



**FIRST-TIER TRIBUNAL
PROPERTY CHAMBER
(RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY)**

Case reference : **LON/00AF/LDC/2025/0994**

Property : **France Court 24-26 Lancaster Road
South Norwood London SE25 4AW**

Applicant : **24 Lancaster Road Management
Company Ltd**

Representative : **none**

Respondent : **The Long Leaseholders of France Court
24-26 Lancaster Road South Norwood
London SE25 4AW**

Representative : **None**

Type of application : **To dispense with the requirements to
consult lessees about major works
section 20ZA of the Landlord and
Tenant Act 1985.**

Tribunal members : **R Waterhouse FRICS**

Venue : **10 Alfred Place, London, WC1E 7LR**

Date of decision : **28 July 2026**

DECISION

Summary of the Decision

1. The Applicant is granted dispensation under Section 20ZA of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 from the consultation requirements imposed on the landlord by Section 20 of the 1985 Act in respect of major works, being as out in the application; “substantial fire safety improvements to meet the fire risk assessment report to comply with BS8214 and BS 9999. This involves new fire door sets or up grading of doors to FD305 and smoke proofing

compartmentalisation. Doors are flat doors and stairwell doors except those already to that standard.”

The application and the history of the case

2. The Application was determined on the papers without a hearing. A hearing was not requested by any party and the Tribunal considered papers that a hearing would be disproportionate.

3. The Applicant applied by an application received 22 December 2025 for dispensation under Section 20ZA of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 (“the Act”) from the consultation requirements imposed by Section 20 of the Act in respect of fire safety works.

4. The Tribunal provided Directions dated 26 January 2026 subsequently amended 24 June 2026. The Applicant providing a bundle of 46 pages.

The Law

5. Section 20 of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 (“the Act”) and the related Regulations provide that where the lessor undertakes qualifying works with a cost of more than £250 per lease the relevant contribution of each lessee (jointly where more than one under any given lease) will be limited to that sum unless the required consultations have been undertaken or the requirement has been dispensed with by the Tribunal. An application may be made retrospectively.

6. Section 20ZA provides that on an application to dispense with any or all of the consultation requirements, the Tribunal may make a determination granting such dispensation “if satisfied that it is reasonable to dispense with the requirements”.

7. The appropriate approach to be taken by the Tribunal in the exercise of its discretion was considered by the Supreme Court in the case of *Daejan Investment Limited v Benson et al* [2013] UKSC 14.

8. The leading judgment of Lord Neuberger explained that a tribunal should focus on the question of whether the lessee will be or had been prejudiced in either paying where that was not appropriate or in paying more than appropriate because the failure of the lessor to comply with the regulations. The requirements were held to give practical effect to those two objectives and were “a means to an end, not an end in themselves”.

9. The factual burden of demonstrating prejudice falls on the lessee. The lessee must identify what would have been said if able to engage in a consultation process. If the lessee advances a credible case for having been prejudiced, the lessor must rebut it. The Tribunal should be sympathetic to the lessee(s).

10. Where the extent, quality and cost of the works were in no way affected by the lessor’s failure to comply, Lord Neuberger said as follows: “I find it hard to see why the dispensation should not be granted (at least in the absence of some very good reason): in such a case the tenants would be in precisely the position

that the legislation intended them to be- i.e. as if the requirements had been complied with.”

11. The “main, indeed normally, the sole question”, as described by Lord Neuberger, for the Tribunal to determine is therefore whether, or not, the lessee will be or has been caused relevant prejudice by a failure of the Applicant to undertake the consultation prior to the major works and so whether dispensation in respect of that should be granted.

12. The question is one of the reasonableness of dispensing with the process of consultation provided for in the Act, not one of the reasonableness of the charges of works arising or which have arisen.

13. If dispensation is granted, that may be on terms. That is to say that dispensation is granted but only if the landlord accepts- and fulfils appropriate conditions. Specific reference was made to costs incurred by the lessees, including legal advice about the application made.

14. There have been subsequent decisions of the higher courts and tribunals of assistance in the application of the decision in Daejan but none are relied upon or therefore require specific mention in this Decision.

15. More generally, the Tribunal considers that the case authorities demonstrate that the Tribunal has a very wide discretion to, if it considers it appropriate, impose whatever terms and conditions are required to meet the justice of the particular case- in Daejan it was said “on such terms as it thinks fit- provided, of course, that any such terms are appropriate in their nature and their effect”.

Submissions and Consideration

16. By copy of email dated 4 February 2026, Chris Walsh of 24 Lancaster Road Management Ltd confirmed compliance with Directions. [19/46].

17. By copy of email dated 24 February 2026, Chris Walsh of 24 Lancaster Road Management Ltd confirmed no objections had been received. [19/46].

The Lease

18. A copy of a sample lease is provided in the Bundle [21/46].

Consultation and the Works

19. The Applicant served a Notice of Intention on 18 December 2025 describing the works as “qualifying works to the building to ensure compliance with the Fire Safety Act 2021 and the Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022.”

20. The Notice of Intention described the works in further detail;

“The works include, but are not limited to:

- The removal and replacement of existing non-compliant flat entrance doors fully certified FD30S fire door-sets (including frames, intumescent/smoke seals, and certified self-closing devices). Upgrading of internal compartmental doors to same standard.
- Where an existing door is found to be certified FD30 component in good condition, remedial upgrade works may be undertaken. This includes the installation of compliant smoke seals, intumescent strips, locks, hinges and fire-related self-closing hardware to bring the door up to current FD30S standards.
- Necessary making-good of internal decorations immediately surrounding the door frames following installation/remediation.
- Sealing of all pipe runs, ducts, corridor service cupboards and electricity to prevent smoke egress to comply with the building compartmentalisation design to BS999.

Analysis and decision

21. The Tribunal finds that it is reasonable to dispense with all of the formal consultation requirements in respect of the major works to the building in respect to the works detailed in the application and set out in paragraph 1 of the decision.

22. This decision is confined to determination of the issue of dispensation from the consultation requirements in respect of the major works outlined above. **The Tribunal has made no determination on whether the costs incurred are reasonable and whether service charges are payable in any given sum or at all. If a Lessee wishes to challenge the reasonableness of those costs and/ or the payable service charges, then a separate application under section 27A of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 would have to be made.**

Rights of appeal

By rule 36(2) of the Tribunal Procedure (First-tier Tribunal) (Property Chamber) Rules 2013, the tribunal is required to notify the parties about any right of appeal they may have.

If a party wishes to appeal this decision to the Upper Tribunal (Lands Chamber), then a written application for permission must be made to the First-tier Tribunal at the regional office which has been dealing with the case.

The application for permission to appeal must arrive at the regional office within 28 days after the tribunal sends written reasons for the decision to the person making the application.

If the application is not made within the 28-day time limit, such application must include a request for an extension of time and the reason for not complying with the 28-day time limit; the tribunal will then look at such reason(s) and decide whether to allow the application for permission to appeal to proceed, despite not being within the time limit.

The application for permission to appeal must identify the decision of the tribunal to which it relates (i.e. give the date, the property and the case number), state the grounds of appeal and state the result the party making the application is seeking.

If the tribunal refuses to grant permission to appeal, a further application for permission may be made to the Upper Tribunal (Lands Chamber).