



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 18 November 2025

by A James BSc MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 12 JANUARY 2026

Appeal Ref: APP/Z5060/W/25/3370953

17 Campsey Road, Dagenham, Barking and Dagenham RM9 4DS

- 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 Chibuike Chibuike against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Barking & Dagenham.
 - The application Ref is 25/00822/FULL.
 - The development proposed is described in the evidence as a “change of use of the C3 dwelling to a 5-person C4 HMO”.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. Notwithstanding the description of development on the application form, which states “change of use from C3 Dwelling house to C4 small HMO 6B 6Person”, it is clear from the submitted plans and accompanying details that the development comprises the change of use of the C3 dwelling to a 5-person C4 HMO. The Council dealt with the proposal on this basis and so shall I.
3. There is an error on the decision notice within refusal reason one. It is stated that the “proposed development would result in the loss of two family-sized dwellinghouses”. However, it should state “one family-sized dwellinghouse” instead. There is no dispute between the parties in this respect.

Main Issues

4. The main issues are:
 - the effect of the proposed development on the supply of family housing within the area and whether it is suitability located;
 - the effect of the proposed development on the living conditions of future occupiers with particular regard to space standards and private outdoor amenity space; and
 - the effect of the proposed development on parking provision and highway safety.

Reasons

Supply of family housing

5. The appeal site comprises of a red brick end-of-terrace house which has been extended on the ground floor and has a rear roof extension. The dwelling is situated in a corner plot with hardstanding at the front and no boundary treatments. The existing dwelling has 5-bedrooms with a kitchen and reception room.
6. Policy SP3 of the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham Local Plan 2020-2037 (Local Plan) states, amongst other things, that in order to address the Borough's specific housing needs, the Council will prioritise self-contained family housing to ensure new residential developments do not limit their supply. Family housing is defined by the Local Plan as a dwelling that by virtue of its size, layout and design is suitable for a family with children to live in and generally has two or more bedrooms. In the London Plan (2021) this is defined as a dwelling with three or more bedrooms. Policy DMH5 of the Local Plan relates to houses in multiple occupation (HMOs). The policy finds that developments which lead to a loss of existing family housing will be resisted. The policy provides conditions with regards to where and when HMOs will be supported.
7. Both policies SP3 and DMH5 of the Local Plan are consistent with paragraph 63 of the National Planning Policy Framework which states that policies should reflect the housing needs of different groups in the community, including families with children.
8. The existing dwelling is by virtue of its size, layout and design suitable for family housing. The proposed development would change the use to a 5 person HMO. Therefore, it would no longer provide unified accommodation for a family.
9. The appellant notes that 39% of the housing mix indicated in the Strategic Housing Market Assessment and Housing Needs Survey (February 2020) should be for one bed dwellings. The appellant argues that this demonstrates that there is a need for smaller, affordable accommodation for individuals, and that HMOs help to meet this demand. However, a one bed dwelling and HMO accommodation are not the same and have different functions. I recognise that HMOs form an important contribution to the overall housing mix and this is recognised by policy DMH5 of the Local Plan and H9 of the London Plan. However, the Strategic Housing Market Assessment and Housing Needs Survey (February 2020), highlights a limited supply of family homes within the Borough alongside a significant level of demand. Therefore, there is a clear need for family housing.
10. The appellant also refers to under-occupation in the private sector indicating a surplus of family housing. However, reviewing the Strategic Housing Market Assessment and Housing Needs Survey (February 2020) there are also issues of overcrowding which demonstrates a need for family housing.
11. The appellant further notes the recently vacant nature of the property, that HMOs are scarce in the area and that there is ample stock of family dwellings, such that the loss of one family home would be of little consequence. However, I am not satisfied that this points to a local need for an HMO in this specific area. I accept that HMOs have a place in the housing mix but this should not be at the cost of the provision of family housing, for which there is a great need.

12. Furthermore, Policy DMH5 of the Local Plan requires that new HMOs will only be allowed where they are located in an area of high transport accessibility.
13. The parties agree that the appeal site has a Public Transport Accessibility Level (PTAL) rating of 1b which indicates the site has poor access to public transport. This is the case irrespective of the site being within walking distance of bus stops. Moreover, Becontree and Upney Stations are not considered to be within a reasonable walking distance of the site. While there is potential to cycle in the area, the proposed cycle parking would be positioned within the rear garden. The submitted plans show no direct route from the garden to the street and bikes would therefore need to be moved through the property. This is not a practical or convenient solution for future occupiers. Taking the above into account, it is likely that future residents would be reliant on private cars for at least some journeys.
14. I conclude that the proposed development would lead to a loss of a family dwelling house which would have a negative impact on the supply of family housing. The proposed development would not be in an area of high transport accessibility. This would be contrary to the relevant provisions of policies SP3, SP8, DMT1, and DMH5 of the Local Plan and T4 of the London Plan. In summary, these policies seek to address different housing needs and prioritise self-contained family housing and direct development to areas with sustainable transport links.

Living conditions

15. Policy DMH5 supports HMOs where they comply with relevant standards, including those set out in the East London Guidance on HMO Standards and satisfy the housing space standards outlined in the London Plan Policy D6: housing quality and standards, and its relevant guidance.
16. All proposed bedrooms comply with space standards set out in Policy D6 of the London Plan. However, these space standards relate to residential accommodation that is self-contained. I do not consider the proposed development to be self-contained accommodation as the future occupiers would make use of shared amenity spaces and facilities. The East London HMO guidance is specific local guidance for HMO development and is relevant to policy DMH5. Bedrooms 1 and 4 fall below the threshold set out in the East London HMO guidance. Although this is a relatively small shortfall it would result in an unsatisfactory standard of accommodation overall.
17. A garden area is proposed to the side and rear of the property. The side garden shown on the plans is in a prominent location within the site and would likely be overlooked by passersby.
18. No evidence of boundary treatments along the side garden area has been provided in support of the appeal scheme. Although the Council has stated that this aspect could be satisfactorily dealt with by a condition, I am not convinced that this would be an appropriate method to secure such details in this instance. This is principally due to the height of fencing required to provide adequate levels of privacy to this part of the proposed garden. This would be positioned within a prominent part of the site with possible effects on character and appearance and living conditions.
19. I also note that cycle parking for the HMO is proposed within the proposed rear garden space. The Local Highways Authority state that a minimum of five secure,

accessible and functional spaces are required to meet policy standards. Without any such details before me, this has the potential to consume a considerable area of the useable space within the rear garden, reducing its functionality as a private amenity space. Ultimately, aspects of the proposed private amenity space are uncertain, and I have insufficient evidence before me to conclude that the provision would be satisfactory for future occupiers.

20. In conclusion the proposed development would fail to meet the standards set out in the East London HMO guidance and would fail to provide satisfactory standard of outdoor amenity space. This would be contrary to the relevant provision of policy DMH5 of the Local Plan and D6 of London Plan when considered as a whole. In summary, these policies seek to ensure that new HMOs are designed to a high standard and provide good quality living conditions for future occupiers.

Parking provision and highway safety

21. The existing dwelling house does not have formal off-road parking, although I noted during my site visit that the front and side garden areas were used for informal parking, with no dropped kerb. The appeal site itself is within a Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ). This means future occupiers would need to apply for a permit if they wished to park near the property.
22. I have already found that there is likely to be a reliance on the car as a method of transport as the appeal site is in an area of low public transport accessibility.
23. The Local Highway Authority requested a parking survey to understand the local parking stress on the streets as they had concerns that the proposed development would increase pressure of the parking stress in the area. No parking survey has been submitted by the appellant to demonstrate that the proposed development would be acceptable.
24. The appellant sets out in their evidence that they are willing to commit to formalising the provision of four on-site parking spaces and will seek the necessary approval for a dropped kerb to ensure safe and convenient access. Nevertheless, no such details are before me.
25. Moreover, there is no substantive evidence before me that four on-site parking spaces could realistically be provided on the site or accessed independently. Even if I was to accept that four on-site parking spaces would be forthcoming, I cannot be certain that these spaces would be provided in line with London Borough of Barking and Dagenham highways standards.
26. Additionally, the site has no dropped kerb and creating spaces would likely remove existing CPZ bays and raise safety issues due to the proximity of the nearby junction. The loss of these spaces would increase parking pressure in the local area.
27. The appellant notes that the HMO would lead to a similar number of people living in the proposed development to that of the existing dwelling and with a similar amount of car ownership. However, there is no substantive evidence before me that this would be the case. Five individual occupants could realistically each require a dedicated parking space.
28. In conclusion, there is insufficient evidence before me to demonstrate that the proposed development would not lead to an increase in parking stress in the local

area. This would be contrary to the relevant provision of policies DMT1, DMT2 and SP8 of the Local Plan and policies T1, T6 and T6.1 of the London Plan. In summary, these policies seek to reduce parking stress and reliance on the private car by promoting active, efficient and sustainable modes of transport.

Other Matters

29. Policy D14 of London Plan has been noted in the refusal reason. This policy relates to noise. However, it was agreed between the parties the proposed development would have a neutral impact with regards to noise and I have no reason to take a different approach. This matter weighs neutrally in my decision.
30. I acknowledge the appellant's reference to a lack of harm in respect of character and appearance, neighbouring amenity and heritage assets. Nevertheless, there is no dispute between the parties on these matters, and I have no reason to disagree. The lack of harm in these respects is effectively neutral in my determination of the appeal.

Conclusion

31. For the above reason, having had regard to the development plan as a whole and all other relevant material considerations, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

A James

INSPECTOR