



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 13 October 2025

by Ryan Cowley MPlan (Hons) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 27 October 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/A5270/W/25/3370642

Cecilia House, 16-17 Hanger Lane, Ealing W5 3HH

- 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 Reeve, on behalf of Charter Property Development Ltd, against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Ealing.
 - The application Ref is 220090FUL.
 - The development proposed is extension to existing 31 co-living rooms, to provide additional 16 co-living rooms to provide total of 47 co-living rooms with associated support accommodation.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. Amended floor plan drawings have been submitted by the appellant. The evidence indicates that these were sent to the Council during the application but not formerly considered or consulted on. Notwithstanding that full details of the amendments have not been provided, the Planning Appeals Procedural Guide¹ states that the appeal process should not be used to evolve a scheme. It is important that what is considered by the Inspector at appeal is essentially the same scheme that was considered by the Council and by interested parties at the application stage. This decision is thus based on the plans and details formally considered by the Council.

Main Issues

3. The main issues are:
 - The effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the appeal site and surrounding area, including Ealing Common Conservation Area (CA);
 - The effect of the proposed development on the living conditions of the occupiers of 18-19 Hanger Lane, with particular regard to outlook and natural light; and
 - Whether the proposed development would provide adequate living conditions for future occupiers, with particular regard to its layout, internal space provision and natural light.

¹ Procedural Guide: Planning appeals – England Updated 30 June 2025

Reasons

Character and appearance

4. Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires special attention to be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the CA. The CA is dominated by Ealing Common in its centre. The appeal site is in the northern part of the CA, adjoining the CA boundary to the east.
5. The CA Character Appraisal (March 2009) describes houses north of the Common as being “extrovert” and setting a pattern of “gothic style” development. Notable features include decorated gables, turrets and balconies, high pitched roofs, patterned brickwork and elaborate pillared porches. Near the appeal site, houses typically sit in spacious plots, set back from the street with generous front and back yards. Some of the original interspaces between properties remain, offering a rather open character to the street. Mature trees and green hedges complement the architecture and frame views. The traditional layout of properties is identified as one of the elements of special interest. The significance of the CA, in so far as it relates to this appeal, is thus derived from the traditional appearance and layout of its buildings and the spacious and verdant character of its residential areas.
6. Many properties in this area feature 2-storey rear offshoots, some of which are of considerable size. While some projections appear to be original, the CA Appraisal identifies extensions that disrupt the traditional spatial relationship between buildings as one of the threats to the CA. It cautions that further intensification could detract from traditional layouts and highlights the in-fill link-extensions at 9-10 North Common Road as “clumsy”.
7. The appeal site comprises a pair of traditional 3-storey brick buildings of the same style, linked at ground floor by a modest, flat roofed, brick extension, and at first floor by a more lightweight heavily glazed connection. The buildings are otherwise relatively well-preserved examples of the Victorian villas that characterise the CA. Their traditional scale and appearance, and the space around them, contributes to the prevailing pattern of development along the street and in the wider area. I saw on my site visit that a large portion of the rear garden at the back of the site is currently fenced off. The plans indicate that part of this land would be used for the development, with the remainder retained in its current condition.
8. The proposal would introduce a large extension to the rear of the existing buildings that would adjoin the existing 2-storey rear offshoot at No 17. The extension would be set across 3-levels, 2 of which would be above ground, with a lower-ground floor below served by several lightwells. The development would occupy an appreciable proportion of the land to the rear of the existing buildings, extending almost to the rear boundary of the application site.
9. The extension would project beyond the side of the existing building at No 17 and would be considerably wider than the existing rear offshoot it is adjoined to. Its eaves and ridge height would also be taller than the existing offshoot, while the proposed layout and roof design would create a series of projecting gables at roof level on all elevations. The north elevation would feature limited openings, with a large expanse of blank wall along this side. These features would emphasise the size and mass of the extension relative to existing buildings at the site.

10. Though partially screened by recent developments and soft landscaping, the proposed extension would still be visible in public views from Freeland Road and Inglis Road through gaps in the street scene, as well as from neighbouring properties. From the front of the site, it would further fill the gap between the host buildings. Its siting, design and size would create a dominant, bulky and incongruous addition that would considerably erode the sense of space around the buildings and to the rear of the site. It would thus not preserve nor enhance the prevailing character and appearance of the CA but would contribute to the erosion of features of special interest and characteristics that contribute to its significance.
11. I recognise there are other examples of large rear extensions in the vicinity, including multi-storey additions to 14 and 15 Hanger Lane, the latter of which features a basement level. The full details of each case and the circumstances that led to those decisions are not before me. Nevertheless, I saw on site that the context, layout, massing and design of the examples referred to are materially different to the appeal scheme. Each case must be considered on its individual merits, and so this does not lead me to a different conclusion on this main issue.
12. The proposal would thus have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the area, and would fail to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the CA. It would conflict with Policies 7.4, 7B and 7C of the Ealing Development Management Development Plan Document Adopted 10 December 2013 (the DM DPD), Policies 1.1 and 1.2 of the Development Strategy 2026 Development Plan Document Adopted 3 April 2012 (the DS DPD) and Policies D3, D4 and HC1 of the London Plan March 2021. These policies, among other provisions, seek to ensure that development complements street sequence, building pattern and scale; has a positive visual impact with high quality architecture and appropriate levels of development on site; cares for the borough's historic character; conserves or enhances the significance of heritage assets; and enhances local context.
13. With respect to paragraph 215 of the Framework and Policy 7C of the DM DPD, less than substantial harm would be caused to the significance of the CA, which is a designated heritage asset. Paragraph 212 of the Framework is clear that great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. The development would contribute to the housing supply, providing additional residential accommodation in a highly accessible location. The appellant advises that it would provide greater space in occupant's rooms, in addition to more common room floor area. However, the public benefits would be relatively modest in this case given the scale and context of the development, and thus insufficient to outweigh the identified harm.

Living conditions for neighbours

14. The proposal would extend along the shared boundary with 18-19 Hanger Lane (known as Kolbe House), which is in use as a care home. It would project a significant distance beyond the rear elevation of Kolbe House, with the first part of the extension sitting closest to the shared boundary, before stepping back at its eastern end. It would also be located due south of this neighbouring property.
15. There are a number of windows in the ground and first floor side elevations of Kolbe House directly facing the appeal site, in addition to several rear facing windows. Due to its height, proximity and depth, the proposed extension would be an obtrusive addition that would dominate the outlook from Kolbe House and appear overbearing from the private garden space at the rear. Due to its

orientation relative to Kolbe House, it is also likely to cast a substantial shadow across this neighbouring property, particularly when the sun is lower in the sky. This would reduce direct sunlight to the building and overshadow external areas.

16. The Council did not identify any harm to other neighbouring properties. Given the separation distances and orientation of the proposal relative to other neighbouring properties, there is no compelling reason for me to conclude otherwise.
17. Nevertheless, the proposed development would have a harmful effect on the living conditions of the occupiers of 18-19 Hanger Lane, with particular regard to outlook and natural light. It would thus conflict with Policy 7B of the DM DPD and Policy D6 of the London Plan. These policies, among other provisions, seek to ensure that new development achieves a high standard of amenity for adjacent uses including by ensuring good levels of daylight and sunlight to surrounding housing and appropriate levels of development on site; and minimising overshadowing.

Living conditions of future occupiers

18. The proposal would add a further 16 bedrooms, each with an en-suite bathroom, to the existing property, in addition to kitchen facilities and a common room. Notwithstanding the original description of the proposed development, the main parties agree that the site is operating as a large House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) and would continue to do so were the appeal allowed.
19. The Council's HMO Standards April 2025 document, which forms the basis of conditions attached to a licence, states that there must be a full set of kitchen facilities for every five occupants. This aligns with the Standards for Houses in Multiple Occupation document (2016), which also advises that a minimum area of 5m² must be allowed for accommodating each set of kitchen facilities. No more than two sets of kitchen facilities may be accommodated in any one kitchen. The size of the proposed bedrooms could accommodate double occupancy, and so the number of occupants for the extension could be up to 32 individuals. Based on the above guidance, this would require between 16m² and 32m² of new kitchen space, or between 3 and 6 sets of additional kitchen facilities (approximately).
20. The proposed common room and kitchen would be 44.79m² in area. This is large enough to accommodate the requisite kitchen facilities for the proposed additional rooms. However, this would require more than 2 sets of kitchen facilities in one kitchen. Moreover, the evidence indicates that this would also be used by existing occupants. While there are a further 4 kitchens shown throughout the building, the floorspace and layout of each and which rooms they would serve is unclear from the proposed floor plans. It therefore has not been demonstrated that adequate kitchen facilities in line with local guidance would be provided.
21. The proposal would include several bedrooms on the lower ground floor level, 3 of which would be served solely by windows facing north towards the adjoining property at 18-19 Hanger Lane. Bedrooms 1 and 2 would be closest to the shared boundary, with bedroom 1 facing directly on to the side elevation of Kolbe House.
22. Each of these rooms would be partially below ground, served by light wells. Views from both bedrooms 2 and 3 would be somewhat restricted due to their position and proximity to the existing boundary wall, though the absence of built development beyond this would allow a degree of outlook. However, the outlook from bedroom 1 would be particularly poor, dominated by the gable of Kolbe

House, which would result in a considerable sense of enclosure for future occupiers. Combined with the north facing aspect of the room, this would provide inadequate levels of natural daylight and sunlight to this room.

23. The proposed development would therefore fail to provide adequate living conditions for future occupiers, with particular regard to its layout, internal space provision and natural light. It would therefore be contrary to Policy D6 of the London Plan, which seeks to ensure that housing development is of high quality design and provides adequately sized rooms with comfortable and functional layouts and sufficient daylight and sunlight.

Other Matters

24. In its Officer Report, the Council notes the provision of rooms at a sub-market rate and states that this would be secured by way of a legal agreement, as would restrictions on occupiers gaining parking permits, which is also set out in the appellant's Design and Access Statement. The Planning Appeals Procedural Guide indicates however that, in written representation appeals, the appellant must ensure that an executed and certified copy of any planning obligation is provided at the time of making their appeal. No mechanism to secure affordable housing provision or a car free development is before me. Nevertheless, as the appeal is dismissed for other reasons, I have not considered this matter further.
25. The evidence indicates that planning permission has previously been granted for rear extensions to the existing buildings². Full details of that permission are not before me, and it is unclear whether the extensions could be lawfully implemented. Irrespective, approved floor plan drawings have been provided that indicate this previous scheme was considerably different to the appeal proposal in its layout and design, including its relationship to neighbouring properties. Accordingly, it has not been demonstrated that there is a realistic fallback position or, if there is, that it would result in harm comparable to that which would arise in the appeal scheme.
26. Other than where set out above, I have not identified conflict with any other relevant parts of the development plan or national policy and guidance. However, the absence of harm or development plan conflict with respect to other relevant matters weighs neither for nor against the proposal.
27. The Planning Practice Guidance and the Framework encourage the Council to take a positive approach and work proactively with applicants. While the appellant's frustrations with the level of engagement offered by the Council are noted, this cannot lead me to a different conclusion on the main issues.

Conclusion

28. The development conflicts with the development plan, taken as a whole. I have found no material considerations that indicate the appeal should be determined other than in accordance with the development plan. Consequently, I conclude that the appeal is dismissed.

Ryan Cowley

INSPECTOR

² Council Ref 165924FUL