

London borough secures £740k confiscation order against landlord over planning breaches

February 23, 2021

The legal team at Brent Council has secured a confiscation order worth nearly £740,000 against a landlord who rented out properties in Willesden in breach of planning enforcement notices.

The council said it believed the order against Mohammed Mehdi Ali of High Road Willesden was the largest such order for a planning breach made anywhere in the country so far this year.

HHJ Wood, sitting at Harrow Crown Court, made the order against Mr Ali on 12 February. He was told by the court that he would face a prison term of 5 years and 9 months if he did not pay the order in full within three months.

The case was then referred to Harrow Crown Court for confiscation proceedings under the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002. Detailed investigations were carried out by Brent's financial investigators and Brent's planning enforcement officers. The properties were used as houses in multiple occupation and as undersized flats.

Mr Ali was also ordered to pay Brent £30,000 to cover its legal costs in the long-running case.

Brent was represented in the Crown court by Edmund Robb of Prospect Law.

Cllr Shama Tatler, Lead Member for Regeneration, Property & Planning, said: "This is another huge win for Brent. The council will take robust action to prevent the creation of poor quality housing. This penalty sends a clear message that rogue landlords will not be allowed to get away with ignoring planning laws.

"The accommodation provided was some of the worst residential accommodation that officers have ever come across. Brent will not tolerate this type of behaviour, landlords providing such horrible conditions. Brent residents deserve better."

Sentencing for the enforcement notice breaches is adjourned until 1 March 2021.