

OFFICER REPORT FOR DECISION UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY

APPLICATION NO: P0805.25

WARD: Harold Wood **Date Received:** 16th June 2025

ADDRESS: 25 Squirrels Heath Road
Romford

PROPOSAL: Conversion of existing house into 1x4 bedroom flat including an annex, 1x 2 bedroom flat and 1x 1 bedroom flat, and alterations to fenestration.

DRAWING NO(S): 0127-JCK-XX-00-DR-A-02-01
0127-JCK-XX-00-DR-A-02-100
0127-JCK-XX-00-DR-A-02-101
0127-JCK-XX-00-DR-A-02-102
0127-JCK-XX-00-DR-A-02-103
0127-JCK-XX-00-DR-A-03-100
0127-JCK-XX-00-DR-A-37-100
0127-JCK-XX-06-DR-A-95-300

RECOMMENDATION: It is recommended that **planning permission be REFUSED** for the reason(s) given at the end of the report

SITE DESCRIPTION

The proposal site is comprised of a semi-detached dwelling with various extensions. There is some space for parking to the front of the property.

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL

Planning permission is sought for the conversion of the existing extended house into 1x4 bedroom flat including an annex in the rear garden, 1x 2 bedroom flat and 1x 1 bedroom studio flat, and alterations to fenestration.

The site has a long planning history including conversion into flats refused in planning application P1167.16 for the following reasons:

- Impact on the surrounding area.
- Impact on living conditions for future occupiers and adjoining dwellings.

This application was also dismissed at appeal by the Planning Inspectorate.

An conversion to flats (as well as other development) was also refused in planning application P0233.22 for the following reasons:

- No 3-bed unit.
- Change of use to F1, F2 and E - noise and disturbance.
- Poor living conditions for second floor flat.
- Impact on surrounding area.
- Lack of tree survey.

Pre-application advice was sought before this current application was submitted and the applicant was advised that planning permission was likely to be refused.

RELEVANT HISTORY

P0442.25	Conversion of existing house into 1X3 bedroom flat (with rear granny annexe), 1X 2 bedroom flat and 1 studio flat including raising the height of first floor rear extension to integrate with the rear dormer Withdrawn - Invalid 30-04-2025
P0084.25	Single storey front extension to existing granny annexe Refuse 20-03-2025
W0249.24	Conversion of the house into 3 self contained units, using the area granted by various permissions Awaiting Decision
P1352.24	Single storey front extension, and part single, part two storey rear extension Apprv with cons 23-12-2024
P1353.24	Erection of a new outbuilding to accommodate granny annexe Apprv with cons 09-12-2024
P0608.24	Single storey front extension, and part single, part two storey rear extension Apprv with cons 13-08-2024
D0166.24	Certificate of Lawfulness for loft conversion with rear dormer and front rooflights, hip to gable roof. PP not required 26-06-2024
P0963.22	Change of Use from Use Class C3 (Dwellinghouse) to Use Class F1 (Learning and Non-Residential Institutions) Refuse 09-08-2022
P0233.22	Change of use to F1(a), F1(f), F2(b), E(g)(i) and provision of a 1bed flat at second floor level together with the erection of ground and first floor rear extensions, single storey front extension, raising the ridge line of the existing 2 storey side projection and erection of a single storey annex building and installation of a parking area within the rear garden. Refuse 12-05-2022
P2415.21	Change of Use from Use Class C3 (Dwellinghouses) to Use Classes F1(a) (Provision of Education), F1(f) (Public Worship or religious instruction), F2(b) (Halls or meeting places), and E(G)(i) (Offices), to include part

	single, part two storey rear extension and single storey annexe to rear.
	Withdrawn - Invalid 02-02-2022
P1993.21	Change of Use from Use Classes C3 and D2, to Use Classes C3, F1(a), F1(f), F2(b), and E(g)(i), to include a new rear extension, creation of second floor for residential use and annexe
	Withdrawn - Invalid 01-12-2021
P0704.21	Erection of single storey granny annex for ancillary use to rear of existing property
	Refuse 19-07-2021
P1307.20	4 bedroom detached bungalow with associated parking and amenity space
	Withdrawn 01-02-2021
P1167.16	Conversion and extension existing house to create 4no. self-contained flats.
	NDAL e refuse 13-04-2017

CONSULTATIONS/REPRESENTATIONS

Neighbouring properties were notified of the proposal at the application site. Two objections were received with comments that have been summarised as follows:

- Increased pressure on surrounding area and facilities.
- Overdevelopment.
- Should maintain living standards.

One representation of support has been received by the National Annexe Planning Consultancy.

Waste and Recycling Department - waste and recycling sacks will need to be presented by 7am on the boundary of the property, facing the road on the scheduled collection day.

London Fire Brigade - no objection.

Highways - no comments received.

Public Protection - no comments received.

RELEVANT POLICIES

Policies 3 (Housing supply), 5 (Housing mix), 7 (Residential design and amenity), 9 (Conversions and subdivisions), 24 (Parking provision and design), 26 (Urban Design) and 35 (On-site waste management) of the Havering Local Plan (2016-2031) as well as the Havering Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule and the Residential Extensions and Alterations Supplementary Planning Document are relevant.

Policies H1 (increasing housing supply), H10 (Housing size mix), D1 (London's form, character and capacity for growth), D4 (Delivering good design), D6 (Housing quality and standards), T6 (Car

parking), T6.1 (Residential parking), T9 (Funding transport infrastructure through planning) of the London Plan 2021 are relevant.

The National Planning Policy Framework is relevant.

MAYORAL CIL IMPLICATIONS

There are no requirements under the CIL regulations for a financial contribution.

STAFF COMMENTS

An in-person site visit was not undertaken. Site photos were provided in support of the application. In determining this application, photos, Google Street View, aerial view images and submitted drawings were used to assess the site constraints.

The report covers the principle of the development, density/site layout, the impact of the development in the street scene, impact on the amenities of neighbouring properties and highway and parking issues.

PRINCIPLE OF DEVELOPMENT

In addition to the above the Housing Delivery Test results are a material consideration. On the 12th December 2024, the Government published the Housing Delivery Test result for 2023. The Housing Delivery Test Result for Havering for 2023 is 61%. In accordance with the NPPF the "Presumption" due to housing delivery therefore applies.

In terms of housing supply, based on the latest 2024 Housing Trajectory, Havering is able to demonstrate 3.4 years supply of deliverable housing sites. The Havering Local Plan was found sound and adopted in 2021 in the absence of a five year land supply. The Inspector's report concluded:

"85. Ordinarily, the demonstration of a 5-year supply of deliverable housing land is a prerequisite of a sound plan in terms of the need to deliver a wide choice of homes. However, in the circumstances of this Plan, where the housing requirement has increased at a late stage in the examination, I ultimately conclude that the Plan, as proposed to be modified, is sound in this regard subject to an immediate review.

86. This is a pragmatic approach which is consistent with the findings of the Dacorum judgement. It aims to ensure that an adopted plan is put in place in the interim period before the update is adopted and the 5-year housing land supply situation is established."

The Council is committed to an update of the Local Plan and this is set out in the Council's Local Development Scheme. Therefore, in the meantime whilst the position with regard to housing supply is uncertain, the "Presumption" due to housing supply is applied. The Presumption refers to the tilted balance set out in Paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF as if the presumption in favour of sustainable development outlined in paragraph 11(d) of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) has

been engaged.

Para 11(d) states that where the policies which are most important for determining the proposal are out of date, permission should be granted unless (i) the application of policies in the Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provide a strong reason for refusing the development, or (ii) any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole. Fundamentally this means that planning permission should be granted unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the policies in the NPPF taken as a whole.

The proposed development would offer a small contribution to housing supply and delivery and this would weigh in favour of the development. For the reasons outlined within the officers report the proposed development is unacceptable and the proposal does not benefit from the presumption in favour of sustainable development set out in paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF.

However the acceptability of any submission is reliant on other policy considerations including Policy 9 of the Havering Local Plan 2016-2031, which requires that:

Proposals for conversion to residential use and subdivision of existing residential properties to self contained homes in Havering will be supported where it can be demonstrated that:

- i. There is no conflict with surrounding uses;
- ii. The existing house being subdivided has no less than 120 sq m of original floor space, including internal circulation, and the subdivision would provide a minimum of one family unit of 3 or more bedrooms;
- iii. The new family unit is preferably on the ground floor with direct access to private, good quality, usable amenity space;
- iv. The living areas of new properties do not abut the bedrooms of adjoining properties;
- v. Safe, secure and convenient access is provided to each unit from the street; and
- vi. The parking standards set out in Policy 24 are met.

The existing original house had a gross internal floor space of approximately 140 square metres, the proposed development would make provision for a family dwelling of three bedrooms on the ground floor (with a rear annex) and safe access is provided to each unit which meets section ii, iii and iv of Policy 9 of the Havering Local Plan. The other points are discussed later in this report.

DENSITY/SITE LAYOUT

Policy D6 of the London Plan states that DPD policies should offer a range of housing choices, in terms of the mix of housing sizes and types, taking account of the housing requirements of different groups. Policy D6 states that Local Development Frameworks should incorporate minimum space standards. Housing development should be of high quality design and provide adequately-sized rooms with comfortable and functional layouts which are fit for purpose. Housing development should maximise the provision of dual aspect dwellings and normally avoid the provision of single aspect dwellings.

Officers have scaled from the submitted floor plans as assessed below:

The ground floor flat has been assessed without the annex as the annex is a fair distance away and is likely to be a separate unit of accommodation in reality, as whilst there is a logic as a granny annex to the dwellinghouse, there is no clear relationship between the ground floor flat and the annex. The flat would have a floor area of approximately 108 square metres, which meets the minimum gross internal floor area of 95 square metres for a single storey 3-bedroom dwelling contained in Policy D6 of the London Plan. The bedroom sizes meet standards and all habitable rooms have a reasonable outlook. The unit would be dual aspect. The master bedroom would abut the adjoining property at no.23 but this property is a dentist surgery so is in daytime use would not lead to noise and disturbance at night time.

The Supporting Statement states that ceiling heights are 2.4m throughout which fails to meet the 2.5m standard. There are parking spaces directly in front of bedroom windows which would lead to noise, glare and disturbance and poor living conditions. As part of the appeal statement in the dismissed appeal for planning application P1167.16, the Inspector wrote that parking on the site frontage would be in close proximity to the bedrooms in the ground floor flat and there would be unacceptable noise and disturbance in close proximity to these windows which would not be in the control of the occupants of this flat.

The first floor flat would have a floor area of approximately 79 square metres, which meets the minimum gross internal floor area of 70 square metres for a single storey 2-bedroom dwelling contained in Policy D6 of the London Plan. The bedroom sizes meet standards and all habitable rooms have a reasonable outlook. The unit would be single aspect. However the kitchen / dining area would be above a bedroom area in the ground floor flat, leading to noise and disturbance and poor living conditions. The Supporting Statement states that ceiling heights are 2.4m throughout which fails to meet the 2.5m standard.

The loft flat would have a floor area of approximately 49 square metres is just below the minimum gross internal floor area of 50 square metres for a single storey 1-bedroom 2 person dwelling contained in Policy D6 of the London Plan. The bedroom size meets standards and all habitable rooms have a reasonable outlook. The unit would be single aspect but roof lights would allow light from the front. The flat would not have easy and convenient access to the communal amenity space to the detriment of the amenity of the occupiers. The Supporting Statement states that ceiling heights are 2.4m throughout which fails to meet the 2.5m standard.

The annex has been assessed as a separate unit of accommodation as it cannot be considered to have a clear relationship with the ground floor flat. It has a floor area of 39.6 square metres which fails to meet the minimum gross internal floor area of 50 square metres for a single storey 1-bedroom 2 person dwelling contained in Policy D6 of the London Plan. The bedroom size meets standards but it would have a poor outlook close to boundary fencing and insufficient internal floor space resulting in poor living conditions for future occupiers. The Supporting Statement states that ceiling heights are 2.4m throughout which fails to meet the 2.5m standard.

Havering's Local Plan does not prescribe minimum space standards for private outdoor areas. London Plan policy D6 states that where there are no higher local standards in the borough Development Plan Documents, a minimum of 5 sqm of private outdoor space should be provided for 1-2 person dwellings and an extra 1 sqm should be provided for each additional occupant, and it must achieve a minimum depth and width of 1.5m. The proposed ground floor flat would have its own private amenity area with a communal area shown for the other flats.

DESIGN/IMPACT ON STREET/GARDEN SCENE

As no extensions are proposed as part of this application and changes to the fenestration are minor, there would be minimal impact on the appearance of the building or the street scene generally.

IMPACT ON AMENITY

Local Plan Policy 7 seeks to protect the amenity of existing and future residents the Council will support developments that do not result in:

- i. Unacceptable overlooking or loss of privacy or outlook;
- ii. Unacceptable loss of daylight and sunlight; and
- iii. Unacceptable levels of noise, vibration and disturbance.

As no new extensions are proposed as part of this application, there are no amenity impacts in terms of loss of light or overshadowing. The fenestration changes would not lead to overlooking issues enough to warrant a refusal. In terms of noise and disturbance, this is explored along with Policy 9 below.

Policy 9 of the Havering Local Plan 2016-2031 states that the living areas of new properties do not abut the bedrooms of adjoining properties. This is not met; the kitchen / dining area of the first floor flat would be above a bedroom area in the ground floor flat. The annex bedroom window would have a poor outlook. There are parking spaces directly in front of bedroom windows in the ground floor flat which would lead to noise, glare and disturbance and poor living conditions. The flats would provide poor living accommodation for the future occupiers of the flats.

HIGHWAY/PARKING

Policy 24 of the Local Plan states that London Plan maximum standards apply across the borough. The site has a PTAL of 2 and the maximum parking provision is 3 for this development. The submitted site plan shows that 3 off-street parking spaces would be provided to the front of the site.

Adequate cycle and bin storage is shown on the plans.

KEY ISSUES/CONCLUSIONS

In light of the above, it is recommended that the proposed application be recommended for refusal.

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that **planning permission be REFUSED** for the following reason(s)

1 Refusal non standard

The kitchen / dining area of the first floor flat would be above a bedroom area in the ground

floor flat leading to loss of amenity and poor living conditions due to disturbance detrimental to the amenity of future occupiers, contrary to Policy 9 of the Havering Local Plan 2016-2031.

2 Refusal non standard

The proposal would lead to substandard accommodation for future residents, due to insufficient minimum floorspace, poor outlook, loss of privacy and access to outdoor amenity space for the upper floor flats. As a result, the development represents an overdevelopment of the site contrary to Policy 7 of the Havering Local Plan and Policy D6 of the London Plan.

INFORMATIVES

1 Refusal - No negotiation

Statement Required by Article 35 (2) of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015: Consideration was given to seeking amendments, but given conflict with adopted planning policy, it was necessary to issue a decision as close to the statutory timeframe as possible as opposed to seeking amendments which would have significantly delayed the application.

Authorising Officer:



Neil Goate

29th August 2025