
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 14 October 2025

by **A Caines BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 17th October 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/Q5300/W/25/3371204

6 Connaught Gardens, Southgate, Enfield N13 5BN

- 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 Gajasinghe Ade Raymond against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Enfield.
 - The application Ref is 25/01199/FUL.
 - The development proposed is conversion of a 5 bedroom house into 1 bedroom flat on ground floor and 2 bedroom flat on upper floors (first floor and loft).
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the development on the availability of family-sized housing within the Borough, having regard to the development plan and other material considerations.

Reasons

3. The appeal property comprises a mid-terraced, two-storey dwelling with a rear garden, currently arranged as a five-bedroom single-family home. The proposal seeks to convert the property into two self-contained flats, with no external alterations proposed.
4. Policy DMD5 of the Enfield Development Management Document (DMD) (2014) requires that proposals involving the conversion of existing family dwellings into flats provide compensatory family accommodation (defined as having three or more bedrooms) within the development. This policy objective is supported by Core Policy 5 of the Enfield Core Strategy (CS) (2010) and Policy GG4 of the London Plan (LP) (2021), which collectively seek to ensure that new development contributes to a range of housing sizes to meet identified needs and achieve mixed and inclusive communities.
5. The Council's Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2015) and Local Housing Needs Assessment (2020) identify a particular need for larger family-sized dwellings within the Borough. Although the appellant refers to affordability constraints and an increasing demand for smaller units, the evidence before me indicates that the existing property provides a good standard of accommodation suitable for family occupation.
6. The proposed conversion into two smaller units would result in the loss of a suitable family-sized unit without the provision of compensatory accommodation. This would

be contrary to the requirements of Policy DMD5 and would undermine the strategic objective of retaining and increasing the stock of larger homes.

7. While the appellant argues that the proposal would not result in a net loss of residential floorspace and would contribute to housing supply, this does not outweigh the harm arising from the loss of a family-sized dwelling in a context where such accommodation is in demonstrable need.
8. Accordingly, the proposal would adversely affect the availability of family-sized housing in the Borough, contrary to the aims of Policy DMD5 of the DMD, Core Policy 5 of the CS, and Policy GG4 of the LP. Although the Council also refers to Policy DMD4 of the DMD, I find no conflict with this policy as there would be no net loss of residential floorspace.

Other Matters

9. The appellant contends that planning permission is not required on the basis that no operational development is proposed and that the change of use would not be material. However, Section 55(1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 defines development as including any material change in the use of buildings or land. The subdivision of a single dwellinghouse into two self-contained flats is commonly understood as a material change as it creates two separate planning units, each with its own facilities for day-to-day living, and introduces a distinct planning purpose.
10. In this case, the occupation of the property as two independent flats would differ fundamentally from its use as a single household. It would introduce separate tenancies, distinct patterns of occupation, and a degree of functional independence that is not characteristic of a single dwellinghouse, even one accommodating a large family. This would typically result in additional comings and goings, increased refuse storage, and a greater likelihood of differing household routines. These factors would alter the character of the use of the land in a way that is perceptible and significant in planning terms. Moreover, the change would have policy implications, including the loss of a family-sized unit and the effect on the mix of housing in the area. For these reasons, the appellant's assertion that the proposal does not amount to development is not well founded and does not represent a fallback position to which I could attach any weight.
11. The site lies within the Zone of Influence of the Epping Forest Special Area of Conservation (SAC). Residential development within this zone is likely to increase recreational pressure on the SAC, potentially affecting its ecological integrity. No evidence has been provided to demonstrate whether the necessary mitigation, such as financial contributions towards strategic access management measures, has been secured. However, as I am dismissing the appeal for other reasons, it is not necessary to consider this matter further.

Planning Balance

12. The appellant contends that the Council cannot demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing land and that paragraph 11(d) of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) is therefore engaged. Even if I were to accept that the most important policies for determining the appeal are out-of-date, the Framework indicates that permission should be granted unless the adverse impacts of doing so

would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the Framework as a whole.

13. The proposal would provide one additional residential unit, contributing to housing supply and offering smaller accommodation types in a reasonably accessible urban location. The appellant also refers to economic benefits arising from construction and future household expenditure. These are benefits that align with the Framework's objectives of boosting the supply of housing, supporting economic growth, and promoting sustainable patterns of development. However, given the modest scale of the development, I afford these benefits only limited weight.
14. Conversely, the loss of a family-sized unit would result in considerable harm in the context of identified local housing needs and would significantly undermine the objectives of the development plan.
15. Overall, the adverse impacts of the proposal would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the limited benefits. The presumption in favour of sustainable development does not therefore apply.

Conclusion

16. The proposal conflicts with the development plan when read as a whole, and there are no material considerations, including the Framework, that would outweigh this conflict. Accordingly, the appeal should be dismissed.

A Caines

INSPECTOR