



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 1 July 2025

by N Teasdale BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 17 July 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/A5270/W/25/3359866

18 Corfton Road, Ealing, W5 2HT

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant full planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Richmond Fellowship against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Ealing.
 - The application Ref is 242118FUL.
 - The development proposed is single storey building to rear of Amadeus House, 18 Corfton Road Ealing W5 2HT, to provide staff offices, confidential space and sleep-in accommodation for overnight staff.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. The appellant has submitted a Tree Survey and Arboricultural Impact Assessment with the appeal. The report does not change the scheme as submitted and the Council has had the opportunity to comment on the report. I do not therefore find my acceptance of this report to be prejudicial to any party. I have therefore taken this information into account in reaching my decision.

Main Issues

3. The main issues of the appeal are:
 - The effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the host property, which is a locally listed building and surrounding area, including whether it would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Ealing Cricket Ground Conservation Area (CA);
 - The effect of the proposed development on the living conditions of existing occupiers of the accommodation with particular regard to amenity space provision; and
 - The effect of the proposed development on trees.

Reasons

Character and appearance

4. The appeal site relates to 18 Corfton Road, located on the eastern side of Corfton Road and is known as Amadeus House. The property comprises a large, detached Edwardian property extending over two and three floors and is currently utilised as a crisis recovery house (a supported housing scheme for people with mental

health needs). The surrounding area of the appeal site is mainly residential in nature and characterised by 2 storey detached dwellinghouses with some 3 to 4 storey blocks of flats including those located to the north and south.

5. As referred to above, the appeal site is located within the CA and the host property, Amadeus House is a locally listed building, described as an Edwardian redbrick mansion with Queen Anne gable, elaborate pargetting and ornament built in 1904. I therefore have a duty under Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the CA. I have also had regard to paragraph 212 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) which explains that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. Paragraph 216 of the Framework sets out that the effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.
6. The proposed development seeks planning permission for a single storey building to the rear of Amadeus House to provide staff offices, confidential space and sleep-in accommodation for overnight staff. It would mainly be used by the staff of the crisis recovery house as well as the NHS Trust/agencies and I am aware of the reasoning behind the proposals in terms of demand/insufficient space within the host property.
7. The proposed building would be located in the existing rear garden of Amadeus House, with a footprint of approximately 108 square metres. It would be approximately 13.3 metres deep, 9.2 metres wide and 4.4 metres high (max) with a flat roof design. It would be in contemporary design, constructed by timber cladding with a single layer membrane roof, and powder coated aluminium windows and doors. A 2.6 metre high, 1 metre wide and 8.5 metres long pergola would be constructed abutting the southern side boundary between the host building and the proposed building.
8. The Ealing Cricket Ground Conservation Area Character Appraisal, 2008 (CACA) acknowledges that Amadeus House is a building of significant architectural quality, sandwiched between two modern developments which significantly compromise its setting. The surrounding area is also characterised by planted frontages comprising hedges and specimen trees, together with the line of street trees and the large rear gardens add to a green and leafy character of this part of the CA.
9. Ealing Cricket Ground Conservation Area Management Plan, 2008 (CAMP) states that garden buildings should be small-scale and sited discretely, taking care not to locate them too near trees. They should be for ancillary garden use and comprise a single, modest-sized room. Timber is the most appropriate material to ensure that they blend with the landscape. In terms of density, the generous plots in which houses are sited within Ealing Cricket Ground is considered to be one of the outstanding characteristics of the CA and all aspects of this openness will be protected. All forms of over-development will be resisted; existing open spaces and gardens will preferably be maintained, and their improvement will be sought.

The future of existing gap-sites, albeit very few, in the Ealing Cricket Ground CA, will be given the most careful consideration in determining planning applications.

10. Similar requirements for outbuildings are also found under the Ealing Generic Conservation Area Management Plan, 2023.
11. As set out, the vicinity of the appeal site is residential in nature. The existing outbuildings in the area are ancillary to the residential use of the host building. The proposed development would create an additional office space in the rear garden of the appeal site in the form of a sizeable outbuilding. Although it would be mainly used by the staff of the existing recovery house, the proposed development would effectively create an intensive office use within the rear garden of the appeal site, being out of keeping with the residential nature and character of the area.
12. The proposed development would not be visible from the streetscene given its location in the rear garden. However, it would still be visible from surrounding properties including from some of the flats in Corfton Lodge to the south. I observed the level of screening to the site's boundaries as part of my site visit, but the development would still be visible. Although the proposed building would include uses and facilities ancillary to the host building, its footprint of 108 square metres and max. height of 4.4 metres are considered excessive and insubordinate to the host building (which has a footprint of 255 square metres). The substantial reduction in size of the rear garden would also harm the character of the CA of large rear gardens to the detriment of the spacious character of the area. In coming to such findings, I have had due regard to the height of the host building and level difference but overall, the proposed building would still be insubordinate. Although the two modern developments significantly compromise the setting of the appeal site as set out in the CACA, this would not be a reason to justify further harmful development.
13. Furthermore, and whilst I do not dispute the appellant's claims regarding the need/demand for additional space, the size of the proposed building, being a staff office (with 3 office rooms and 7 office desks in the open plan area) and sleep-in space (for 1 person), is not considered reasonable and proportionate for the recovery house with only 6 staff per shift. I appreciate that additional appointments may take place, but even considering this, I still find the overall size to be excessive. Although the proposed building would be constructed by timber cladding, which is considered an appropriate material as suggested by the CAMP, its contemporary design would be out of keeping with the design and appearance of Amadeus House which is a redbrick Edwardian property. The front of the property may provide more locally distinctive features although at my site visit, I observed that the property as a whole is of pleasant architectural merit including its rear elevation and I cannot agree that the character is limited to the front elevation. A lack of intervisibility from some windows between the host property and the proposed building would not sufficiently mitigate against the harm identified.
14. For the above reasons, the proposed development, by reason of its excessive size and insubordinate scale, would represent an incongruous form of overdevelopment on this site, being out of keeping with the character of the CA and the host building. The proposed contemporary design would also be out of keeping with the design and appearance of the host building which is a locally listed building. It would create less than substantial harm to the significance of the designated heritage asset and local heritage asset.

15. Paragraph 215 of the Framework explains that where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use. There would be some benefits associated with the scheme by providing additional space within both the host property and proposed building. However, this would not be sufficient to offset the identified harm to the CA which I have attached great weight given the requirements of the Framework nor the harm to the local heritage asset.
16. The proposed development would therefore be contrary to Policies D3, D4 and HC1 of the London Plan, 2021 (LP), Policies 7B, 7C and 7.4 of the Ealing Development Management Development Plan Document, 2013 (DPD), the CAMP and Ealing Generic Conservation Management Plan, 2023. Amongst other matters, such policies explain that development proposals affecting heritage assets, and their settings, should conserve their significance, by being sympathetic to the assets significance and appreciation within their surroundings.
17. For the same reasons, the proposed development would also be contrary to section 16 of the Framework relating to conserving and enhancing the historic environment.

Living conditions

18. The proposed development would substantially reduce the size of the rear garden area. I observed onsite the areas surrounding the property including to the front and sides. However, I am not convinced that these areas are useable and functional as amenity space given the front is used for parking and the passageways are narrow. It was evident that the existing rear garden is the only outdoor amenity space for the residents. The quality of living accommodation of the residents would therefore be compromised. As the existing recovery house serves people with mental health needs, sufficient outdoor amenity space is an important element to the living accommodation, and I observed onsite that residents do indeed use this space. I appreciate that residents have full access to the local public amenities as they are free to come and go into the property. Even so, I still find it important to provide a good level of convenient space available at the property particularly given the use. Social/adult services may not have advised on this matter and the professionals operating the facility may have judged the garden area to be sufficient, but this would not alter my findings nor mean that the development would not be harmful.
19. The area of garden space may also be consistent with that provided at other facilities run by the appellant and I do not dispute that such accommodation often has pods added. Nonetheless, this would not be sufficient to justify the scheme, and I also have very limited information regarding other schemes where I cannot be certain of the impact on the living conditions of occupiers.
20. For the above reasons, I conclude on this issue that the proposed development would unacceptably harm the living conditions of existing occupiers with particular regard to amenity space provision. It would therefore be contrary to Policies S2 and H12 of the LP which together, amongst other matters, explain that the delivery, retention and refurbishment of supported and specialised housing which meets an identified need should be supported. The form this takes will vary, and it

should be designed to satisfy the requirements of the specific use or group it is intended for, whilst providing options within the accommodation offer for the diversity of London's population.

Trees

21. There are a number of existing trees onsite and to its boundaries which contribute to the landscape setting and visual amenity of the site whilst forming part of the existing tree buffers between the appeal site and the adjoining properties. As set out above, the appellant has submitted a Tree Survey and Arboricultural Impact Assessment with the appeal. The report confirms that the main arboricultural features of the site and locality are unlikely to be affected by the proposed development given their overall positioning. This is evidenced by the Tree Protection Plan contained within the report.
22. A number of trees are to be removed to enable the proposed development and these largely relate to a number of fruit trees which are deteriorating in their condition with one tree already collapsed on the ground. The report confirms that there is sufficient space within the rear garden for replacement tree planting on a 1:1 basis and based on my observations on site, I have no reason to disagree with this. The replacement fruit trees are likely to have a longer life span than the current fruit trees.
23. There are trees to the south of the site, and I understand that these have not been surveyed. The appellant explains that this is because they are a sufficient distance away not to be affected by the proposed development. Based on the evidence before me and my own observations onsite, I have no compelling reason to disagree. Additionally, it is likely that the boundary wall would impede tree root growth making the ingress of tree roots into the site less likely. There is significant space on land to the south for tree roots to provide for the tree and there is less need for tree root growth from the south to grow into the site. Ground protection measures along the southern boundary could also be achieved to ensure adequate protection which could be conditioned were I minded to allow the appeal.
24. The report confirms that the impact upon retained trees is likely to be insignificant provided the trees to be retained are protected throughout the development in accordance with the Arboricultural Impact Assessment, Method Statement and Tree Protection Plan which could also be conditioned were I minded to allow the appeal. Overall, I am sufficiently satisfied that the proposed development would not unacceptably harm trees. It would also not have a detrimental impact upon the landscape setting of the site and surrounding area.
25. The proposed development would therefore accord with Policy G7 of the LP and Policy 5.10 of the DPD which together, amongst other matters, explain that development proposals should replace existing trees and plantings on the basis of no net loss of amenity. A lack of harm in this respect would not however overcome the other harm that I have identified.

Other Matters

26. In considering this appeal, I have had due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) set out under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, in particular the need to eliminate discrimination against persons with the protected characteristics of age and/or disability, advancing equality of opportunity for those persons and

fostering good relations between them and others. Following careful consideration of the scheme. I am satisfied that the impact of dismissing the appeal is proportionate and necessary.

Conclusion

27. The proposed development would conflict with the development plan when considered as a whole. There are no material considerations, either individually or in combination including the provisions of the Framework, that would outweigh the identified harm and associated plan conflict. I conclude that the appeal should therefore be dismissed.

N Teasdale

INSPECTOR