
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 2 March 2026 by Kim Vo MPLAN

Decision by John Morrison BA (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 2 April 2026

Appeal Ref: 6003529

15 Barnhill Road, Prestwich, Bury M25 9WH

- 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 Garry Almond against the decision of Bury Metropolitan Borough Council.
 - The application Ref is 72321.
 - The development proposed is for an external escape stair.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal Procedure and Main Issue

2. The site visit was undertaken by a representative of the Inspector whose recommendation is set out below and to which the Inspector has had regard before deciding the appeal scheme. The main issue in regard to which is its effect on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons for the Recommendation

3. The appeal building is a detached two storey dwelling in a residential area. Architecture varies, but there is a pleasant homogeneity to the traditional and conventional suburb style of housing which is generally set back from and facing a single carriageway road with frontages given over to off street parking.
4. In this context, the staircase would be significant in scale, sprawling across the depth of the main side elevation and rising to the second floor. Its galvanised steel construction would give it a distinctly industrial character. In combination with its rigid, utilitarian design, the structure would appear incongruous and jar against the architectural traditionality of the host building and surrounding area. It would be positioned to the side and partly concealed by the existing front mature trees and planting. However, given its scale and positioning, it would remain visible from public viewpoints through the open front driveways of both the appeal site and Number 13 Barnhill Road.
5. For these reasons, the proposal would cause unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the host dwelling and surrounding area. As such, it would be contrary to Policy H2/3 of the Bury Unitary Development Plan 1996 and the Alterations and Extensions to Residential Properties Supplementary Planning Document 2004. This policy and guidance require, amongst other things, alterations to not have a detrimental impact on the character of the property and surrounding area.

6. An occupier of the appeal property has a medical condition which results in mobility limitations. I am aware of the Public Sector Equality Duty set out under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. Disability is a protected characteristic thereunder.
7. The proposal would be accessible only from the second floor. This loft level is not occupied by the disabled resident, and it is unclear how they would access the external staircase in the event of an emergency. As such, the proposal would not directly meet their needs in providing them with an alternative means of escape and would only benefit the disabled occupier's relative who resides on this floor.
8. It is also unclear how exactly this disabled resident would cause an obstruction of the internal staircase, and why another household member would be unable to pass by them safely in the event of a fire, or even assist them in their escape. Additionally, there is no sufficiently compelling evidence to demonstrate that fire safety requirements could not be achieved through alternative means, which might have a lesser impact. Such measures could include a fire suppression system, fire warning systems, or changes to the internal living arrangements. I remain to be convinced that the proposal is the only way to achieve the outcome the appellant desires.
9. Therefore, I attach only limited weight to the benefits the development would provide for the disabled resident. The proposal would not alter their existing means of escape and does not present as an opportunity to eliminate discrimination against a person with the protected characteristics of a disability. Accordingly, the harm I have identified would outweigh the limited benefits and the impact of dismissing the appeal would be proportionate and justified.

Conclusion and Recommendation

10. For the above reasons, the appeal proposal would conflict with the development plan and material considerations do not indicate a decision other than in accordance therewith. I therefore recommend that the appeal should be dismissed.

Kim Vo

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

11. I have considered all the submitted evidence and my representative's report and on that basis the appeal is dismissed.

John Morrison

INSPECTOR