



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 14 October 2025

by **P Burley BA (Hons) MPhil MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 17 October 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/F5540/W/25/3370312

815 Great West Road, Isleworth TW7 5PB

- 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 Mr Ahmed Nasser against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Hounslow.
 - The application Ref is P/2025/0908.
 - The development proposed is the change of use from residential (C3) to a large HMO for up to 10 people (*Sui Generis*).
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The appellant has submitted four appeal decisions relating to changes of use to Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) in the borough, arguing that these are precedents that should guide my decision in this case. However, the Council has highlighted that there are material differences in circumstances: two were determined before the Council adopted its Houses in Multiple Occupation Supplementary Planning Document in 2017 (HMO SPD), one was located in Hounslow town centre with a public transport accessibility level (PTAL) of 6a and the fourth was a change of use from a small to a large HMO within 400m (i.e. a reasonable walking distance) of Hounslow town centre. Whilst I have reviewed each of the submitted appeal decisions and considered each Inspector's conclusions, each case must be determined on its own merits and therefore I have based my decision on the information that has been submitted to me in respect of this appeal and the particular circumstances of this appeal site.

Main Issues

3. The main issues are:
 - the effect of the appeal scheme on the living conditions of occupiers of neighbouring properties;
 - whether the appeal site is suitable for use as an HMO; and
 - whether sufficient car parking would be available for the future occupiers of the proposed HMO.

Reasons

Living Conditions of Occupiers of Neighbouring Properties

4. Hounslow Local Plan (2015) (HLP) Policy SC10 and the HMO SPD seek to ensure that a change of use would not be detrimental to the amenity of residents of the HMO, neighbours, or the overall residential amenity of the area. The HMO SPD says that a management statement should be submitted with the planning application to address the potential impacts on the amenity of both residents of the HMO and neighbouring properties, noting that the impact upon neighbouring properties of comings and goings and the cumulative effect on a local community will be taken into account when making a decision on a planning application. Thus, it would follow that if proposals for the management of an HMO are not likely to be effective then planning permission could be withheld.
5. The appellant has not explained why it did not follow the Council's guidance but has said that a management statement could be submitted pursuant to a planning condition, also noting that the appeal scheme would result in a small-scale level of activity / amenity impact. However, this appeal relates to a change of use from a single dwellinghouse to a 10-person HMO and although it does not necessarily follow that a property with more occupants than a typical single household dwelling of this size would result in harm, given the size of the proposed HMO I consider it reasonable that the potential consequences of the change of use are assessed before planning permission is granted.
6. Although the Great West Road might be a relatively noisy environment and the appeal site could be sound-proofed, there could still be an impact on neighbouring properties as a result of a noticeable change in comings and goings which is a separate, distinct consideration and which would not necessarily be addressed through sound insulation. There is no evidence before me to enable me to conclude whether the appeal scheme, either on its own or together with any other nearby HMOs, would be compatible with the prevailing character of the area or whether it would have a negative effect on the local community. Whilst there may not have been any representations from immediate neighbours in respect of the appeal scheme, this does not necessarily mean that there would be no harmful effects.
7. Furthermore, although it has been argued that the licencing regime would ensure that the proposed HMO would be properly managed, I have not been provided with any details of, or relating to, the matters that would be controlled by licencing.
8. Therefore, whilst the absence of a management statement does not in itself make the development unacceptable, in this case the absence of any information to indicate that an acceptable outcome could be achieved leads me to conclude that such details should not be reserved by way of a planning condition. Thus, I find that it has not been demonstrated that the appeal scheme complies with HLP Policy SC10 and the HMO SPD which seek to establish that a change of use to an HMO would not have a detrimental effect on the living conditions of the occupiers of nearby properties.

Suitability of the Appeal Site for HMO Use

9. Whilst the floorspace of the existing dwellinghouse following a loft extension is approximately 154m², the supporting text to HLP Policy SC10 notes that

conversion of properties that only achieve a total floorspace of more than 130m² because of a previous or proposed extension will not be supported.

10. Although the original dwellinghouse was 124m², the appellant has argued that the proposed accommodation would meet the Council's HMO standards in terms of room sizes. It has also referred to other appeals which have been allowed despite the original properties not exceeding 130m² on the basis that they would provide a satisfactory standard of accommodation for the future occupants.
11. However, this figure is not solely to prevent cramped, substandard conversions, to protect small family homes, or to exclude properties that demonstrably provide adequate space. It is also because, as noted in the supporting text to HLP Policy SC10, in smaller homes the impact of multiple occupation on the residential amenity and character of the surrounding area is likely to give rise to serious harmful impact. This is a consideration which is of relevance to the area within which the appeal site is located because of the close proximity of the dwellings to one another. Furthermore, and as discussed above, it has not been demonstrated that the appeal scheme would not have a detrimental effect on the living conditions of the occupiers of nearby properties. Therefore, I find that the failure of the appeal scheme to comply with the floorspace threshold in HLP Policy SC10 has not been justified.
12. In respect of the proximity of the appeal site to town centre facilities, the nearest town centre, Brentford, is approximately 1.8km from the site which is substantially more than the 400m which the HLP notes would be a 'reasonable distance'. The appellant has drawn my attention to neighbourhood centres on London Road and Spur Road, but it has also noted that these would be 850m to 900m from the appeal site. Therefore, these are also not within a reasonable distance. Whilst Policy SC10 might not impose an absolute prohibition where a property marginally exceeds a numerical threshold or is beyond an indicative walking distance, none of the designated centres are anywhere close to the 400m guideline and even if some of these are accessible by public transport, HLP Policy SC10 specifically seeks to locate HMOs within a convenient walking distance of town centre facilities.
13. Although the appellant has noted that there are other facilities such as shops, restaurants and gyms, and employment opportunities in the local area, it has not provided details of these or how accessible they would be from the appeal site. The absence of such information does not allow me to conclude whether any flexibility should be applied to the 400m criterion in light of the wider context.
14. In respect of public transport links, the HMO SPD explains that good accessibility is a PTAL of 4 and above. The appeal site has a PTAL of 2. The Council has also noted that some of the bus services that the appellant has referred to are more than 400m, i.e. beyond a reasonable distance, from the appeal site. Taking account of all of the services noted by the appellant and the distance of these from the appeal site, I find that the appeal site is not within convenient walking distance of good public transport links as is sought by HLP Policy SC10.
15. Overall, therefore, I conclude that the appeal scheme conflicts with HLP Policy SC10 and the HMO SPD which support HMOs in locations that are appropriate for intensive occupancy.

Parking

16. As already discussed, the appellant has not provided details of the facilities (shops etc.) upon which it bases its argument that future occupiers would not be unduly reliant on private vehicles. It has also not provided any evidence to demonstrate why there would only be a modest increase in vehicular activity associated with a 10-person HMO when compared with the current lawful use of the appeal site as a single dwelling, not least bearing in mind the PTAL of the site. Furthermore, it has not explained the level of parking demand which it says can be accommodated within existing on-site and on-street provision (including in the context of the nearby controlled parking zone) without there being unacceptable impacts on safety, congestion, or residential amenity.
17. The appellant has said, however, that the Council has not submitted survey evidence demonstrating a current shortage of spaces or quantifying any cumulative effect of nearby HMOs and that in the absence of robust data, there is no basis to conclude that the modest additional demand from the proposal would create material parking stress. However, it is for the appellant, not the Council, to provide evidence to support its proposals.
18. Although the appellant has argued that the absence of a parking survey should not override the policy support for intensifying residential use in accessible urban areas, as already discussed the appeal site is not within convenient walking distance of good public transport links or town centre facilities.
19. The appellant has also argued that Local Plan Policy EC2 requires that development does not lead to “*severe residual impacts*” on the transport network. However, that policy expects development proposals to demonstrate that adverse impacts on the transport network are avoided.
20. I conclude, therefore, that it has not been demonstrated that the appeal scheme would not result in additional excessive parking stress on the roads surrounding the development. The proposed development is therefore contrary to HLP Policy EC2 which seeks to ensure that an appropriate amount of vehicle parking is provided and to avoid adverse impacts on the transport network.

Other Matters

21. The appellant has said that it is essential to note that the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) promotes sustainable development, which includes the effective use of land by re-using land that has been previously-developed. It has stated that the proposed development aligns with this principle as it seeks to make optimal use of the existing residential capacity without expanding the footprint of the host property, taking account of embodied carbon, whilst also safeguarding the amenity of the appeal site and wider area and providing high-quality accommodation. It has also noted that the HLP supports the increased provision of housing to help meet Hounslow’s share of the London Plan housing targets and encourages a diverse mix of housing, and that Policy H9 of the London Plan (2021) recognises the important role that HMOs play in addressing both local and strategic housing needs.
22. In addition, the appellant has noted that the scheme would optimise an existing building (which is encouraged by HLP Policy SC1) without compromising its architectural character or necessitating external alterations, avoiding the

environmental costs of new construction and protecting undeveloped land from unnecessary pressure, and encourage low-carbon lifestyles because of the availability of transport other than the private car. It has also argued that it would promote social sustainability by widening housing choice and supporting mixed and balanced communities, offer accessible accommodation for key workers and young professionals, and provide short-term economic benefits through construction activity and ongoing contributions such as council tax revenue and household spending. It has said that, together, these add substantial weight to the planning balance.

23. The appellant has provided information which suggests that the Council does not have a five-year housing land supply and it has said that in accordance with paragraph 11 d) of the Framework, the Council's relevant housing policies must be regarded as out-of-date. Whilst I sought the Council's position on this matter it did not provide any comments and, therefore, I have proceeded on the basis of the information provided by the appellant.

Planning Balance and Conclusion

24. Given the Council's housing land supply position, the increased provision of housing while avoiding the development of other land and taking account of embodied carbon, and the widening of housing choice to support mixed and balanced communities is a matter to which I attach significant positive weight. Bearing in mind the relatively small scale of the development I also attach a small amount of positive weight to the other social, environmental and economic benefits that have been noted by the appellant.
25. However, on the basis of the evidence provided I conclude that the appeal site is not a suitable location for a large HMO and that it has not been demonstrated that it would encourage low-carbon lifestyles because of the availability of transport other than the private car. Furthermore, it has not been demonstrated that the appeal scheme would not have an unacceptable impact on the living conditions of the occupiers of neighbouring properties or in terms of car parking and the related effect of the scheme on the transport network.
26. Bearing in mind that paragraph 11 d) ii) of the Framework states that particular regard should be had to directing development to sustainable locations, and given the enduring nature of the potential impacts, I conclude that the adverse impacts of allowing this appeal would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole. The proposed development would not therefore benefit from the presumption in favour of sustainable development found at paragraph 11 of the Framework.
27. For the reasons given above, having regard to the development plan as a whole, the approach in the Framework, and all other relevant material considerations, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

P Burley

INSPECTOR