



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 25 September 2025

by **S Brook BA (Hons) MA MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 27 October 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/N4205/W/25/3369594

95 Bradford Street, Bolton BL2 1JY

- 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 M Michael against the decision of Bolton Metropolitan Borough Council.
 - The application reference is 19730/25.
 - The development proposed is described as 'Addition of one HMO room to the existing six bed HMO facility, conversion of little used lounge to additional HMO room, the only building work form small en-suite with stud partitions.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the addition of one HMO room to the existing six bed HMO facility, conversion of little used lounge to additional HMO room, the only building work form small en-suite with stud partitions, at 95 Bradford Street, Bolton, BL2 1JY, in accordance with the terms of the application, reference 19730/25, and the plans submitted with it, subject to the conditions in the attached schedule.

Preliminary Matters

2. Works to convert the ground floor lounge to a bedroom had been undertaken at the time of my visit and the room appeared to be in use. However, bedroom 4 on the submitted plans was not in use. I have assessed the proposal based on the plans before me.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is whether the proposed development would provide satisfactory living conditions for future occupiers.

Reasons

4. The appeal site comprises a semi-detached dwelling with bedroom accommodation over four floors, including in the basement and the roof space, providing a 6-bedroom House in Multiple Occupation (HMO). The dwelling is separated from the road by a gravelled frontage where a lightwell exists, serving the basement. At the rear of the dwelling is a garden, with includes a storage shed for bicycles and a separate area to accommodate refuse bins.
5. Policy CG4 of Bolton's Core Strategy¹ (CS), requires that all development is compatible with surrounding land uses and occupiers, protecting amenity, privacy,

¹ Local Development Framework Bolton's Core Strategy Development Plan Document Adopted 2 March 2011, Shaping the Future of Bolton

safety and security. The Council also references advice contained within the General Design Principles Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), which seeks well designed buildings that provide good living, working and social environments for their occupiers.

6. Reference has also been made by both main parties to Bolton Council's Houses in Multiple Occupation Guidance and Amenity Standards (HMO Guidance), a copy of which has been provided. While referencing the space standards within this document, the Council indicate that it was prepared for licensing purposes and it does not form part of the Development Plan or Supplementary Planning Guidance. While this document is a material consideration, it is unclear whether this document has been subject to any formal consultation process. This limits the weight I can afford it.
7. The proposal seeks the addition of a seventh bedroom at the property, by converting the existing lounge. The remaining communal area would therefore be limited to the kitchen/diner, which the submitted plans indicate has an area of 20.4sqm, as well as the rear garden. The proposed bedroom would have a floorspace of 17.6sqm, while existing bedrooms range in size from 14.9sqm to 24.6sqm. All bedrooms and the kitchen/diner would exceed the minimum space standards of the Council's HMO Guidance.
8. While the kitchen/diner is reasonably sized, providing cooking, storage and dining facilities, clothes washing facilities and bin storage/recycling areas, I agree with the Council that if this area were to be used by all seven residents at any one time, then this space would be cramped and uncomfortable, particularly the dining area, which I observed would only comfortably sit four people in its present position.
9. However, I noted at my visit that except for the basement bedroom and bedroom 4 at present, all other bedrooms are provided with kitchenette type facilities of varying sizes and some seating for dining purposes. Additionally, all those bedrooms presently in use had additional seating for relaxation purposes. It is reasonable to consider that the additional capacity provided by these alternative facilities within the private bedrooms, would reduce the intensity of use of the communal areas to some extent. I am satisfied therefore that in the circumstances of this particular dwelling, the functional use of the kitchen/diner would not be unacceptably compromised by the addition of a seventh resident and future occupiers would be provided with acceptable living standards in terms of the size and functionality of the available shared space.
10. The existing basement bedroom is served only by a lightwell, which has implications for the level of light available into this bedroom, as well as restricting the outlook for occupiers. The appeal scheme would not change the present conditions of this bedroom, however, it would remove the lounge that sits above ground level and provides an alternative outlook and space for any occupier of this bedroom to utilise, for the undertaking of day-to-day tasks.
11. However, from what I observed on my site visit, the window and lightwell serving this basement bedroom are reasonably sized, while the window is orientated south/southeast. At the time of my visit, which I appreciate is only a snapshot, this arrangement allowed for a reasonable level of natural light to penetrate into this room. The appellant has provided readings from a light meter which indicate lighting levels in this room exceed those of north facing bedroom 4. Again, these

are only a snapshot in time, and I cannot be certain that they have been undertaken in accordance with any recognised guidelines. Nevertheless, I have been provided with no contrary evidence to suggest that light levels in the room fall below any recognised standards.

12. While outlook from this basement bedroom is restricted, alternative communal indoor and outdoor space would remain available to the occupier of this room, in the form of the ground floor kitchen/diner, which is served by two large windows, and the shared garden. As such, the removal of the existing lounge would not change the living conditions afforded to the occupier of this bedroom, to the extent that it would be significantly harmful.
13. To conclude on this main issue, the proposed development would provide satisfactory living conditions for future occupiers and so I find no conflict with CS policy CG4, the requirements of which have been set out above, or the advice contained within the Council's SPD.

Conditions

14. As use of the dwelling as a 7 bed HMO did not appear to have commenced, I have included the standard time limit condition, along with a condition specifying the approved plans for the layout of the HMO, as this provides certainty. I have also imposed a condition to limit the number of residents to 7 to regulate the living conditions of future occupiers, and the overall effect of the development on the locality.

Conclusion

15. For the reasons outlined above, having had regard to the development plan as a whole and all other material considerations, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

S Brook

INSPECTOR

Schedule of conditions

- 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
- 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Location Plan Drawing No.0.03, Proposed Plans Drawing No. 0.02.
- 3) The number of persons residing at the premises shall not exceed 7 at any one time.