Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 17 December 2018

by N Smith BA (hons) MA MRTPI
an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 26th March 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/Z5060/W/18/3211934
808 Rainham Road South, Dagenham, RM10 8YX

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant outline planning permission.
- The appeal is made by Mr Michael Barlow against the decision of London Borough of Barking and Dagenham Council.
- The application Ref 18/00026/OUT, dated 08 January 2018, was refused by notice dated 19 March 2018.
- The development proposed is demolition of existing house and redevelopment of the site to create 3no. dwellings incorporated with front dormers and associated parking.

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural matters

2. This appeal relates to an application for Outline Planning Permission. The planning application form states at Question 4 that approval is sought for landscaping, with all other matters reserved for subsequent approval. The Council state in their report that the only matter reserved is landscaping and appear to have assessed the remaining matters. I have considered the appeal based on the information set out in the planning application form, i.e. that approval is sought for landscaping and that all other matters are reserved for subsequent approval.

Main Issues

3. The main issues in this case are:

   - The effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area; and

   - Whether a satisfactory standard of internal living space would be provided by the proposed development.

Reasons

Character and appearance

4. I have taken the site layout plans to be indicative, given that layout is a reserved matter but in order to accommodate three dwellings at the site, given its size, they would likely need to be arranged in a manner similar to that shown on those plans, as a small terrace of three. Many of the properties on Rainham Road South are semi-detached but there is variety in the pattern of
development, particularly in the area immediately around the appeal site. Hanbury Court, at the junction with Dagmar Road, is a larger, detached building and the newer properties on the opposite side of the road are arranged as a long terrace of houses. The character of the area in so far as it relates to the layout of buildings on their plots in this location is not so defined as to prevent a terraced arrangement, with properties narrower than the norm, from being compatible with it.

5. I do not find that the development would appear cramped for that reason, and because the houses could be set away from the boundaries of the site in a manner broadly consistent with others around it.

6. Whilst the pattern of development in the area is not entirely consistent, the general absence of front dormer style roof additions is a feature of the character of the area. I agree with the Council that these additions would be prominent in the street scene and would result in the development appearing visually at odds with other buildings around it.

7. I have taken the plans and drawings in so far as they relate to appearance to be indicative at this stage, but the description of the development as set out on the planning application form specifies that front dormers would form part of the development. Given my view that dormer roof additions fronting the road in this location would conflict with the character of the area, I must conclude that there would be a conflict with Policy CP3 of the Core Strategy 2010 and Policies BP8 and BP11 of the Borough Wide Development Policies Development Plan Document 2011 (DPD) which seek, amongst other requirements, to ensure that the development is compatible with the character of the area.

**Internal living space**

8. As above, I have taken the plans in so far as they relate to layout to be indicative but the size and nature of the site and the character of the area around it would likely result in internal layouts for the three houses being similar to those shown, particularly given that the planning application form specifies that each of the houses would have three bedrooms.

9. Policy 3.5 of the London Plan 2016 seeks to ensure that all new housing is of a satisfactory standard for future occupants and it sets minimum total internal space standards to help achieve this. The standard for a three bedroom house for five people over three storeys (as shown on the plans) is a minimum gross internal area (GIA) of 99m² plus 2.5m² of built-in storage space. The Council says that the proposed plans show houses of around 79m² (including storage space) and the appellant does not dispute this figure, which is significantly below the London Plan standard. In my view, the houses would be undersized, well below what is a minimum expectation and would therefore not satisfactorily meet the space needs of the intended number of occupiers. As a consequence, they would not represent a high quality of living accommodation for future occupiers.

10. There is nothing before me to indicate that the amount of development proposed could be provided at this site whilst providing satisfactory internal living accommodation and so I conclude that the development would be in conflict with Policy 3.5 of the London Plan, the aims of which I have specified. The appellant refers to different standards set out in Policy BP6. I do not have that policy before me but am satisfied in any event that an assessment against
the London Plan standards is appropriate in this case because the London Plan does form part of the Development Plan for Barking and Dagenham.

**Conclusions**

11. Whilst I agree with the appellant that a small terrace of three houses at the site could be compatible with the character and appearance of the area, I have found that the inclusion of front dormer roof features would not be. I have also found that the units would be undersized and would not represent high quality living accommodation. These harms result in conflict with the development plan.

12. As a result, I do not find that the appeal should succeed.

*N Smith*

INSPECTOR