



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 26 May 2026

by **J Davis BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 09 June 2026

Appeal Ref: 6004136

40 Vernon Drive, Harefield, Hillingdon, UB9 6EG

- 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 Lands Partners against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Hillingdon.
 - The application Ref is 79715/APP/2025/2539.
 - The development proposed is Subdivision of existing single dwelling house into 2 x three-bedroom houses, with associated private amenity space, car and cycle parking, and refuse storage.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

2. I have used the Council's description of the development as set out in their decision notice in the above banner heading, rather than the original description on the planning application forms. This is because the proposed development was amended prior to the determination of the application, from a proposal for the subdivision of the existing dwelling to 2 x two bedroom houses, to its subdivision to form 2 x three-bedroom houses.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the living conditions of future occupiers, with particular regard to internal living space.

Reasons

4. The appeal relates to a two-storey detached dwelling located within a corner plot on Vernon Drive, within the Harefield Village Conservation Area.
5. Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the Act) states that special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the area. The Council did not raise concern regarding the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area, including on the CA. From the information before me I have no reason to disagree with the Council's finding on this issue.
6. The proposal is for the subdivision of the existing dwelling into 2 x three-bedroom houses, with associated private amenity space, car and cycle storage and refuse

- storage. Each dwelling would have a double room, and two, one- bedspace single bedrooms.
7. Policy D6 of the London Plan (2021) (LP) concerns housing quality and standards and seeks to ensure housing developments are high quality and provide adequately sized rooms with comfortable and functional layouts which are fit for purpose. Housing developments are required to meet minimum standards as set out in Table 3.1. For a two storey, three-bedroom, 4-person dwelling, the minimum gross internal floor area is 84sqm.
 8. Policy DMHB 16 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 2 (2020) (HLP) similar states that all housing development should have an adequate provision of internal space in order to provide an appropriate living environment. The internal space standards set out in Table 5.1 reflect those in Policy D6, Table 3.1 of the LP.
 9. There is no dispute between the main parties regarding the gross internal area (GIA) of the proposed dwellings; with each dwelling having a GIA of 75.80sqm. The proposed gross internal floor space of the dwellings would therefore fall considerably short of the 84sqm required by Policy D6 of the London Plan and Policy DMHB 16 of the HLP and would be in conflict with those policies.
 10. I acknowledge that the proposed bedrooms (i.e. one double and two single in each dwelling) would all offer an appropriate outlook and would meet the applicable minimum floor area standards set out Policy D6 of the London Plan.
 11. The proposed ground floor layout would essentially be the same for each dwelling. The proposal makes provision for a kitchen / dining area annotated to be 18.66sqm and a confined lounge of 8.35sqm. A storage area of 1.59sqm falls short of the 2.5sqm storage area set out in Table 5.1 of the HLP and 3.1 of the LP. A hallway and toilet would also be provided on the ground floor.
 12. The minimum floorspace standards set out in LP Policy D6 take into account commonly required furniture and spaces needed for different activities and moving around (paragraph 3.6.1). The proposed dwellings each fall short of the internal floorspace standards set out in the development plan by about 8.2sqm. The amount of internal living space relative to the potential number of occupants is therefore substandard and given the substantial shortfall, would be likely to lead to cramped living conditions, insufficient circulation space and inadequate internal space overall to provide a flexible, comfortable and appropriate living environment.
 13. I have considered the appellant's contention that the existing dwelling was originally constructed as two semi-detached houses, each providing three-bedroom family accommodation but later combined to form a single larger dwellinghouse. The appellant also refers to other three-bedroom houses along Vernon Drive of a comparable original size and footprint to the appeal property, having been constructed before the adoption of modern space standards.
 14. Whilst I have no evidence of the original internal layout of the dwellings, I acknowledge that the garden of the appeal site is shown to be subdivided on earlier road layouts, such as on the Council's Harefield Conservation Area map. Notwithstanding the building's possible historic use as two dwellings, the proposal falls to be considered against the current housing quality standards set out in the development plan and accordingly, this consideration does not override the harm I have identified.

15. I also note the appellant's comments that the Council raised no objection to the internal layout when the proposal was initially presented as two-bedroomed units, although as far as I am aware no such proposal was formally determined by the Council. I have not been provided with floor plans of the earlier drawings, but in any event, the internal floor space standards are relative to the level of occupancy, i.e. the number of bedrooms and bedspaces. I therefore place limited weight on this consideration.
16. I concur that the proposal would offer an acceptable level of outdoor amenity space and that the Council raised no objection in relation to other matters such as neighbouring amenity, highway safety, effect on heritage assets or the character of the area. However, this consideration does not outweigh the harm I have identified above.
17. The proposal would provide an additional three-bedroom dwelling in the Borough which is a benefit. However, the provision of an additional dwelling represents only a modest contribution to housing supply and therefore this consideration carries limited weight which does not override the concerns set out above.
18. In conclusion, I find that the proposal would have a harmful effect on the living conditions of future occupiers with regard to internal living space. Thus, it is contrary to Policy D6 of the LP, Policy DMHB 16 of the HLP and paragraph 135(f) of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024).

Conclusion

19. I have found that the proposal conflicts with the development plan taken as a whole, and material considerations do not outweigh that finding. Therefore, for the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

J Davis

INSPECTOR