



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 4 June 2025

by **J Hobbs MRTPI MCD BSc (hons)**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 03 July 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/A5270/W/24/3352326

122 Girton Road, Northolt, Ealing UB5 4ST

- 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 Surjeet Singh against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Ealing.
 - The application Ref is 240562FUL.
 - The development proposed is the conversion of single dwelling house into three flats with alteration of roof from hip to gable end, rear roof extension; two storey side and part single, part two storey rear extension, single storey front extension; refuse and cycle storage.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. A revised National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) was published in December 2024, following the submission of this appeal. I sought submissions from the parties on this matter. I have considered the additional submission alongside the original representations.
3. The description of development in the banner above is taken from the Appeal Form and Decision Notice rather than the Application Form, as it accurately reflects the fact the proposal includes more than one cycle store.

Main Issues

4. The main issues are:
 - whether the proposal would provide acceptable living conditions for future occupiers of the proposed flats with particular regard to privacy, and the provision of internal and external space;
 - whether the proposed sub-division of the appeal property would result in an acceptable use of the existing housing stock; and,
 - the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

Living conditions

5. The proposal comprises of the extension and subdivision of a dwelling into three flats. Flat 1 would be a two-bedroom flat on the ground floor, Flat 2 would be a one-bedroom flat on the first floor, and Flat 3 would be a studio flat on the second floor/converted loft space. The garden would also be subdivided into three private

gardens, with Flat 1's garden immediately next to the building, Flat 3's garden furthest away, and Flat 2's garden in between.

6. Following the construction of the proposed extensions, the appeal building would have a staggered rear elevation, with the ground floor projecting further to the rear, than the upper two floors. As such, views of Flat 1's garden from first and second floor windows would be somewhat screened by the roof of the extended ground floor. Nonetheless, there would be views of Flat 1's garden from within Flat 2 and Flat 3. In particular, the kitchen of Flat 2 would project out from the original building toward the rear gardens and there would be extensive views of most of Flat 1's rear garden from its window. Accordingly, occupiers of Flat 1 would not benefit from an acceptable level of privacy when using their rear garden.
7. There is a dispute between the parties with regard to the width of the proposed bedroom within Flat 2. Policy D6 of the London Plan¹, March 2021 (LP) advises that a dwelling with two or more bedspaces must have at least one double bedroom that is at least 2.75m wide. As there would only be one bedroom within Flat 2, it would not be contrary to the above guidance regardless of the width of the bedroom. Nonetheless, it would be contrary to LP Policy D6 where it advises that the floor area of a double bedroom must be at least 11.5m². Accordingly, the bedroom would be undersized.
8. The gross internal area of Flat 3 would be 40m² which is above the minimum specified within Table 3.1 of the LP. However, as it would be located within the loft, the ceiling height would be restricted in parts of the flat. LP Policy D6 requires the ceiling height to be at least 2.5m for at least 75 per cent of the gross internal area. Whilst the majority of the flat may have a ceiling height of at least 2.5m, it has not been demonstrated that the ceiling height of Flat 3 would be 2.5m for 75 per cent of the gross internal area. Accordingly, I am unable to conclude that Flat 3 would have an acceptable amount of usable internal floorspace.
9. Although the gross internal area of Flat 3 would be above the minimum standard for a studio flat, it would only be by a modest amount. Consequently, this would not mitigate the harm caused by a lack of useable internal floorspace.
10. To access their rear gardens and cycle storage, occupiers of Flat 2 and Flat 3 would need to exit the front door and walk to the side of the appeal building. Whilst this would be a convoluted route, given the modest distance between the garden and the front door, future occupiers would not be overly disincentivised from using their gardens. Similarly, I do not consider having to walk this route and manoeuvre a bicycle past a parked car would overly disincentivise future occupiers from using the cycle storage. On balance I consider this arrangement would be acceptable.
11. The Council contends that the bedroom within Flat 3 would not be of a sufficient width and consequently it would be contrary to LP Policy D6. Nonetheless, Flat 3 would be a studio flat and therefore the bedroom would not be separate from the main living space. Accordingly, the guidance with regard to the width of bedrooms would not be applicable to Flat 3.
12. Overall, I conclude that the proposal would not provide acceptable living conditions for occupiers of the proposed flats with particular regard to privacy, and the provision of internal and external space. The proposal would be contrary to LP

¹ The London Plan, The Spatial Development Strategy for Greater London, March 2021

policies D5 and D6, and policies 3.5, 7B and 7D of the Development Management, Development Plan Document, December 2013 (DMDPD). These policies indicate that new development must achieve a high standard of amenity for users and housing development should be of high-quality design and provide adequately-sized rooms, amongst other matters. It would also be contrary to paragraph 135 of the Framework where it indicates that planning decisions should ensure that developments create places with a high standard of amenity for future users. Nonetheless, the proposal would comply with LP Policy T5 where it indicates that development proposals should help remove barriers to cycling.

Housing mix

13. LP Policy H2 supports the construction of well-designed new homes on sites below 0.25ha. Paragraph 4.2.4 of the LP is positively worded, and it supports the incremental intensification of existing residential areas within Public Transport Accessibility Level (PTAL) 3-6. Conversely, it does not discourage the intensification of small sites which are located in areas with a lower PTAL. Furthermore, LP policies H9, GG2 and GG5 support the efficient use of the existing housing stock, indicate planning must proactively explore the intensity of use of land to support additional homes, and requires development to ensure that there is sufficient high-quality housing.
14. The appeal property is currently a five-bedroom dwelling which is capable of accommodating a family. Although it is an area within PTAL 0, there are some public transport services in proximity to the appeal site. There are also several shops within walking distance. Moreover, there is no evidence that there is a particular shortage of family-sized homes in the area. Therefore, in principle the conversion of the appeal property to flats could be supported by planning policy.
15. Notwithstanding this, the proposal would result in substandard accommodation which would be harmful to the living conditions of future occupiers. Consequently, the proposed flats would not be well-designed and the sub-division of a family home to form three flats would not be justified, in this instance.
16. I acknowledge that the Council has granted permission² for the conversion of houses into flats in proximity to the appeal site. However, there are no details before me on the quality of the accommodation provided by those flats. Therefore, I cannot conclude that the granting of permission for the sub-division of properties nearby would set a precedent for the appeal proposal.
17. I conclude that the proposed sub-division of the appeal property would not result in an acceptable use of the existing housing stock. The proposal would be contrary to LP policies GG5, H2 and H9 where they indicate that planning must ensure that high-quality housing is provided and a borough should support well-designed new homes on small sites, amongst other matters.

Character and appearance

18. There is a fairly consistent pattern of development within Girton Road of short blocks of terraced houses. However, there is significant differences in the design of properties within the road as they have been altered and extended. Several

² Planning permission Refs. 178703FUL and 180430FUL

properties have complex roof forms, and many include roof extensions which have altered the roof from a hipped roof to a gable end roof.

19. The appeal property assimilates with other properties in the area. It is an end of terrace, two-storey dwelling with a hipped roof. The appeal property also has a single-storey rear extension which spans the full width of the property and benefits from an area of off-street parking to the front and a large rear garden. However, there is a two-storey side extension which has a flat roof, that projects above the eaves of the original building. This extension appears incongruous within the street scene.
20. The proposed development includes several extensions and alterations to the appeal building which would significantly increase its scale and massing. The resultant building would bear little resemblance to the original building and would be much larger than most properties along the road. The resultant building would appear incongruous when viewed alongside much smaller neighbouring properties. Notwithstanding this, it is necessary to consider what development has already been approved and how the appeal property could be lawfully extended.
21. In November 2023, the Council granted planning permission³ and a lawful development certificate⁴. The difference between the development permitted and the appeal proposal is the creation of a gable end roof above the side extension rather than a hipped roof, a further extension of the existing ground floor rear extension, and the insertion of windows and the removal of a door within the side elevation. These approvals remain extant and are therefore, material to my decision.
22. The creation of a gable end above the side extension would further increase the massing of the appeal building, beyond what has already been approved. The increased massing, particularly at the roof level, would make the appeal building appear overly dominant when viewed from the road. Nevertheless, it would ensure that the roof form above the side extension would be consistent with, but stepped down from, the roof over the main section of the building. It would also lead to the eaves height of the side extension matching the eaves height of the main section of the building. The benefits of a more consistent roof form would outweigh the harm caused by a minor increase in the massing of the roof, as the extended section of the building would read as a cohesive addition.
23. Several properties on this side of Girton Road have been extended to the rear; as such, there is no consistent building line. The proposed ground floor rear extension would only be a modest addition to the existing extension and would not extend as far as others on this side of the road. Therefore, the depth of the proposed ground floor extension would not appear overly dominant or incongruous.
24. The Council contends that the first-floor extension would breach established building lines. Nonetheless, the extent of that proposed extension has already been permitted as part of the aforementioned planning permission. Moreover, the insertion of windows and removal of a door within the side elevation would have a neutral effect on the appearance of the appeal property.

³ Planning permission Ref. 233894HH

⁴ Lawful Development Certificate Ref. 233893CPL

25. Overall, I conclude that the proposal would not have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the area, when considering the development already permitted. The proposal would comply with LP policies D1 and D4 and DMDPD policies 3.4 and 7.4. These policies indicate that development in Ealing's existing built areas should complement their building pattern, amongst other matters. The proposal would also accord with paragraphs 131 and 135 of the Framework, in this regard only, where it indicates that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development and planning decisions should ensure that developments are sympathetic to local character.

Other Matters

26. Paragraph 61 of the Framework indicates to support the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward. In addition, Table 4.2 of the LP indicates that the housing target for small sites in Ealing is 424 per annum. The appellant has indicated that the Council has a shortfall in housing delivery and consequently a buffer applies to its housing supply.
27. The proposal would lead to the net addition of 2 dwellings on a small site, as defined by the LP, in an area where there has been a shortfall in the delivery of housing. Nonetheless, the benefit of providing 2 additional dwellings would not outweigh the harm caused by the proposed substandard accommodation.

Conclusion

28. The proposal conflicts with the development plan, when considered as a whole, and the material considerations do not indicate that the appeal should be decided other than in accordance with it. Therefore, the appeal should be dismissed.

J Hobbs

INSPECTOR