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## Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 29 September 2025

by **S Simms BSc (Hons) MA MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 04 November 2025

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**Appeal Ref: APP/W5780/W/25/3367948**

**37 Belgrave Road, Ilford IG1 3AW**

- 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 Jasvir Rooprai against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Redbridge.
  - The application Ref is 0803/25.
  - The development proposed is conversion of single dwelling house into 3no. self-contained (2 x 1 and 1 x 2 bedrooms) flats with associated car parking, cycle storage, waste / refuse and amenity space. Alterations to fenestrations.
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### Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

### Preliminary Matter

2. A revised drawing was submitted with the appeal showing a reconfigured front forecourt, which I am requested to consider. The appeal process should not be used to evolve proposals. Revisions intended to overcome refusal reasons should normally be tested through a fresh application. I have therefore determined the appeal based on the plans that were before the Council when it made its decision and on which parties were consulted.

### Main Issues

3. The main issues in this appeal are the:
  - effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area
  - effect of the proposal on the provision of larger family-sized homes
  - adequacy of the proposed parking and access arrangements

### Reasons

#### *Character and appearance*

4. The appeal site comprises a two-storey double-fronted mid-terrace house with a pair of double-height bay windows. The rear garden contains an outbuilding, and the front is block-paved for parking with no boundary treatment to the street or right-hand side as seen from it; the left-hand side has a low wall.
5. The house is one of four in a terrace, and the street contains several of the same to both sides. Many have been rendered, pebble-dashed or clad, but retain their bays and decorative stonework, creating uniformity of scale and form. Similar

streets run parallel, also with hard surfaced front gardens. Whilst I have no survey data, the number of parking spaces and wheelie bins suggest occupation density consistent with some degree of conversion into flats or multiple occupation.

6. The proposal would convert a four-bedroom house into three flats with cycle and bin stores, a rear garden fence and an enlarged rear window. As the Council does not anticipate increases in occupation or comings-and-goings, I find it unlikely that any adverse impact on the character and appearance of the area could occur in this respect, and I find no conflict with Policy LP26 of the Redbridge Local Plan (2018) (RLP), which seeks to require good design.

#### *Larger family-sized homes*

7. The proposal would replace a four-bedroom market dwelling with three smaller such dwellings, two one-bedroom and one two-bedroom. The Council reports an increasing need for 'larger family-sized homes' with three or more bedrooms over smaller ones. The appellant does not dispute this but points to overall need and lack of delivery. Whilst the existing plan would appear to facilitate central horizontal subdivision, I have no technical, design or viability evidence as to why a family-sized dwelling could not be retained.
8. I have been referred to appeal decisions by other Inspectors where planning permission was granted for the conversion of family sized dwellings elsewhere in the Borough. The evidence on which those appeals were decided is not before me. It may have been clearer in those cases why no ground floor family dwelling could be retained. Furthermore, parking and access were not issues. Consequently, I cannot be sure that they are directly comparable.
9. Overall, whilst the proposal would result in a net increase in dwellings, it would do so at the cost of a family-sized dwelling, which the development plan specifically seeks to prevent. Consequently, it would be contrary to Policies LP5 and LP6 of the RLP, which prioritise and seek to retain larger family-sized homes.

#### *Parking and access arrangements*

10. I noted on site that the kerb was only dropped at either end of the frontage, with a small gap between. Because accesses along both sides of the street are generally so frequent as to be almost continuous, the risk of on-street parking seems low. The street also has a single yellow line to both sides, but no signs showed the type of restriction in force. During my early afternoon site visit on a term-time weekday, I observed moderate off-street and little on-street parking.
11. Ilford railway station and town centre are about 400 metres to the south-east with a station access located at the end of the street. Consequently, the site has a Public Transport Accessibility Level (PTAL) of 6a, representing very good accessibility. However, no analysis has been provided to justify the proposed amount of parking, and the proposed layout is cramped, prioritising vehicles over pedestrians and the convenient storage of and access to bicycles.
12. Given the site's public transport accessibility, fewer or no parking spaces may be appropriate. As it stands, I cannot be sure the proposal would provide sustainable, convenient and safe access. Consequently, it would be contrary to Policies LP23 and LP26 of the RLP and Policy T6 of the London Plan, which considers proposals

based on accessibility – assuming car-free development in well-connected places – and the quality of their design.

### **Other Matters**

13. The appeal site is within the zone of influence of the Epping Forest Special Area of Conservation (SAC). The appellant has supplied a signed Unilateral Undertaking to contribute financially to Strategic Access Management and Monitoring and Suitable Alternative Natural Green Space on commencement. This seeks to mitigate the impact on the SAC of recreational activity associated with the new dwellings. The Council is content with this approach, and if I were minded to grant permission I would carry out an Appropriate Assessment to form my own view.

### **Planning Balance**

14. The Council cannot demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites, and the 2023 Housing Delivery Test result for the Borough was 39%. It is therefore common ground that housing delivery is substantially below the requirement. In these circumstances, footnote 8 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) establishes that the policies most important for determining the application are out-of-date.
15. Consequently, with regard to paragraph 11(d) of the Framework, permission should be granted unless the application of policies in the Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a strong reason for refusing or adverse impacts would significantly and demonstrably outweigh benefits, assessed against the policies in the Framework as a whole.
16. Whilst the effect on the Epping Forest SAC could potentially be mitigated, I have found harms in terms of failures to prioritise sustainable transport, to provide safe, suitable access designed to national guidance and to consider the identified need for different types of housing. Paragraphs 110, 115, 129, 135 and 139 of the Framework are relevant to these harms, to which I attach significant weight.
17. Set against this, the under-delivery of housing is very significant. The proposal would seek to address this, but only in a small way and at the cost of a greater-needed housing type in this Borough, contrary to the development plan as a whole. I also note that Policy H2 of the London Plan sets targets for homes on small sites and refers to paragraph 73 of the Framework, which recognises the contribution they can make. The moderate weight I attach to these benefits, is significantly and demonstrably outweighed by the harms I have identified. As a result, the presumption in favour of sustainable development does not apply.

### **Conclusion**

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

*S Simms*

INSPECTOR