



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 15 November 2023

by J Smith MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 19 December 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/W5780/W/23/3321478

1A - 1B Chestnut Drive, Wanstead, London E11 2TA

- 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 Charlie Rood against the decision of London Borough of Redbridge.
 - The application Ref 4126/22, dated 23 December 2022, was refused by notice dated 23 February 2023.
 - The development proposed is conversion of property from two flats into single dwelling house. Alterations to fenestrations.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The application form related to this appeal refers to 1A in the address and has a longer description of the proposal. I have used the details from the Council's decision notice and the appeal form in the interest of clarity.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the overall supply of housing in the Borough.

Reasons

4. The appeal property is a two-storey building at the end of a terraced row which is formed by two separate flats. The wider street scene is characterised by dwellings of a similar form and appearance. The proposed development seeks to create a large family dwelling.
5. Policy LP2 of the Redbridge Local Plan 2015 - 2030 (RLP) seeks to deliver 16,845 new dwellings between 2015 to 2030. To achieve this, the policy seeks to resist the net loss of residential accommodation. In addition, the Council has noted that it is unable to demonstrate a 5-year supply of deliverable housing sites at present and therefore there is a clear need for residential accommodation in the London Borough of Redbridge.
6. The existing layout of the property contains two separate flats. One is located on the ground floor with access to the rear garden and the second on the first floor with no access to the rear garden. The appellant contends that the first floor apartment does not meet the Nationally Described Space Standards for a two bedroom flat. The Council acknowledge that the one-bedroom ground floor flat is not suitable for a family. The proposal would create a coherent family dwelling which would allow the full property to have access to the rear garden.

However, there would be a net loss of a residential unit, this would therefore be contrary to LP2 of the RLP.

7. The Outer North-East London Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) identifies a need for larger homes in the Borough of Redbridge. The SHMA highlights an 84% of housing need for homes with three or more bedrooms. The appellant contends that it is inaccurate to suggest that the SHMA is out of date as there have been no publications to confirm that this is the case. However, it is the Local Plan policies which are out of date due to the lack of a 5 Year Housing Land Supply (HLS).
8. The appellant also contends that the Redbridge Local Plan Authority Monitoring Report 2021-2022 dated June 2023 shows that only 15% of dwellings of 3 or more-bedroom properties have been completed against the target of 50%. This is correct. The appellant has also provided a letter to the London Mayor from the London Borough of Redbridge in Appendix 3 of the appellants response to the Council. This letter highlights that 3 or more-bedroom houses are required in the Borough. I note this is supported by the findings of the SHMA.
9. I acknowledge the need and benefit of providing family sized housing. However, in this case the benefit of this does not outweigh the harm of the net loss of one dwelling. This would worsen the shortfall of housing during a period where sufficient numbers of housing are not being delivered to meet the need in the Borough of Redbridge. Whilst I note that this would result in the loss of one dwelling in this instance, a cumulative loss of residential accommodation overtime would undermine the RLP and its ambition of maintaining and increasing the supply of housing in the Borough.
10. To conclude, although the SHMA does identify a need for larger family dwellings, I find that the proposal would erode the supply of housing in the Borough of Redbridge due to the loss of one residential unit. As such, it would therefore conflict with Policy LP2 of the RLP which seeks to increase the supply and maintain the stock of housing in London through resisting the loss of residential units.

Other Matters

11. In Appendix A of the appellants statement and in their response to the Council, the appellant provides an overview of recent approvals of planning permission by the Council. I have not been provided an officer report or a decision notice for these schemes and I am therefore unable to comment on the reasoning behind these decisions or their applicability to this proposal.

Planning Balance

12. Paragraph 11 of the Framework states that development plan policies which are most important for determining the application should be considered out of date where a Council is not able to demonstrate a five-year HLS. As such, the Framework states that planning permission should be granted unless there are any impacts which would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits.
13. The proposed development would result in a net reduction of housing within the Borough of Redbridge. The proposal would therefore be contrary to Policy LP2 of the RLP. The RLP seeks to boost housing provision and maintain its existing stock. The Council currently has a shortfall in housing provision.

14. In my assessment of the proposed scheme, I have considered the benefits of the proposal. The proposal would create one large family dwelling which would have full access to the rear garden space. At current, the Council state that this space is not accessible by one of the flats in its current configuration. The SHMA also identifies a need for larger family dwellings which this proposal would bring. Nevertheless, the proposal would result in the net loss of one residential unit.
15. As such, I find that the adverse impact of the net loss of one residential unit would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits of the scheme found above. The proposal would be contrary to the development plan when read as whole and I find no material considerations which outweigh this conflict.

Conclusion

16. To conclude, for the reasons given above, the appeal is dismissed.

J Smith MRTPI

INSPECTOR