehicles. This harm would be exacerbated by the lack of any defensible space between the window and the parking spaces. Defensible space is a characteristic of nearby dwellings,

and without any, persons accessing their vehicles could view straight into the proposed kitchen/dining room to the detriment of future occupants' privacy. Future occupants may install blinds or curtains, but they should not be required to do so to ensure they enjoy a high standard of privacy in their own home.

6. The quantum of private external amenity space proposed would fall significantly below the amount required for a one bedroom dwelling. The gross internal area of the proposed dwelling does not lessen the need to provide a quality, functional private external amenity space for future occupants to use as it would not enable a range of activities such as sitting out, dining, child's play, gardening and social interaction to take place. The standard sought for a flatted development and the site's constraints do not alter my view given the limited amount of amenity space proposed. There is a large public open space on the northern side of Manor Road a short walk away, but it would not provide a substitute for future occupants wishing to sit out, dine or garden, given the size and layout of the private external amenity space proposed.
7. I conclude, on this issue, that despite my finding about future occupants' privacy in terms of the patio doors, the proposed development would not provide a high standard of accommodation for future occupants in terms of outlook, privacy and external amenity space. The proposal would conflict with Policies LP26 and LP29 of the Redbridge Local Plan 2015 – 2030 (Local Plan) along with Policy D6 of The London Plan. Jointly, these policies seek, among other things, new housing development to provide high standards of accommodation in terms of size, quality and arrangement of external private amenity space, and access to usable open space.

Conservation Area

8. The Conservation Area covers an area on either side of Chigwell Road and Manor Road. The special character derives from the varied type, style, design and use of buildings within the Conservation Area that reflects the evolution of the area and its rich historic and architectural interest. Moreover, the layout of development around two ancient greens informs the story of the area's evolution. Development within Chapelmount Road has a unified character owing to its scale, massing, layout, design and use of materials.
9. The new dwelling would replicate the existing terrace's scale and massing. However, it would be wider than properties in the terrace and the wider estate. Whilst the number of fenestrations proposed in the front elevation are necessary to break up the front elevation, they would highlight the proposed dwelling's width, which would harmfully jar with the characteristic design and width of dwellings in the road.
10. The proposal would improve the existing condition of the land, respond to the staggered building line found elsewhere in the road and display many of the design features that make up the area's character. Whilst residents have submitted representations supporting the scheme, I consider that the proposal before me would not integrate well and respect the surrounding area, in terms of its layout, style and design, to reinforce the positive and distinctive unified character found in the road which forms part of the Conservation Area. Hence, less than substantial harm to the Conservation Area would be caused. Yet, great weight does still need to be given to the asset's conservation and the public benefits of the appeal scheme need to be weighed against this harm.

11. The appeal site lies within the setting of a locally listed building which lies to the south-west of the site. The building is now used as part of a hotel but was formerly Barnardo's Chapel. Its significance derives from the building's architectural detail. However as the proposal would respond to the scale, siting, massing, design principles and use of materials evident in properties within Chapelmount Road, I consider that this significance would be preserved.
12. The proposal would result in the provision of an additional dwelling and make effective use of the land in what is a built-up area. There would also be temporary construction jobs and spending in the supply chain, plus ongoing spending by future occupants in the local economy. However, these modest benefits do not outweigh the less than substantial harm that I have identified. I therefore conclude that the proposed development would not preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Woodford Bridge Conservation Area. As such, it would conflict with Local Plan Policies LP26 and LP33 and London Plan Policies HC1 and D6. These policies collectively seek high quality design that: conserves and enhances the character and significance of the historic environment, is well integrated, has regard to its layout, style and design and complements the borough's heritage assets, and their settings.

Other matters

13. The appeal site lies within 6.2km of the Epping Forest Special Area of Conservation (SAC). To mitigate future occupants' effect on the integrity of the SAC the Council seeks to ensure that a financial contribution is made as mitigation. There is no mechanism before me to secure that mitigation, but as I am dismissing the appeal as it is unacceptable for other reasons, I have not considered this matter further.
14. No suggested planning conditions were submitted by the Council in the event that I were minded to allow the appeal. However, having regard to the evidence before me and my findings, I am of the view that planning conditions could not make this development acceptable in planning terms.
15. Based on the latest version of the Housing Delivery Test, the Council is meeting the required target so there are not any decision-making consequences.

Conclusion

16. The proposal would not accord with the development plan as a whole and there are no other considerations, including the Framework, that indicate that I should take a different decision other than in accordance with this. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Andrew McGlone

INSPECTOR