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## Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 18 June 2025

**by A Knight BA PG Dip MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

**Decision date: 23 July 2025**

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**Appeal Ref: APP/W5780/W/25/3359941**

**Park Hotel, 325-327 Cranbrook Road & 2 Cavendish Gardens, Ilford IG1 4UE, IG13EA.**

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
  - The appeal is made by Mr Ikram Wahid of London & Co UK Ltd against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Redbridge.
  - The application Ref is 2361/24.
  - The development proposed is for temporary use. The proposal is for a single-storey modular unit within the Park Hotel's rear courtyard. This prototype will serve as a showcase, demonstrating the principle of modular construction as a sustainable and efficient housing solution. The unit will not be used for living or cooking but will be used to engage with clients including local authorities and to promote modular construction.
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### Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

### Preliminary Matters

2. The appeal is described as having been made partly in retrospect. I observed during my site visit that a unit at least comparable to that proposed in the appeal was in place. I have made my determination on the basis of the development as shown on the plans.
3. The extent of the appeal site is not clearly shown on the plans. I have proceeded on the basis that the appeal scheme would allow the proposed modular unit to be placed as shown on plan Ref 2724.

### Main Issues

4. The main issues are the effect of the proposal on living conditions for occupiers of neighbouring properties and for No 2 Cavendish Gardens, as well as its effect on the character and appearance of the area.

### Reasons

#### *Living Conditions*

5. The appeal site includes an open courtyard behind a hotel complex. Beyond this is housing laid out back-to-back. The appeal scheme includes placing a modular residential unit on the courtyard, parallel to the boundary with No 4 Cavendish Gardens, and behind No 2 Cavendish Gardens (No4 and No2 respectively).
6. No4 is in residential use, and its rear garden is separated from the courtyard by standard close-boarded fencing. The appellant's submissions set out that the unit

would be some 1.5m from the boundary, and describe it as some 2.9m tall. However, they also describe it as being on castor wheels, and I note that the proposed section shows the highest point of the unit to be some 3.5m from ground level. At some 11.9m long and given its proximity to the boundary and apparent height above ground level, the unit would be highly prominent to occupiers of No4. It would create an oppressive and harmful sense of enclosure, eroding what would otherwise be fairly open views northward above the fence. This would cause unacceptable harm to the outlook of occupiers of No4, particularly from the rear garden of the property.

7. The unit would have two rear windows. I have no indication that either would be obscure-glazed though, as it is not intended for the unit to be occupied residentially, I see no reason why such a requirement could not be imposed via condition. This would protect privacy at No4.
8. No2 is described as being part of the hotel premises. Its rear windows and doors face out directly onto the courtyard. It is not evident that movement around the courtyard by persons associated with the hotel is restricted, and there is no means of enclosure around the rear of No2. A combination of obscured glazing and curtains are deployed at the rear windows and doors. This prevents direct sight into No2 from the courtyard and significantly compromises rearward outlook from No2. Given this existing position, the presence of the unit as proposed would have little effect on living conditions for occupiers of No2.
9. Given the distance between the unit and 3 and 5 Redcliffe Gardens, and the presence in between of an existing courtyard building, the unit would not harm the living conditions of occupiers of those properties in terms of outlook or overlooking.
10. The unit would not be occupied residentially, would only be available for singular clients to view, the number of visits would be limited to two visits per week between the hours of 12.00 and 15.00. Given this, it is not apparent that the appeal scheme would generate noise and disturbance above and beyond that usually associated with the hotel, and I see no evidence harm would occur in this respect.
11. Overall, however, the appeal scheme would have a harmful effect on the living conditions of occupiers of No 4 Cavendish Gardens in respect of outlook. It would therefore contravene Policy LP26 of the Redbridge Local Plan (2018), where it requires that development not result in such adverse impacts.

#### *Character and Appearance*

12. Housing beyond the courtyard is laid out in back-to-back fashion, with properties on Redcliffe and Cavendish Gardens having reasonable size rear gardens. This forms a corridor of open, green space. Whilst there are a number of domestic outbuildings therein, they are generally modest in height. The openness of the corridor is appreciable, and it has a spacious, undeveloped character, beneficial to those who look out over or have use of it.
13. The hotel courtyard contributes to the open character described above; Whilst it contains outbuildings, they are modest in size and, overall, it serves as a separation gap between the green corridor and the busy hotel buildings.

14. As a result of its length, position, height above ground level, and orientation alongside the boundary, the unit would be prominent from various points along the green corridor, as well as from upper floor windows of properties along both Redcliffe and Cavendish Gardens. It would indicate a new, significant spread westward of development on the hotel site. As such, it would harmfully erode the spacious character of the area, contrary to the pertinent requirements of Policy LP26 of the Redbridge Local Plan (2018).

### **Other Considerations**

15. The proposal is for temporary planning permission, lasting no more than 550 days. That, however, is a significant period of time for living conditions and the character and appearance of the area to be harmed in the way I have described above.
16. The appellant is contemplating the use of this type of housing on other sites they own and envisages the appeal scheme acting as a demonstration of its potential. Whilst the Governmental aim of boosting the supply of housing is explicitly outlined in the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework), I have been provided with little to show the area has need of, or appropriate sites to support, this particular type of housing. Even if I presume that there is some degree of need, it is not clear how much modular housing the appellant would be able to provide, and so not clear that the appeal scheme is part of any wider benefit.

### **Conclusion**

17. The proposal conflicts with the development plan and the material considerations do not indicate that the appeal should be decided other than in accordance with it. The appeal is dismissed.

*A Knight*

INSPECTOR