



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 4 March 2026

by P Storey BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 29th April 2026

Appeal Ref: APP/Q5300/W/25/3376841

Garages, Lakeside Road, Southgate, Enfield, Greater London N13 4PR

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant permission in principle.
 - The appeal is made by Mrs Susan Cook against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Enfield.
 - The application Ref is 25/02682/PIP.
 - The development proposed is described as: "Permission in Principle Application Change of Use of a Redundant Garage to a Single-Storey Dwelling".
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and permission in principle is granted for residential development comprising 1 dwelling, at Garages, Lakeside Road, Southgate, Enfield, Greater London N13 4PR, in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 25/02682/PIP.

Preliminary Matters

2. The proposal is for permission in principle. The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) advises that this is an alternative way of obtaining planning permission for housing-led development. This consent route has 2 stages: the first stage (or permission in principle (PiP) stage) establishes whether a site is suitable in-principle and the second (technical details consent (TDC)) stage is when the detailed development proposals are assessed. This appeal relates to the first of those 2 stages.
3. The scope of the considerations for PiP is limited to location, land use and the amount of development permitted. All other matters are considered as part of a subsequent TDC application if PiP is granted. I have determined the appeal accordingly.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is whether the site is suitable for residential development, having regard to its location, the proposed land use and the amount of development.

Reasons

5. The Council's refusal is based on the view that the proposal would result in sub-standard accommodation and would harm the character and appearance of the Lakes Estate Conservation Area (the CA), with reliance placed on internal space standards, plot size and development pattern. Similar concerns have been raised by consultees and interested parties, including alleged overdevelopment,

loss of a garage space, parking stress, conflict with the Low Traffic Neighbourhood scheme, impacts on living conditions, and doubts about deliverability.

6. However, the PiP regime deliberately separates the question of whether a site is suitable in principle from the question of how development would be designed and delivered. Matters of detail are expressly reserved for the TDC stage.
7. The significance of the CA lies in its strong architectural coherence, Edwardian suburban character, consistent plot rhythm, and contribution of houses, gardens and streetscape to a planned early 20th century residential environment. Under section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, special attention must be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the CA.
8. However, at this stage I am concerned only with whether the principle of residential development on the site would be compatible with that statutory duty. The appeal site is part of an established residential area, and the existing garage is a utilitarian structure incidental to that use. There appears no dispute that housing is an appropriate use in this location in broad planning terms, and both the Council's officer report and the Heritage Officer accept that residential use, in itself, would not conflict with the prevailing character of this part of the CA.
9. I therefore do not find that the site's use or redevelopment as an independent dwelling would, of itself, be alien to the CA. On the evidence before me, and having regard only to the principle of development, there is nothing to indicate that the development of a single dwelling would harm the character or appearance of the CA at this stage, noting that matters of design, scale and form fall to be considered at the TDC stage.
10. Concerns raised by the Council and others regarding internal space standards, reliance on the existing garage footprint, or assumptions that a future dwelling would necessarily be cramped or sub-standard, rely upon speculative and detailed design outcomes that do not form part of the PiP application. At this stage, there is no fixed layout, footprint, or defined building envelope.
11. Similarly, concerns relating to parking stress, access constraints, servicing arrangements, refuse collection, drainage, and traffic impacts, including those connected to the Low Traffic Neighbourhood measures, do not demonstrate that residential use of the site is unacceptable in principle. Notably, transport officers raise no in-principle objection to a single dwelling and confirm that detailed matters would be assessed through future stages.
12. Concerns raised by interested parties regarding living conditions, including noise, privacy and outlook, rely on assumptions about layout, orientation and intensity of use that have not been advanced at this stage. Such matters are capable of being controlled, mitigated or, if necessary, found unacceptable through the TDC process. It would therefore be premature to conclude that an acceptable dwelling could not be achieved, as compliance with these standards falls to be assessed at the TDC stage.
13. Overall, while I acknowledge the concerns raised, the evidence before me does not convincingly demonstrate that the site is unsuitable in principle for residential development. Rather, the objections largely relate to whether a satisfactory

scheme could be achieved in detail, which is not the test to be applied at the PiP stage.

14. Nevertheless, for the avoidance of doubt, these findings relate only to the suitability of the site for residential development in principle. Granting PiP does not grant planning permission and does not imply that a future TDC application would necessarily be acceptable. A subsequent application would be required to address matters of detail and may be unsuccessful if it fails to comply with the development plan or other material considerations in these terms.
15. Accordingly, I conclude that the site is suitable for residential development in principle, having regard to its location, the proposed land use and the amount of development. Insofar as they are relevant to PiP, the proposal would therefore accord with Policies D6 and HC1 of the London Plan, March 2021, Policies CP4, CP30 and CP31 of The Enfield Plan Core Strategy 2010-2025, Adopted November 2010, and Policies DMD8 and DMD44 of the Development Management Document (DMD), Adopted November 2014. Collectively, these policies seek to ensure that new residential development delivers high-quality and accessible living accommodation, respects and preserves the character and appearance of heritage assets and their settings, integrates sensitively with its surrounding context, and protects residential amenity and environmental quality, while promoting sustainable, well-designed housing in suitable locations. It would also accord with the relevant provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework, which have similar aims.

Conclusion

16. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the proposal for permission in principle would accord with the development plan as a whole, and there are no considerations to indicate that the decision should be made other than in accordance with the plan. I therefore conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

P Storey

INSPECTOR