
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 19 August 2025

by **S Lo LLB M.SRA**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 3 October 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/G5750/W/25/3366063

65 Skeffington Road, Eastham, Newham, London E6 2NA

- 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 Mohammed Khan against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Newham.
 - The application Ref is 24/01684/FUL.
 - The development proposed is to convert a single dwelling house to two flats and create a bedroom on the loft with amenity space.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are:
 - the effect of the proposed roof additions proposal upon the character and appearance of the host building and surrounding area;
 - the effect of the proposed development upon the supply of family housing in the borough; and
 - whether or not the proposed development would provide suitable living conditions for future occupiers.

Reasons

Character and Appearance

3. The appeal site is comprised of a mid-terraced, two-storey dwelling with three bedrooms. It benefits from a rear garden, and it is separated from one of the neighbouring properties by a narrow gap. The property is located in a predominantly residential area, which is characterised by properties that are generally suitable for family occupation.
4. The proposed development would involve minor alterations to the front elevation, through the installation of skylights. Towards the rear elevation, the plans indicate the creation of a recessed terrace which would serve as a form of amenity space, furnished with seating and a table. One of the plans describes this area as a "Pitched Roof Terrace Balcony" which is intended to serve the first-floor unit.
5. While some neighbouring properties feature rear dormers, the evidence before me indicates that the roofscape in the surrounding area is generally uniform, with dormers being the most common form of roof extension. The proposed recessed

terrace would introduce a distinctly unusual and uncharacteristic feature, which would not reflect the prevailing form of development along the terrace. As such, it would appear incongruous and out of keeping with the established architectural rhythm of these buildings.

6. Although the proposed terrace would not be immediately visible from the public street scene, it would be clearly observable from various private vantage points, particularly from the rear elevations of neighbouring properties along Caledon Road. Given the orientation of the appeal site, the rear of the dwelling directly faces the rear façades of adjoining houses, increasing the likelihood of visual intrusion. The visibility of this untypical roof structure from surrounding homes would further accentuate its discordant appearance and contribute to a harmful impact on the character and appearance of the area.
7. In conclusion, the proposed roof additions proposal would harm the character and appearance of the host building and surrounding area. It would not result in high quality development that enhances the positive features of the borough. It would also not respond positively to local distinctiveness. As such, it would be contrary to Policies SP1, SP3 and SP8 of the Newham Local Plan 2018 (the 'NLP') and Policies D3 of the London Plan 2021 (the 'LP').

Supply of family housing

8. Policy H4 of the NLP seeks to protect all housing unless replaced with at least equivalent floorspace. It places particular emphasis on the protection of 3 bed and 4+bed family housing. It states that the subdivision of any 3+ bed housing, subject to the satisfaction of other policies, may be appropriate where proposals deliver high quality conventional housing that enhances the street scene. Such proposals must also meet additional criteria: they should be located in a town or local centres, or along those sections of quality Movement Corridors or Linear Gateways within 400m of town or local centres; located above an existing, occupied commercial unit; not have access to external private amenity; and have poorly defined entrances.
9. The plans indicate that the proposed development would result in the creation of two residential units: a one-bedroom dwelling on the ground floor (Flat A), and a two-bedroom dwelling on the upper floors (Flat B). Although the proposed development would add an additional housing unit into the area and diversify the local housing mix, it would also result in the loss of a three-bedroom dwelling. Even if the property were to be reinstated as a single dwelling in the future, its temporary use as subdivided flats would still represent a period during which a family-sized unit is lost. Moreover, any future reinstatement would be unlikely to restore the original three-bedroom layout or result in the creation of a four-bedroom house. Instead, the three retained bedrooms would be internally configured for a subdivided flat arrangement, thus limiting the property's suitability for family occupation.
10. No clear evidence has been provided to demonstrate that this loss would be offset by new 3-bedroom housing of equivalent floorspace. Given the size, layout, and location of the existing property, it is well-suited to use as family occupation. There is no substantive evidence before me to suggest that it could not continue to serve this purpose or that there is an overriding demand for flats of the type and size proposed. While residential flats do play an important role in meeting the needs of

specific groups, the proposal would lead to a net reduction in family-sized housing, which the Council has identified as being in significant demand. Furthermore, I find that the proposed development would not enhance the street scene, due to its adverse impact on the character and appearance of the local area. There is also no evidence before me that the proposal meets any of the additional criteria set out in Policy H4. Thus, it has not been demonstrated that the need for the proposed development outweighs the objective of retaining larger family sized homes.

11. In conclusion, the proposed development would have an adverse effect on the supply of family housing in the borough. It would not protect 3 bed family housing or comply with the appropriate design and technical criteria, contrary to Policy H4 of the NLP. It would fail to protect family housing, would not provide high quality development and would not result in a high quality of urban design, contrary to Policies S1, H1, SP1 and SP3 of the NLP. It would result in the loss of family housing, thus failing to meet an identified need, contrary to Policies GG4, H8 and H10 of the LP.

Living Conditions – future occupiers

12. Policy D6 of the London Plan 2021 requires housing development to achieve high quality design standards. This includes the provision of adequately sized rooms which are fit for purpose, including meeting a minimal internal standard of gross internal floor areas and storage.
13. The plans indicate that Flat A would be a one-bedroom, two-person, single-storey dwelling. In accordance with the Nationally Described Space Standards and Policy D6, such a unit should provide a minimum gross internal area of 50 square metres, along with at least 1.5 square metres of built-in storage. Additionally, a minimum of 5 square metres of private outdoor space is required for a one-person dwelling. The plans indicate that Flat B would be a two-bedroom, three-person, two-storey dwelling. The applicable standard requires a minimum gross internal area of 70 square metres and at least 2 square metres of built-in storage. For a three-person dwelling, a minimum of 6 square metres of private outdoor space should also be provided. For both dwellings, the minimum floor to ceiling height must also be 2.5m for at least 75% of the gross internal area of each dwelling.
14. Contrary to the requirements set out in Policy D6 of the London Plan, the plans indicate that Flat A would provide an internal floor area of approximately 47.5 square metres, which falls below the minimum standard of 50 square metres for a one-bedroom, two-person dwelling. The Council has confirmed that it would provide approximately 1.8 square metres of built in storage, thereby meeting the minimum requirement. Similarly, although not measured within the plans, the Council has confirmed that approximately 52.1 square metres of private amenity space would be available, thereby meeting the minimum requirements. Due to the absence of internal section drawings, it is unclear whether minimum floor-to-ceiling height standards would be met.
15. Although the plans indicate that Flat B would provide a gross internal area of approximately 72.0 square metres, this figure includes 9.2 square metres of external terrace space. Once this area is excluded from the calculation, the internal floor area falls below the minimum requirement of 70 square metres for a two-bedroom, three-person, two-storey dwelling. The roof terrace, measuring

approximately 9.2 square metres, would meet the minimum outdoor space requirement for a three-person unit. However, the plans do not indicate that this flat would provide any built-in storage, rendering it unlikely that it would meet the relevant standard of 2 square metres. Furthermore, due to the limited headroom within the proposed loft space and the absence of internal section drawings, it is unclear whether minimum floor-to-ceiling height standards would be met.

16. In light of the identified deficiencies, I cannot be satisfied that the proposed development would offer a comfortable and functional living environment. The limited internal space, combined with uncertainties around ceiling heights and storage provision (particularly in Flat B), raises concerns that the accommodation across both flats would feel cramped and confined. These shortcomings suggest that the dwellings would not support reasonable domestic activities or day-to-day living needs. As a result, the proposal would fail to provide satisfactory living conditions for future occupiers and would not constitute high quality design.
17. In conclusion, the proposed development would not provide suitable living conditions for future occupiers. It would not create healthy neighbourhoods or provide high quality accommodation for living, contrary to Policies SP2 and SP3 of the NLP. It would not provide adequately sized rooms which are fit for purpose nor create good quality homes that meet high standards of design, contrary to Policy D6 and GG4 of the LP. It would fail to meet nationally described space standards, set out in the DCLG Technical Housing Standards (nationally described space standard) (DCLG, March 2015) (as amended) and the Housing Design Standards (GLA, June 2023).

Other Matters

18. The appellant's planning statement states that the appeal site lies within the Whitechapel Market Conservation Area. However, the Council has not identified this as a constraint affecting the property. Having conducted a site visit, I am satisfied that the appeal site is located outside the boundaries of this conservation area. Accordingly, this is not a relevant planning constraint.
19. The Council has referred to a number of policies from both the NLP and the LP, along with associated guidance, in support of its reasons for refusal on each main issue. However, not all these policies and related guidance documents appear to be determinative in relation to the key issues which are considered under each main issue. I have therefore focused on the key policies in each section.
20. The proposal would generate modest economic benefits through its construction phase and the provision of an additional unit of accommodation. Given the appellant's stated intention to reside in one of the proposed flats, it would also provide functional improvements by decreasing the amount of habitable space which would require ongoing maintenance. However, given the limited scale of the proposed development, these benefits are relatively minor in planning terms.

Conclusion

21. The scheme would unduly harm the character and appearance of the host building and terrace, result in the loss of a family sized dwelling contrary to policy and would fail to provide accommodation with adequate living conditions. These are serious shortcomings which collectively weigh against the scheme to a substantial

extent. Accordingly, the benefits would not outweigh the harm and related policy conflict.

22. The proposal conflicts with the development plan and the material considerations do not indicate that the appeal should be decided other than in accordance with it. Therefore, for the reasons set out above, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

S Lo

INSPECTOR