



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: 27 MARCH 2026

Appeal Ref: APP/Z5060/W/25/3370715

82 Holgate Road, Dagenham, Barking and Dagenham RM10 8NB

- 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 Mrs Nicoleta Ghita against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Barking & Dagenham.
 - The application Ref is 25/00405/FULL.
 - The development proposed is Conversion of the existing C3 dwelling into two 1xbed flats involving the addition of two ground floor side doors.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The appellant has indicated that the Council's description of development should be used. Accordingly, I have used this description of development, which more accurately describes the proposed development.
3. During my site visit I observed that the rear single-storey extension shown on the plans does not currently exist. Clarification has subsequently been sought from the appellant and council on this matter. The parties agree that the extension has not yet been built. However, it is understood that planning consent exists under reference 24/01629/PRIEXT. While the previously permitted extension may be constructed, it does not currently exist and does not form part of the description of development for this appeal. I have therefore assessed the appeal on this basis.
4. The Housing Design Standards LPG has been referenced in the refusal reason but has not been submitted. Accordingly, I have not taken this document into consideration in making my decision.

Main Issues

5. The main issues are:
 - whether the proposed development would provide acceptable living conditions for future occupiers, with particular regard to internal layout, outlook, daylight, noise and outdoor amenity space; and
 - the effect of the proposed development on the supply of family housing within the area.

Reasons

Living conditions

6. The appeal site comprises of an end-of-terrace house with hardstanding at the front of the property and private outdoor amenity space to the rear. The proposed development would subdivide the dwelling into two flats.

Flat 1

7. The proposed ground floor flat would provide one bedroom accommodation. The submitted plans indicate that the window of the proposed bedroom would connect, internally, with the dining area. This is a highly unusual arrangement. Outlook for future occupiers of this room would therefore be entirely lacking.
8. I note from the submitted drawings that a skylight is proposed above the bedroom window within the dining area. This would be the only source of natural light to the bedroom. I have no substantive evidence before me that this would enable satisfactory levels of daylight into the bedroom.
9. These aspects, together with the very narrow width of the kitchen, are indicators of a dysfunctional layout and generally poor design, which would clearly result in unsatisfactory living conditions for the future occupants of Flat 1.

Flat 2

10. The proposed first floor flat would provide one bedroom accommodation. Policy D6 of the London Plan and The Technical Housing Standards - Nationally Described Space Standards (NDSS) find that a one bedspace bedroom must have a floor area of at least 7.5 sqm and a two-bedspace bedroom must have a floor area of at least 11.5 sqm. The proposed plans show the bedroom in the upper flat with a floor area of 10.50 sqm. However, bedspaces are not shown on the proposed plans. Without this information I cannot be certain that the proposed bedroom would meet the standards set out in Policy D6 or the NDSS. I understand that this bedroom is existing, but it is currently a secondary bedroom, with a compliant bedroom also provided on the first floor. This is an indicator that the proposed development would be cramped with a poor layout leading to inadequate living conditions which would be harmful to future occupiers.
11. In assessing the impact of ventilation, outlook, daylight and sunlight with regard to the upper flat, I can see from the evidence that each habitable room within proposed upper flat has at least one window. This would provide adequate ventilation, outlook, daylight and sunlight for future occupiers.

Noise

12. The effect of noise on future occupiers has been raised as a concern by reason of the proposed stacking of the flats, in particular that a kitchen and living space would be positioned directly above the bedroom in the ground floor flat. The appellant has explained in their evidence that controls under the Building Regulations and Environmental Health Regulations would provide safeguards with regards to noise. I have no reason to disagree with this. The full comments of the Environmental Protection Officers have not been submitted as part of this appeal

and are not before me. Consequently, there is no substantive evidence before me to demonstrate that adding an additional household, and the stacking proposed, would materially change the level of noise generated from movement on the upper levels.

Outdoor amenity space

13. Concerns have been raised with regards to the quality of outdoor amenity space. The proposed plans do not show the garden area as subdivided, and no landscaping details have been provided. I undertook a site visit in which I could see the current garden was sizeable. However, the rear extension was not built, and this would reduce its overall size. I cannot be certain that the future occupiers would have access to a good quality of outdoor amenity space as there are no details before me. The appellant has indicated that a condition could be used to address this matter and there are local parks which future occupiers could also use. Attaching a condition would not provide clarity around the subdivision or access to the garden areas. The ability to use local parks, of which there is no detail before me in terms of distance or function, would not outweigh the harm I have found in relation to living conditions.
14. Overall, I conclude that the proposed development would fail to provide a satisfactory standard of accommodation, harmful to the future occupiers of the proposed development. Therefore, the proposal would be contrary to the relevant provisions of policies SP2, DMD1 and DMS13 of the Barking and Dagenham Local Plan (Local Plan) and D6 and D14 of the London Plan. In summary, these policies seek to achieve reasonable living conditions through good urban design.

Supply of family housing

15. Policy SP3 of the 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.
16. During my site visit, I observed that the existing dwelling contained 4 bedrooms and noted the reception and study rooms were also being used as bedrooms. By virtue of its size, layout and design it could reasonably be described as suitable for family housing and would meet the definition of a family sized home. The proposed development would see the existing dwelling converted into two one-bedroom flats. The proposed development would therefore result in the loss of family housing.
17. The appellant explains that their review of the planning register and the property licensing register showed only a modicum of applications for non-family housing, with the majority of rental properties operating as single-family dwellings. However, I am not satisfied that this points to a particular local need for 1 bed units in this specific area. I accept that well-designed 1 bed units have a place in the housing mix, offering flexible and low-cost accommodation, but this should not be at the cost of the provision of good quality family housing, for which there is a demonstrated need.

18. I acknowledge the proposal would lead to an additional dwelling within an existing residential and sustainable area. The proposed development would also benefit from some support from policy SPDG1 in respect of intensification. However, the contribution of one dwelling would be minor, and the proposed development would ultimately reduce the total number of bedspaces available on the site.
19. Overall, I conclude that the proposed development would lead to a net loss of family housing and would not positively contribute to the local housing mix. Therefore, the proposed development would fail to comply with policy SP3 of the Local Plan and policies H1, H2 and H10 of the London Plan. These policies, in summary seek to ensure that the mix of housing reflective of local communities.
20. The Council has also referred to policies D6 and H9 of the London Plan and LP Policy DMH5 in its decision notice.
21. However, policies H9 and DMH5 relate to vacant or under-occupied dwellings and the protection of certain housing types, including houses in multiple occupation (HMO). Given that this proposal relates to the conversion of the property into two flats and is currently occupied I do not consider them to be directly relevant to this main issue. Similarly, policy D6 relates to housing quality and standards, not housing supply. I have covered matters of housing quality in the other main issue.

Other Matters

22. The submitted evidence indicates that the council cannot demonstrate a five-year housing land supply. Neither party have provided a figure in relation to the shortfall in housing supply, but both parties agree the council have failed to meet the Housing Delivery Test. Noting the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, the provisions of Framework paragraph 11.d are engaged.
23. There is no substantive evidence that the site is within a protected area or is an asset of particular importance as defined by the Framework. Therefore bullet (ii) of paragraph 11.d applies in this case. The test in paragraph 11 d) ii. is whether any adverse impacts of granting permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole.
24. Paragraph 139 of the Framework finds that development that is not well designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies and government guidance on design. I have identified that the proposed development is not well-designed and would have a harmful impact of the living condition of future occupiers. The proposed development would also lead to a loss of a well-designed family accommodation. The proposed development would lead to the addition of one dwelling to the council's housing supply which I afford limited weight. It does not negate the harm I have identified. When assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole, the adverse impacts of the proposed development would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits.

Conclusion

25. For the above reasons, having had regard to the development plan as a whole and all other relevant material considerations, I conclude that the appeal is dismissed.

A James

INSPECTOR