



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 24 February 2026

by **R Lawrence BSc (Hons), PGDip (TP), MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 16 March 2026

Appeal Ref: 6001172

18 Hayman Crescent, Hayes, Hillingdon UB4 8PW

- 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 Amin Bashman against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Hillingdon.
 - The application Ref is 79578/APP/2025/1845.
 - The development proposed is two-storey side extension and subdivision to provide 2 self-contained bedroom flats. One at ground (18A) and the other at first floor level (18B).
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Application for costs

2. An application for a full award of costs has been made by Mr Amin Bashman against the Council of the London Borough of Hillingdon. That application is the subject of a separate decision.

Preliminary Matters

3. I have taken the description of development from the planning application form. However, I have removed superfluous text that is not in itself development, and I have made minor alterations for clarity and legibility.
4. Amended plans have been submitted with the appeal. These include changes to the ground floor layout, a relocated entrance for the upper floor flat, revised fencing positions, a new recycling store, alterations to the fenestration and the removal of the rear patio. The scale and nature of these changes mean the plans are substantially different from those considered by the Council when it made its decision. This is especially important given the reasons for refusal that form part of my assessment of the appeal.
5. What is considered at appeal should be essentially the same scheme that was before the local planning authority. In this case the amended plans would create a materially different proposal. For that reason, my decision is based upon the plans on which the application was determined.
6. The Council has advised that the wrong ownership certificate was submitted, as access to the upper floor flat would require crossing land outside the red line boundary, including what appears to be a publicly maintained grass verge. The key issue is whether the application site includes all land necessary to carry out the development, including access, which in turn determines whether the correct ownership certificates were served and whether all interested parties were notified. There is no information before me confirming who owns the land or whether notice was given.

7. Given that I am dismissing the appeal, no party with an interest in that land would be prejudiced, and I have not pursued the matter further.

Main Issues

8. The main issues are:
- the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area,
 - the effect of the proposal on the supply of family housing in the Borough,
 - whether the proposal would provide sufficient external amenity space would be provided for future occupiers of the first floor flat, and
 - whether the proposal would provide suitable living conditions for future occupiers of the ground floor flat in respect of privacy and outlook.

Reasons

Character and appearance

9. Hayman Crescent and its surrounding roads are a suburban residential area, that mainly comprises of two-storey semi-detached and terraced houses of a similar age and design. A defining characteristic of the area are large areas of open grass. These give a spacious and softer appearance to this suburban area and an open setting. Those open spaces tend to dictate the orientation of dwellings, with dwellings set back from the roads, and where these are immediately adjacent, they front onto those open spaces rather than onto the road, albeit there are examples of this more traditional arrangement in areas of the estate which are not directly adjacent to areas of open space. Roof forms are generally shallow pitched roofs which run parallel to the open grassed spaces.
10. The appeal building, a two-storey semi-detached house in a corner position at the end of a short row of two-storey semi-detached properties, is no exception and faces onto the open space in front of the row. To the rear of the appeal building and the row of houses it sits within, is a grass verge which runs around the rear boundary wall and separates the appeal site from the hard landscaping parking court to the rear. To the rear and side of the appeal site, are two-storey purpose-built blocks of flats. These are of a more modern design than other dwellings which characterise the immediate surroundings, and the relatively modern age of the building is also signalled by the parking areas, rather than verdant open space, immediately around the buildings.
11. The proposed side extension would appear subordinate when viewed from the front, being both set back and lower than the main roof. This helps retain the primacy of the existing house. However, the increase in width would noticeably imbalance the pair of semi-detached houses, eroding the symmetry that is a defining feature of their appearance. The front-facing windows of the extension would also be smaller and more heavily walled than the established pattern, lacking the articulation seen on the main elevation. As a result, the extension would not fully integrate with the host dwelling.
12. From the front, the subdivision into two flats would not be obvious. No new front entrance or separate frontage treatment is proposed, so the building would still read as a single extended dwelling in this view.

13. The rear elevation, however, is unusually prominent because it fronts Blake Close and is only minimally set back. The extension, despite a slight set-down in height, would read as a full continuation of the building, and the new rear entrance would not follow the established pattern of garden doors normally positioned tight to the shared boundary. Its decorative fanlight and detailing would also contrast with the simpler, more modest doors normally found on rear elevations, while not matching the style of those on the front either. Although the rear boundary wall would obscure much of this door, the visible parts, together with the need for a new walkway across the grass verge, together with two new entrances within the rear garden wall, would slightly erode the soft, open character of this area.
14. I understand that a similar conversion has been approved at 22 Hayman Crescent (No 22), however, there are very limited details of that scheme before me such to enable a comparison. Nonetheless, I was able to view No 22 during my site visit, and note that in its current form, it appears to retain its original form as viewed from the frontage, and as such, given the information before me there is little comparison with the scheme before me. Although other schemes have been sited, including at Avondale Drive and Pole Hill Road, in the context of the character of an area, these lie some distance away, and in the absence of details to the contrary, do not appear within the same context as the appeal site.
15. Overall, the proposal would result in limited harm to the character and appearance of the area. At the front, the loss of symmetry within the semi-detached pair and the weaker integration of the extension would create minor but perceptible disruption to the established pattern of development. At the rear, the prominence of this elevation within Blake Close means that the new entrance and associated works to the grass verge would introduce further, albeit limited, visual harm. While these changes detract from the coherence of the existing building and its surroundings, the extent of harm would be small.
16. Nonetheless, the proposal would lead to adverse effects, bringing it into conflict with Policy BE1 of the Hillingdon Local Plan Part One 2012 (LPP1), Policies DMHB 11 and DMHB 12 of the Hillingdon Local Plan Part Two 2020 (LPP2), and Policy D3 of the London Plan 2021 (LP), which together require high-quality design that responds positively to local distinctiveness, including established street patterns.

Supply of family housing

17. The appeal property is a two-storey, three-bedroom semi-detached house. Its size, layout and character mean it clearly performs the role of family housing, consistent with many other dwellings in the surrounding area. Policy DMH 2 records a substantial borough-wide requirement for larger units, particularly three-bedroom properties, and expects schemes to reflect this wider need.
18. Policy DMH4 is, however, the most directly relevant policy when considering the conversion of existing dwellings. It permits residential conversions where four criteria are satisfied. In this case, the extended building would exceed the minimum 120sqm internal floorspace requirement, and the development would provide one flat per floor, both in accordance with criteria (iii) and (iv) of the policy. The Council has also confirmed that no properties on Hayman Crescent have been converted into flats. There is therefore no evidence that the 10% threshold in

criteria (i) and (ii) would be exceeded. On this basis, and in the absence of any contrary information, the proposal accords with all requirements of Policy DMH4.

19. Policy DMH 2 seeks an appropriate mix of unit sizes across residential schemes, informed by the need for larger family housing. However, on a scheme of only two units, the extent to which a mix can realistically be achieved is limited, and reducing the scheme to a single dwelling would not deliver any uplift in housing supply. Policies H1 and H2 of LPP1 seek to increase housing supply and support the delivery of homes on small sites, and the proposal would make a modest contribution consistent with these broad aims. While the scheme would result in the loss of one family unit, Policy DMH4 sets out the specific circumstances in which such subdivision is acceptable, and these are met here. In this context, the very small scale of the development means it would not materially distort the balance of unit sizes in the wider area.
20. Policy H10 of the LP advises that smaller units are generally more suitable in locations with good public transport accessibility, which is not the case here. Nevertheless, the proposal would not create an over concentration of one- or two-bedroom units in the locality which I take to be the key aim of this policy. The surrounding area is dominated by family housing, and the addition of two flats would not alter that prevailing character. Furthermore, because DMH 4 is the specific policy governing conversions of this type, it carries particular weight in this case, and the proposal demonstrably meets its requirements.
21. Therefore, I find that the increase to the supply of housing in the Borough, justifies the loss of a family-sized three-bedroom dwelling in this case, and the effect of the proposal on the supply of housing would be acceptable. Accordingly, I find that the proposal would comply with Policies DMH 1, DMH 2 and DMH 4 of LPP2 and Policy H10 of the LP.

External amenity space

22. Policy DMHB 18 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part Two (2020) establishes clear minimum standards for the provision of private outdoor amenity space. Table 5.3 specifies that a two-bedroom flat should be served by at least 25 sqm of usable private amenity space for the sole enjoyment of its occupiers. This requirement ensures that residents have access to suitable outdoor areas which contribute positively to day-to-day living and overall wellbeing.
23. The submitted drawings show a subdivided rear garden, with the rear portion accessed from outside of the appeal site to serve the proposed first floor flat. The area allocated to this unit would measure less than 20 sqm and therefore would not meet the minimum 25 sqm threshold required by Policy DMHB 18. As a result, the proposal would fall short of the Council's adopted standard for private outdoor amenity space provision.
24. The appellant seeks to justify the reduced provision by highlighting the site's close access to Pole Hill Park, which offers a generous area of public open space as well as children's play facilities. During my site visit, I observed that the park is within a short walking distance of the property and can be comfortably reached via established pedestrian routes. The availability of high-quality, accessible open space is therefore a relevant material consideration in this case.

25. Although public open space cannot act as a substitute for private garden areas, particularly for activities such as sitting outside, drying clothes or providing a small play area, it can help to offset limited provision where a scheme retains a meaningful amount of private space. In this instance, the private area for the first floor flat, while below the standard, remains usable for typical garden activities and would allow residents some degree of privacy and outdoor enjoyment. The close proximity of a large and well-equipped park further reduces the practical impact of the shortfall and lessens the extent to which daily activities would be constrained.
26. Taking the above factors into account, I find that the level of amenity space provision, although not fully compliant with the numeric requirement, would not result in unacceptable living conditions for future occupiers. In this specific context, the combination of an adequately sized albeit sub-standard private area and convenient access to high-quality public open space leads me to conclude that the proposal achieves an acceptable overall standard. I therefore consider the scheme to accord with the aims of Policy DMHB 18 of LPP2.

Living conditions

27. The first-floor rear living room window would allow views towards the garden of the ground floor flat, and some visual connection between the two areas would exist. I am mindful that a degree of intervisibility is common in built up residential settings, particularly where private outdoor space sits close to low rise flatted buildings. The shape and proportions of the garden would allow residents to arrange seating or activity areas so that the most sensitive parts of the space remain less exposed.
28. The change in levels and the potential for planting or light screening would soften the relationship, and the Council's suggested landscaping condition would give the opportunity to secure a scheme to minimise overlooking. Policy DMHB 11 seeks to avoid unreasonable harm, and in this context the relationship would not exceed what is ordinarily experienced in similar flatted environments. Policy D3 of the London Plan recognises that privacy cannot be absolute in higher density residential areas, and the extent of overlooking here would remain limited.
29. Taken together, these factors mean the proposal would not cause an unacceptable level of privacy or outlook for future occupiers of the ground floor flat. The living conditions provided would be acceptable and would comply with Policies DMHB 11 and DMHB 16 of LPP2, Policy D3 of the LP and the Framework. Collectively, these policies seek to secure a good standard of amenity for future occupiers by protecting privacy, outlook and the practical use of external spaces and by ensuring development avoids unreasonable overlooking.

Planning Balance and Conclusion

30. The proposal would result in harm to the character and appearance of the area, leading to conflict with the development plan when read as a whole. In support of the scheme, the development would deliver a single additional dwelling, adding modestly to the supply of housing and contributing to the mix of homes in the Borough. Economic benefits would arise temporarily during construction, and future occupiers would support local services. Financial contributions would also be secured to ensure no undue pressure on local infrastructure. However, as only one additional dwelling would be provided, the extent of these benefits would be very limited.

31. I have found that the proposal would provide acceptable living conditions for future occupiers, including in terms of the level of external amenity space to be provided, and in respect of privacy and outlook. I have also found the principle of the loss of the existing family house to be acceptable. However, these are expectations of any residential development, and compliance in this respect is a neutral matter.
32. The Framework places significant importance on achieving high-quality and well-designed places, and this forms a central strand of the environmental objective of sustainable development. Given the identified harm to the character and appearance of the area, the proposed development fails to satisfy the environmental objective of sustainable development and runs counter to the Framework taken as a whole, notably those that promote good design. In this context, whilst the harm to the character and appearance of the area may be limited, this is a matter of considerable importance and accordingly I attach considerable weight to it.
33. While the proposal offers some limited benefits, these do not outweigh the harm I have identified. The proposal would conflict with the development plan as a whole, and material considerations do not indicate a decision should be made other than in accordance with the development plan. For the reasons given above, the appeal is dismissed.

R. Lawrence

INSPECTOR