
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 4 August 2025

by **F P Tinsley MA (Hons) MBA MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 10th September 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/F5540/W/25/3367196

98 Whitton Road, HOUNSLOW, TW3 2ES

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr F Syed against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Hounslow.
 - The application reference is Ref: P/2024/4064
 - The development proposed is described as 'change of use of single dwelling into HMO (house in multiple occupation) for up to 12 people. Retrospective'
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The premises are currently operating as a House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) without planning permission, providing eight bedrooms and accommodating up to 16 persons (sui generis use). On 4 September 2023, an Article 4 Direction came into force in the Borough, including the appeal site, removing permitted development rights for change of use from a dwellinghouse (Use Class C3) to a house in multiple occupation (Use Class C4).
3. I have not been presented with evidence to demonstrate that the authorised use of the premises is Use Class C4. Therefore, the lawful use of the premises remains as a dwellinghouse (Use Class C3) and I shall determine this appeal as such. It is not within my remit to determine whether a change of use occurred prior to the adoption of the Article 4 Direction.
4. The submitted drawings indicate several changes to the layout of the accommodation compared to the existing arrangement, including the introduction of a communal kitchen area. These proposed changes are not retrospective in the manner described by the appellant. Accordingly, my assessment is based on the details provided in the application form and the submitted scheme drawings.

Main Issues

5. The main issues in this case are:
 - The suitability of the premises for use as a six-bedroom HMO accommodating up to 12 persons, considering its location and the size of the existing property.
 - The impact of the proposed development on the living conditions of surrounding occupiers, particularly in relation to increased activity and the use of the

premises as an HMO.

- The impact of the proposed development on the living conditions of future occupiers, with regard to the standard of accommodation provided and the adequacy of waste and recycling facilities.

Reasons

Suitability of the premises

6. Policy SC10 of the London Borough of Hounslow Local Plan 2015–2030 (the Local Plan) requires that HMOs be located within convenient walking distance of town centre facilities and have good public transport links. Paragraph 3.4 of the London Borough of Hounslow Houses in Multiple Occupation Supplementary Planning Document 2017 (the SPD) states that HMOs should have at least a good Public Transport Accessibility Level (PTAL 4) and be within 400 metres of town centre facilities. It defines town centre facilities as those found in Metropolitan and District Centres, specifically Hounslow, Chiswick, Brentford, and Feltham. The SPD is a significant material consideration in the determination of this appeal.
7. Although the appeal site is located close to Hounslow railway station and benefits from regular bus services along Whitton Road and there are some local shops in the vicinity, it is situated more than 400 metres from Hounslow, which is the closest town centre (Metropolitan or District) and lies within an area designated as PTAL 3 (Moderate).
8. Policy SC10 also stipulates that properties must have an original floor area greater than 130 square metres to be considered suitable for conversion to an HMO. There is a discrepancy between the main parties regarding the floor space of the original dwelling. The appellant has submitted a drawing indicating a floor area of 130 square metres, which is 4 square metres more than the 126 square metres identified by the Council. Given that the building has been significantly extended with a ground floor rear extension, I do not consider this minor difference to be significant. Therefore, I am satisfied that the existing building is of adequate size to allow for conversion to an HMO.
9. In summary, the proposal is contrary to Local Plan Policy SC10 due to its location not being within convenient walking distance of town centre facilities and it not having good public transport links. In terms of the specific criteria provided in this regard by the SPD, it is more than 400 metres from Hounslow town centre and has a PTAL 3 rating, which is lower than the minimum required PTAL 4.

Living Conditions

10. Local Plan Policies CC2 and SC10, along with the SPD, require that development does not negatively impact the living conditions of surrounding occupiers. This includes making provision for specific on-site requirements such as waste and recycling storage, and cycle storage. The policies also require that proposals demonstrate they will not, either individually or cumulatively with other similar developments in the area, cause serious harm to the character or residential amenity of the locality.
11. Although an HMO is currently operating at the premises, I have not been provided with any information about any other similar properties in the area. This lack of data prevents a proper assessment of the cumulative impact of the proposal, as

required by both Policy SC10 and the SPD. Additionally, no management statement has been submitted, which is a requirement under the SPD to demonstrate how the facility will be managed. No detailed information has been provided regarding waste and recycling facilities, other than a statement that they will remain as existing.

12. As the application lacks the necessary information to assess the impact of the proposed development on the living conditions of surrounding occupiers, particularly in relation to disturbance and cumulative effects, it is contrary to Policies CC2 and SC10 of the Development Plan. It also fails to meet the requirements of the SPD in this regard.

Standard of Accommodation

13. All six bedrooms proposed in the HMO exceed the minimum size standard for a double room intended for two persons (10.2 sq.m), as stipulated in the SPD and are acceptable in all other regards including access to daylight and layout. I am also satisfied that the communal kitchen and dining area would offer an acceptable standard of accommodation for residents. The provision of outdoor amenity space to the rear of the building would also be acceptable.
14. The ground floor rear bedroom does not have internal access to the communal kitchen/dining area. Based on the submitted drawings, the resident of this room would need to exit the building and re-enter to access the communal space, which is not acceptable. This issue could be resolved by installing an internal doorway between the bedroom and the communal kitchen/dining area. Had I been minded to allow the appeal, this matter could have been addressed by means of a planning condition.
15. No details of waste and recycling storage facilities area provided other than reference to the existing provision to the front of the property. I am also satisfied that this matter could have been addressed by means of a planning condition had I been minded to allow the appeal.
16. In conclusion, the proposed development would provide adequate living conditions with particular reference to internal living space and external amenity space. It would accord with Policy SC10 of the Local Plan, insofar as they require schemes to meet the demands of everyday life for the intended occupants and comply with the required standards.

Other Matters

17. Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) play an important role in the Borough's housing supply. However, any potential benefits of the proposal, or its alignment with the National Planning Policy Framework or the Local Plan in this regard do not outweigh the harm I have identified above.

Conclusion

18. While I have found that the proposal would provide an acceptable standard of accommodation for future occupiers, I am unable to determine whether it would have an acceptable impact on the living conditions of surrounding residents, particularly in relation to disturbance and cumulative effects as no supporting information has been submitted to enable this assessment. I have also concluded

that the location is unsuitable for conversion to residential use, primarily due to its only moderate PTAL level and its significant distance from Hounslow town centre.

19. For the reasons given above, I find that the proposal would conflict with the development plan when it is read as a whole, and other relevant considerations do not indicate that a decision contrary to the development plan should be reached. I therefore conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

F P Tinsley

INSPECTOR