



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 3 June 2025

by A Caines BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 20th June 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/W4705/W/25/3364879

27 Blenheim Road, Bradford BD8 7LH

- 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 Sonam Ali against the decision of City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council.
 - The application Ref is 25/00292/FUL.
 - The development proposed is conversion of basement area into studio flat.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is whether the development would provide an acceptable standard of living for its occupiers, with particular regard to natural light and outlook.

Reasons

3. The proposal is for a 1-bedroom basement flat. There is inconsistency in the submitted information in terms of the proposed works. While it is stated that no external alterations are proposed, there is reference to the replacement of existing door panelling with glazing to serve the bedroom. Additionally, the plans indicate the provision of a secure cycle storage facility in the rear yard to mitigate the absence of off-street parking. However, no detailed specifications, such as elevation drawings, have been provided for these elements.
4. The bedroom would be served by a single opening at the front. This is located in a recess partly below ground level and currently contains a door with minimal glazing. In its current form, it would not provide sufficient natural light or outlook. Even if the intention is to replace the door panels with glazing, the absence of detailed drawings or specifications prevents a proper assessment of whether this would adequately address the issue.
5. The separate kitchen and living room would each be served by a window at the rear. These windows are also situated partially below ground level and face into a confined space which is dominated by a large outbuilding at ground level. Without sectional drawings and technical assessments addressing the availability of sunlight and daylight, it is not possible to conclude that these rooms would receive adequate natural light. Furthermore, the proposed cycle store is shown directly adjacent to these windows, potentially obstructing light and outlook. Given the limited space in the yard, it is unclear whether the cycle store could be relocated to mitigate this impact.

6. I have considered whether planning conditions could be used to secure further details regarding the proposed alterations and cycle storage. However, these matters are fundamental to the acceptability of the scheme. Based on the evidence before me, I cannot be confident that the issues could be resolved through conditions alone. Thus, it would not be appropriate to grant planning permission subject to such conditions.
7. Consequently, it has not been demonstrated that the development would provide an acceptable standard of living for its occupiers in terms of natural light and outlook. The proposal conflicts with Policies DS5 and HO9 of Bradford's Core Strategy Development Plan Document (2017), which seek to ensure a good quality of life for future residents. It also conflicts with Policies DS1 and DS3, which generally promote high standards of design and layout.

Other Matters

8. The site lies within the St Paul's Conservation Area (CA). Although the Council did not cite heritage impacts as a reason for refusal, the lack of detail regarding the proposed external alterations and cycle store prevents a full assessment of their potential effect on the character and appearance of the CA. Nevertheless, as the appeal is being dismissed on other grounds, the CA would remain unaffected.
9. The appellant has referred to other approved basement flats in the area. However, none of the examples cited appear to be directly comparable in terms of location, window arrangements, or the level of supporting detail. Hence, they have little bearing on the determination of this appeal.
10. While the Council's decision may have come as a surprise to the appellant given earlier correspondence, the refusal is justified for the reasons set out above.

Planning Balance

11. The proposal would contribute to housing supply and make use of an existing building in an accessible urban location. These are acknowledged benefits, albeit the scale of the benefits arising from one dwelling would be small.
12. However, the failure to demonstrate that the development would provide an acceptable standard of living for the occupiers weighs heavily against the proposal. The resulting conflict with the development plan is afforded significant weight.
13. Overall, the adverse impacts of the development would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the limited benefits. Accordingly, the proposal does not represent sustainable development.

Conclusion

14. The proposal conflicts with the development plan when considered as a whole. There are no material considerations that indicate a decision should be made other than in accordance with the development plan. Therefore, the appeal is dismissed.

A Caines

INSPECTOR