



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 27 August 2025

by N Armstrong BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 2 October 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/Q5300/W/25/3366745

420 Green Lanes, Southgate, Enfield N13 5XG

- 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 Mark Roberts of Paramount Services Holdings Ltd against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Enfield.
 - The application Ref is 24/03853/FUL.
 - The development proposed is conversion of an existing first and second floor maisonette into two self contained flats and external steel staircase.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The appellant has provided copies of amended plans with the appeal that they state have been submitted to the Council in a revised planning application. These include changes to the design and configuration of the external staircase, the layout of the external amenity space and the relocation of the cycle storage. It is not the purpose of the appeal process to evolve a scheme, and it is therefore important that what is considered by the Inspector is essentially what was considered by the Council.
3. There are substantial differences between the appeal proposal and the revised scheme. In this case, it is my view that the appeal must be determined on the basis of the plans as originally submitted to the Council and upon which it based its decision, and which have been subject to consultation. To do otherwise could prejudice the interests of the Council, consultees and other parties, who have not been consulted on the revised scheme and who may have observations to make. I have therefore proceeded to determine the appeal on the basis of the plans as originally submitted.

Main Issues

4. The main issues are:
 - the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the property and the surrounding area, with reference to the proposed external staircase and railings to the outdoor amenity space;
 - whether the proposed development would meet sustainable transport requirements, with reference to the proposed cycle parking provision;

- whether the proposed development would provide adequate living conditions for the future occupiers, with reference to the size of the internal floor area; and
- whether the proposed development would provide adequate living conditions for the future occupiers, with reference to the provision of outdoor amenity space.

Reasons

Character and appearance

5. The appeal site is situated within a terrace of predominantly three-storey properties fronting onto Green Lanes, with a mix of commercial uses at ground floor level and residential use to the upper floors. There are variations in the form and appearance of the rear elevations within the group, including the scale and design of offshoots. The rear elevations also feature various elements associated with the functional and servicing requirements of the properties, including external staircases, flues, ventilation and extraction equipment.
6. The appeal property features a large, single-storey, flat roof element that extends towards the rear access road that runs along the full length of the Green Lanes properties and adjacent to the gardens and properties on Windsor Road and Osborne Road. The plans indicate that access to the existing residential accommodation at the appeal property is taken from the rear of the site via internal stairs at ground floor level.
7. In combination, the staircase and railings that would enclose the amenity space above the flat roof would introduce a substantial new structure to the exterior of the property, with the staircase extending considerably up to the height of the first and second floor levels. The rear of the properties in this group have more limited aesthetic value in comparison to the front elevations of buildings in the vicinity. However, the upper floors of the rear elevations along the terrace have more of a residential character than the ground floor elements. Given the single-storey flat roof offshoot to the rear of the appeal property, this elevation also appears more open in comparison to others in the group. Due to its overall scale and design, the proposal would result in a visually prominent and discordant addition to the property that would be clearly visible from the rear access road and other properties in the immediate area.
8. Whilst there are other examples of external staircases and railings to parts of the rear of properties in the group, these are predominantly smaller in comparison to the appeal proposal in terms of their height and overall scale, and larger rear offshoots help to mitigate some of the visual impact. Consequently, the cumulative effect of the staircase and railings at an elevated position, as well as to the more open rear aspect of the appeal site, would be out of scale and character with surrounding residential development, and would have a harmful visual impact on the property and the area.
9. The appellant has suggested that perforated screening could be utilised and that this could be conditioned. However, there is insufficient evidence to suggest that such screening could adequately mitigate the harm that would be caused. Notwithstanding my position on the revised plans set out above, a condition in these circumstances would not be appropriate.

10. I conclude that the proposed external staircase and railings would be unduly harmful to the character and appearance of the property and the surrounding area. It therefore conflicts with Policy D3 of The London Plan (2021) (the LP), Core Policy 30 of The Enfield Plan Core Strategy 2010-2025 (the CS) and Policies DMD 8 and DMD 37 of the Improving Enfield Development Management Document (2014) (The DMD). Amongst other things, these seek to ensure that development is of a high quality, which is appropriate in scale and responds appropriately to existing character and context. It would also conflict with the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework), which requires proposals to be sympathetic to local character.

Sustainable transport

11. The plans indicate that there would be some cycle parking provision, although this could only be accessed via the new staircase. Due to its siting and the potential difficulties in accessing this space, with occupants having to carry bicycles up and manoeuvre around the steps, this inconvenience would likely render the provision unusable. Consequently, the development would not adequately facilitate and encourage cycling. Given my position on the revised plans set out above, a condition in these circumstances would also not be appropriate.
12. I conclude that the cycle parking would be poorly located and would not adequately meet the sustainable transport requirements of the development. The proposal therefore conflicts with Policy T5 of the LP, Core Policy 25 of the CS and Policy DMD 45 of the DMD. Amongst other things, these aim to secure the provision of appropriate levels of cycle parking that should be fit for purpose, secure and well-located, and provide safe, convenient and accessible routes for cyclists. It would also conflict with the Framework, which aims for layouts and development to encourage and pursue opportunities to promote cycling.

Living conditions – internal floor area

13. The bedrooms of the proposed development comfortably exceed the minimum standards of the LP and the Technical housing standards – nationally described space standard (2015) for dwellings with two bedspaces. Without anything to the contrary in the application, and notwithstanding the appellant's subsequent comments on single occupancy, I find it reasonable that the size of the bedrooms is used to determine how the occupancy of the flats should be assessed, which in this case would be one bedroom, two person occupancy. This occupancy establishes the minimum gross internal floor areas that the LP states must be provided in order to ensure homes are of an adequate size and fit for purpose. I have therefore considered the appeal on this basis, which is consistent with the Council's assessment.
14. Taking into account the size of the bedrooms, the development would fail to meet the overall minimum internal space standards relative to the possible number of occupants of the new dwellings. Despite the dual aspect layout, as well as the levels of outlook and light that could be achieved, this would not adequately mitigate the failure to meet the established minimum internal space standards required by the LP for this level of potential occupancy. Therefore, the proposed development would not satisfactorily ensure that the dwellings would be of adequate size and fit for purpose.

15. I conclude that the proposed development would not provide adequate living conditions for the future occupiers, with particular regard to the size of the internal floor area. The proposal therefore conflicts with Policy D6 of the LP, Core Policy 4 of the CS and Policy DMD 8 of the DMD. Amongst other things, these policies require development to provide adequately-sized rooms with comfortable and functional layouts that are fit for purpose, and to meet or exceed relevant minimum space standards. This would also conflict with the Framework and the aim to provide a high standard of amenity for future users.

Living conditions – outdoor amenity space

16. The plans show that outdoor amenity space would be provided at first floor level to part of the existing flat roof at the rear of the site, and the size of the proposed space would be generous and relatively open. Despite the elevated position, there is no substantive evidence to suggest that this would be substandard, or that a suitable scheme could not be achieved in qualitative and quantitative terms, including in respect of its condition and the outlook from these areas.
17. Notwithstanding my conclusions on the effects on character and appearance due to the railings and external staircase, I find that there would be no harm to the living conditions of future occupiers of the development from a lack of suitable outdoor amenity space. Therefore, the development would not conflict with Policy D6 of the LP, Core Policy 4 of the CS and Policies DMD 8 and DMD 9 of the DMD, which, amongst other things, seek to provide high quality amenity space meeting relevant standards.

Other Matters

18. No harm has been identified on other matters, including effects on the living conditions of occupants of neighbouring properties, car parking and waste management. A lack of harm in these respects is neutral and weighs neither for nor against the development.

Planning Balance

19. For the reasons set out above, the development conflicts with the development plan as a whole and should be refused unless other material considerations indicate otherwise.
20. The Council cannot demonstrate a five year supply of deliverable housing sites with the appropriate buffer applied. Paragraph 11 d) of the Framework explains that in these circumstances, 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 Framework taken as a whole.
21. The proposal would make a positive contribution to housing supply and the overall housing mix, including making more efficient use of the site, which is within walking distance of services and facilities. However, having regard to the scale of development and the Council's evidence suggesting that the greatest need is for family sized dwellings, the contribution of the additional flat would be limited.
22. I have also concluded that the effect on the character and appearance of the area, the provision of sustainable transport and to the living conditions of future occupants of the development conflicts with policies of the Framework. The adverse impacts of the development would significantly and demonstrably

outweigh the benefits when assessed against the policies of the Framework taken as a whole. As such, the appeal scheme does not benefit from the presumption in favour of sustainable development as set out in paragraph 11 d) of the Framework.

Conclusion

23. The proposal would conflict with the development plan as a whole. Material considerations, including the Framework, do not indicate that the appeal should be decided other than in accordance with it. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

N Armstrong

INSPECTOR