



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 3 September 2025

by **C Mayes CMLI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 29 October 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/N4720/W/25/3369173

Sprayquip House, St Pauls Street, Leeds LS27 9EP

- 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 P Woods against the decision of Leeds City Council.
 - The application Ref is 25/02573/FU.
 - The development proposed is conversion of existing two storey building and redevelopment of single storey building to form a 15no. bedroom HMO with parking, cycle and bin storage.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are:
 - whether the proposed development would provide acceptable living conditions for future occupants, with regard to privacy, outlook, daylight, noise, internal space and the provision of outdoor amenity space; and
 - the effect of the proposed car parking provision on the safety of highway users.

Reasons

Living conditions for future occupants

3. The appeal development proposes to convert an existing single and two-storey commercial building into residential accommodation comprising 15 independent rooms, each with ensuite bathrooms. The scheme would also provide two communal kitchen, dining and living areas, one to each floor. Externally the development would provide 7 car parking spaces, bin storage, secure cycle storage and a small, shared amenity space.
4. Rooms 4 to 10 would be single-aspect rooms, within the single-storey element of the building. The windows to Rooms 5 to 10 would face the proposed cycle storage and car parking. As such, the outlook from these ground-floor rooms would be extremely limited and dominated by parked vehicles in very close proximity.
5. Other occupants of the property, using the shared amenity space, would have direct and very close-range views into Rooms 4 and 5. Furthermore, access to the proposed secure cycle storage and car parking would result in other occupants passing very close to the windows to Rooms 5 to 10 at unpredictable and potentially unsociable times. Hence, use of the shared external amenity space,

secure cycle storage and car parking would result in an unacceptable arrangement with regard to the privacy of the occupants of Rooms 4 to 10.

6. Rooms 1 to 3 would be single aspect rooms to the ground floor of the two-storey element of the building. The orientation of the appeal property would mean these rooms would receive low levels of natural light. Additionally, the proposed windows to Rooms 1 to 3 would directly face third party land used as a car park, with no effective boundary treatment or separation between them, providing poor outlook from these rooms.
7. Light and noise from cars manoeuvring in the adjacent car park, potentially at unsociable times, would be in very close proximity to Rooms 1 to 3 and likely to cause significant disturbance to future occupants of these rooms. Hence, the disturbance resulting from the use of the adjacent land, the poor levels of daylight to and limited outlook from Rooms 1 to 3 would result in unacceptable living conditions for future occupants of the proposed scheme.
8. The plans show combined kitchen, dining and living rooms to both ground and first floors. However, the proposed layout results in Rooms 11 to 13 being stacked above the ground floor kitchen, dining and living room, and Room 3 wholly below the first-floor shared communal space. This configuration of rooms would lead to unacceptable levels of noise emanating from the communal spaces that would be outside of the control of occupants of each of the affected rooms. Acoustic insulation could be employed to reduce noise transmission between communal rooms and individual bedrooms. However, I have not been provided with evidence that this would adequately address the incompatible arrangement of uses of the communal and private spaces that would result from the proposal.
9. Furthermore, the scheme does not provide any dedicated shared living space, separate to cooking and dining areas. Given the small size of the individual rooms, neither would there be an acceptable amount of private living space. Therefore, overall, the scheme fails to provide an acceptable amount of internal amenity space.
10. The proposed external shared amenity space is small, largely enclosed by the building on three sides, and dominated by the secure cycle storage. I have not been directed to any policy in the development plan or supplementary guidance that indicate requirements for private shared amenity space for residential development such as that proposed. However, external amenity space makes an important contribution to the living conditions of occupants of shared residential developments and, in this situation more so given the lack of internal shared amenity space. In this case, the size of the external amenity space, its layout and relationship to other elements of the scheme would not result in a high-quality space, particularly for the number of occupants proposed.
11. Lack of available shared communal outside space can be, in specific circumstances, supplemented by additional access to public green space. However, I have not been provided with details of nearby public greenspace nor its location in relation to the appeal site. Nor do I consider that access to public greenspace would be likely to wholly offset the limited provision of shared communal amenity space in this scheme, given that communal amenity space is likely to be used differently to public space.

12. Therefore, to conclude on this main issue, the appeal scheme would not result in acceptable living conditions for the occupants of the property. The scheme fails to provide adequate internal space or external amenity space for the number of occupants proposed and does not protect the privacy of the occupants of Rooms 4 to 10. It fails to provide adequate outlook to ground-floor rooms and adequate natural light to Rooms 1 to 3. The layout of the scheme does not acceptably address noise and disturbance to future occupants resulting from activities both within and outside the building. This would not secure a high standard of amenity for future occupants or promote the important matters of health and wellbeing.
13. Accordingly, the scheme conflicts with Policy P10 of the Leeds Core Strategy (CS), 2019, and Policy GP5 of the Leeds Unitary Development Plan (UDP), 2019, and guidance provided in the Leeds City Council Neighbourhoods for Living, Supplementary Planning Document, December 2003. These, among other things, seek to ensure that development functions well and creates places with a high standard of amenity for users.

Car parking and highway safety

14. Policy T2 of the CS requires that new development should provide car parking, motorcycle, and cycle spaces in line with current guidelines. According to the Leeds City Council Transport Supplementary Planning Document, February 2023, (the SPD) the proposed development should provide parking for 15 cars, rather than the 7 shown on the plans. Furthermore, the plans do not demonstrate that vehicles would have adequate manoeuvring space within the site to enter and exit in a forward gear. As a result, vehicles would likely need to reverse out of the site, crossing the footway and entering St Paul's Street, which would pose a significant risk to other highways users.
15. Representations suggest that on-street vehicle parking is very limited within the surrounding area, that there is a high demand for parking spaces in the area and that there are parking restrictions in place in the vicinity and I also saw this at my site visit. I have not been provided with contradictory evidence in this case.
16. I acknowledge that the appeal site is located within walking distance of Morley town centre, close to public transport connections and that secure cycle storage would be provided. These factors may reduce reliance on private car use at the site. However, given the number of independent occupants proposed and the significant shortfall in parking provision identified, I am not satisfied that the demand for parking spaces would be sufficiently reduced as to avoid additional pressures on on-street parking.
17. The appellant suggests that the proposed parking provision is in line with similar examples of residential developments in the area. However, I have not been provided with any details of these examples, and therefore, there is no evidence to indicate that they are directly comparable to the current appeal. Moreover, each case must be dealt with on its own merits.
18. The appellant has indicated that a shortfall in car parking provision could be addressed through the implementation of car ownership restrictions on occupants or through travel plan incentives. However, I have not been provided with any details of such schemes nor any mechanism that could secure these measures. Accordingly, I attach limited weight to the likely effectiveness of these suggestions.

19. The scheme is likely to generate greater demand for parking spaces than would be provided on site. Therefore, car parking would be displaced to nearby streets and would add to the extent and severity of local parking problems to the detriment of highway safety with the associated serious consequences.
20. Consequently, the proposed development fails to provide adequate levels of car parking and vehicle manoeuvring space that would result in increased pressure on on-street parking provision in the area and increased risk to the safety of highways users. Accordingly, the proposal conflicts with Policy GP5 of the UDP and Policies P10 and T2 of the CS, and guidance provided within the SPD. These, among other things, seek to ensure that parking provision and safe access are integral to development and maximises highway safety.

Other Matters

21. As the appeal site is within the Morley Town Centre Conservation Area (the CA), I have a statutory duty under Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the Act) to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the CA. The National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) also requires great weight should be given to the conservation of heritage assets. These include conservation areas.
22. It appears that the significance of this CA relates to the historic layout and buildings associated with the residential and industrial development of Morley town centre. The footprint and scale of the principal building would remain substantially unchanged and the proposed works to the single storey element would uplift its appearance. Moreover, reinstatement of a window to the first floor and the addition of windows to the rear, blank elevation of the building would have a neutral effect on the building. Therefore, the minimal works proposed would have a neutral effect on the significance of the CA. As such, it would preserve the character and appearance of the CA.
23. The proposed development may contribute to the local economy, would be in a sustainable location and make use of an underutilised and dilapidated town centre site, and I give substantial weight to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements for homes. In doing so the scheme may reduce the need for urban expansion. Furthermore, the addition of 15 units would make a positive but nevertheless small overall difference to the supply of housing, particularly considering the significant housing supply figure indicated by the Council. Considering the scale of the development, overall, these benefits would be modest. On the other hand, the appeal scheme would result in unacceptably harmful living conditions for future occupants and would be harmful to highways safety. Taken together these multiple harms are substantial and outweigh the benefits.

Conclusion

24. The proposal conflicts with the development plan, when taken as a whole, and the material considerations 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.

C Mayes

INSPECTOR