



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 23 October 2025

by **M Cryan BA(Hons) DipTP MSc MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 5th February 2026

Appeal Ref: APP/T5150/W/25/3370863

126 Fleetwood Road, London, NW10 1NN

- 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 Mohammad Mtawaa against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Brent.
- The application reference is 25/1401.
- The development proposed is the conversion of a single-family dwelling into 2x self-contained flats with cycle parking, refuse storage spaces and soft and hard landscaping.

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The development was described on the planning application form as:

Proposed conversion of single-family dwelling house into 2x self-contained flats with associated cycle parking and refuse storage. The proposed layout includes:

- A 4-person 3-bedroom flat on the ground floor with a total area of 98.2m².
- A 4-person, 2-bedroom flat on the first floor and loft, with a total floor area of 117m².

3. An amended wording was used on the decision notice issued by the Council and subsequently by the appellant on the appeal form. I have used that in the banner heading above as it provides a more concise description of the proposal.

Main Issues

4. The main issues are:

- Whether the proposal is appropriate having regard to the borough's development strategy in respect of family housing; and
- The provision of car parking, with particular regard to effects on highway and pedestrian safety.

Reasons

Family housing

5. The appeal property is a semi-detached dwellinghouse on the north side of Fleetwood Road, with living accommodation on three levels (including a converted loft) and at least four bedrooms¹. The proposed development is the conversion of

¹ I say "at least" because not all rooms on the submitted "existing" drawings are labelled.

the property into two self-contained flats, which would comprise a two-bedroom flat on the ground floor, and a three-bedroom flat on the first floor and loft.

6. In order to protect the supply of family-sized housing, Policy BH11 of the 2022 Brent Local Plan ("the BLP") is supportive of the subdivision of family dwellings with three or more bedrooms only when such proposals comply with three criteria. Criterion c) is that the site is in an area with a public transport accessibility level ("PTAL") of 3 or above. The PTAL of the appeal site is 2, indicating low public transport accessibility, so the location is not one where the subdivision of family dwellings is supported.
7. The site's PTAL score is not disputed by the appellant, though they argue that it "does not accurately reflect the true quality and accessibility of local public transport" or "not reflect the extensive real-world public transport options available within walking distance of the site". However, while I am sure that legitimate criticisms could be made of the PTAL methodology, it provides an impartial assessment of connectivity which can be applied neutrally to any site or proposal. That there may be other connections available beyond the walking distance taken into account when the PTAL is calculated is not therefore a strong argument in favour of the appeal scheme, not least because it could be applied to almost any situation with a consequent inconsistency in decision making.
8. I also do not agree with the assertion that "the PTAL rating is not a determinative barrier under the London Plan or Brent's own Development Management Policies"; as I have noted above, the PTAL of a site is one of the specific criteria applied by Policy BH11 of the BLP. BH11 allows for exceptions only "where the amenity of the existing family sized home is so deficient that family occupation is unlikely and it could not reasonably be changed to overcome such deficiencies", but there is nothing before me to suggest that those circumstances apply in this case.
9. The appellant has drawn my attention to the grant of a lawful development certificate ("LDC") for the use of the property at No 116 Fleetwood Road as three self-contained flats². I do not know the full details of that scheme but note that the granting of an LDC is not dependent on the same assessment of planning matters as is the case here. That LDC does not weigh significantly in favour of this appeal proposal.
10. The appeal scheme would include secure on-site storage for bicycles, which would support future occupiers in making local journeys by sustainable means of transport. However, this provision is also required by the development plan, and is not something which would mitigate other shortcomings.
11. I conclude that the development would not be appropriate, as allowing the proposal would conflict with the development strategy which seeks to retain family housing. The proposal would therefore conflict with Policy BH11 of the BLP, which seeks to protect the supply of family housing in the borough.

Car parking

12. The second reason for which planning permission was refused was that "the proposed front garden arrangement fails to provide a sufficiently sized car parking space and does not maintain pedestrian visibility", the Council stated on the

² LPA Ref: 14/2303

decision notice means that the proposal does not comply with its 2018 *Domestic Vehicle Footway Crossover Policy* (“the DVFCP”). There is nothing before me to suggest that the DVFCP has been adopted as supplementary planning guidance so, while I accept that it may be a material consideration it is not one which in itself carries great weight here. No development plan policies were referred to on the decision notice on this issue, though in determining the appeal I have had regard to Policy BT2 of the BLP, and to the parking standards of the London Plan 2021, which were referred to elsewhere in the evidence before me.

13. At the time of my site visit, the entire front forecourt of the property was hard-surfaced with block paving. There is also a dropped kerb, shared with No 124 next door, across part of the footway on the frontage. The submitted drawings for the appeal scheme show the area of block paving next to No 124 would be retained, with the part of the garden next to No 128 being given soft landscaping and a 1m high boundary fence.
14. Given the site’s Outer London location PTAL of 2, Policy T6.1 of the London Plan 2021 sets a *maximum* parking provision for the development of 1.75 spaces. The Council’s concerns centred on the possibility that occupiers of one of the flats would continue to use the retained area of hard surfacing for parking via the footway crossover, although neither the size of the space nor driver-pedestrian intervisibility would be adequate in the terms set out in the DVFCP.
15. The Design and Access Statement had stated that “the ground floor will not include a designated parking space for one car” (a slightly confusing form of words, in my view) as “the intention is to utilize on-street parking which, will be exclusively for the use of the ground floor occupants”. The appellant’s initial appeal statement also said that there would be no off-street parking, although the plans show that the existing footway crossover would be retained. The appellant also suggested that the removal of the crossover and the existing access gap could be required by a condition, in the event of the appeal being allowed.
16. The Council noted this “vagueness”, as it put it, though it also acknowledged that it too was “fairly ambivalent as to whether the parking space should be retained or removed, as parking demand from the site could be safely accommodated on-street on Fleetwood Road without providing a driveway”. The appellant’s final submissions did not entirely clear things up either, saying that “residents will continue to use only the existing off-street parking already present on site”, but reiterating that “the existing dropped kerb could be reinstated to full height” and (although I think they mean “or”) a condition could be imposed “ensuring that no further parking is introduced beyond the single off-street space already available”. In fairness, this “either/or” approach is in part reflective of the Council having previously suggested alternative conditions according to whether parking was to be provided on-site or not.
17. Notwithstanding this slight muddying of the waters, both main parties made some reasonable points on this matter. The Council pointed out that driveways of inadequate length lead to cars overhanging and obstructing footways, while the appellant highlighted that many gardens in the area have already been hard surfaced for parking, with a consequent loss of greenery and an adverse impact on the character of the area. I saw several examples of both of these issues on Fleetwood Road and elsewhere nearby; I agree that they cause significant harm to the appearance and liveability of the neighbourhood.

18. Having considered everything which has been put before me, as well as what I observed on site, I am content that this matter could be resolved by the use of a suitable condition. (Had the proposal been otherwise acceptable, in view of the more positive impact on the appearance of the area, I would have leaned towards preferring the on-street parking approach requiring the reinstatement of the crossover.)
19. Subject to such a condition, I am satisfied that the proposed development would make adequate and safe provision of car parking. It would therefore comply with the provisions of the DVFCP and the relevant development plan policies I have referred to in paragraph 12 above. Together these policies seek to ensure that parking provision does not have negative impacts, including by adding to on-street parking demand where it cannot be met, or by harming the character of the area.

Planning Balance and Conclusion

20. I have found that the development would not cause unacceptable harm in respect of providing safe and adequate parking, as this matter could be managed by conditions. However, while the proposal would provide a net gain of one dwelling, this would come at the expense of significantly downsizing a dwelling suitable for a reasonably large family. Although a three-bedroom flat would form part of the scheme, there would be a fundamental “in principle” conflict with the development plan strategy in respect of family housing. The proposal therefore conflicts with the development plan taken as a whole.
21. While I have considered the benefits of the scheme which have been put to me, there are no material considerations which indicate that the decision should be made other than in accordance with the development plan. For the reasons given above, the appeal is therefore dismissed.

M Cryan

Inspector