
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 4 November 2025

by **N Armstrong BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 5th December 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/F5540/W/25/3372722

92 Cambridge Close, Hounslow TW4 7BG

- 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 Mrs Shweta Sandhu against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Hounslow.
 - The application Ref is P/2025/1371.
 - The development proposed is described as “Retention of single storey rear extension. Retention of use of the dwelling as a House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) with four bedrooms for six occupants”.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The description of the proposed development provided in the application form differs from that in the Council’s decision notice. I have taken the description used in the decision notice for the banner heading above, as the appellant has relied on this in the appeal form, confirming that is what planning permission is sought for. From the evidence before me, there is no dispute between the parties that the lawful use of the property is as a dwellinghouse.
3. I observed at my site visit that a rear extension has been constructed, which appeared to be that shown in the submitted plans. This is not part of the Council’s reason for refusal, nor does the Council identify any conflict with the development plan for this element of the application. From the evidence before me and my site visit, I see no reason to disagree. Therefore, the focus of this appeal is the proposed use of the property as an HMO comprising four bedrooms for six occupants.

Main Issues

4. The main issues are:
 - whether or not the property would be suitable for conversion, with particular reference to its location and floor area;
 - the effect of the development on the living conditions of neighbouring residents, with particular reference to noise and disturbance;
 - the effect of the development on parking provision and the local transport network; and

- the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the area, with particular reference to bin storage.

Reasons

Suitability

5. The appeal site comprises a two-storey, semi-detached dwelling located within a predominantly residential area of similar properties.
6. Legislation usually allows the change of use of a dwellinghouse (Use Class C3) to small HMOs (Use Class C4). However, the Council's evidence highlights the area is covered by an Article 4 Direction removing the permitted development rights for the conversion of a dwelling to an HMO, which is not disputed by the appellant. Consequently, in addition to controls over the change of use to larger HMOs, the Council has identified that the conversion of dwellings to small HMOs should be controlled. The removal of permitted development rights does not suggest that all HMOs are inappropriate, only that proposals should be assessed against the development plan and other material considerations.
7. Policy SC10 of the London Borough of Hounslow Local Plan (2015-2030) (the LP) recognises the contribution of HMOs to the range of housing provision within the borough, and these will be supported in locations suitable for more intensive occupancy, subject to criteria. These include being located within convenient walking distance of town centre facilities and good public transport links, and having a minimum 'original' floor area greater than 130sqm.
8. Despite the site's location in relation to some shops and other services, Hounslow town centre is well beyond a convenient walking distance, which the supporting text to Policy SC10 considers to be 400m. The Council's evidence also indicates that the site is in an area classed as having a Public Transport Accessibility Level (PTAL) of 2, suggesting a poorer level of accessibility overall. Whilst there are bus stops in the wider area of the appeal site allowing for public transport to access town centre facilities, in my judgement, the site is an unsuitable location when considered against Policy SC10 given it is not within a convenient walking distance of town centre facilities and good public transport links.
9. The evidence indicates that the property is well below the minimum original floor area of 130sqm required by Policy SC10, which is not disputed by the appellant. This is a specific requirement of the policy to be suitable for conversion into a non-family HMO, alongside the locational requirements addressed above, and thus there is clear conflict in this regard.
10. I have limited information before me to indicate whether or not there would be any adverse effects from the development in terms of cumulative effects arising from a concentration of HMOs in the area. Notwithstanding this, the property fails to accord with Policy SC10 as it is not located within convenient walking distance of town centre facilities and good public transport links, and due to its floor area.
11. For the above reasons, I conclude that the appeal site is not suitable for conversion, with particular reference to its location and floor area. It therefore conflicts with Policy SC10 of the LP, the aims of which are set out above.

Living conditions

12. I observed the area of the site and its immediate surroundings to be a relatively quiet neighbourhood. The appellant suggests that the proposal would result in increased capacity for one more person over the lawful use as a dwelling, which would be a modest increase in the number of occupants. However, given that its occupants would live as separate households with individual living, working and social patterns, the use of the property as an HMO would likely generate a more intensive use with activity from comings and goings compared to use as a single dwelling.
13. As established above, I have limited information before me regarding the number of HMOs within the surrounding area, although the appellant's evidence suggests the area is not experiencing conversion stress from such uses. Where there is an absence of other similar uses, the effects of a more intensive use may appear as a more notable addition in comparison to single, family households. Conversely, if there are other HMOs in this area, the proposal could add to existing effects for neighbouring residents.
14. I therefore cannot be sure whether or not the appeal scheme would contribute to an overconcentration of HMOs in the area and potential cumulative effects, or whether or not it would harm the living conditions of neighbouring occupants. Furthermore, there is also limited evidence before me to adequately demonstrate if there would be satisfactory management of the development that would ensure it would not have an adverse impact upon the amenity of neighbouring residents with regard to noise and disturbance.
15. I therefore find that there is insufficient evidence before me to ensure that the proposal would not unacceptably harm the living conditions of neighbouring residents, with particular reference to noise and disturbance. It would therefore conflict with Policies CC1 and CC2 of the LP, which amongst other things, aim for development to respond to the wider context of the area and its communities, function well in their effect on surrounding areas, and have a positive impact on the amenity of residents.

Car parking

16. There is a block paved frontage to the property, which the evidence indicates provides two vehicle parking spaces, which was not in use for parking at the time of my visit. Access to this is restricted as no crossover with dropped kerb serves the frontage, with the nearest located in front of the pavement and the pathways leading to the side of the appeal site, extending across the front of the driveway at the adjacent 90 Cambridge Close. In addition, a marked on-street parking bay is situated directly to the front of the appeal site.
17. There are other marked bays on the estate roads, which I observed were well used at the time of my visit during early afternoon on a weekday, with some spaces available, although demand will likely fluctuate at different times of the day and week. Other properties in the area benefit from off-street parking, although their accesses reduce on-street parking capacity, while there are parking restrictions in parts of Cambridge Close, including close to the appeal site.
18. The Council's evidence suggests the use could generate demand for up to four vehicles, and given the site's low PTAL, there is potential that individual occupiers

of the HMO would own cars. I have limited information before me to determine the level of car parking provision that would be required. Notwithstanding this, whilst the frontage of the appeal site may well be used for off-street parking, the position of the nearest existing marked bay and dropped kerb would make access and manoeuvring difficult and inconvenient for drivers. Therefore, the change of use would likely lead to an increased demand for on-street car parking spaces, which could result in congestion and inconvenience to local residents. Whilst the appellant has provided some observations on parking in the area, this covers limited periods, therefore I give this limited weight in favour of the development.

19. For the above reasons, I conclude that the proposal has failed to demonstrate that it would not have an adverse impact upon parking provision in the area or the local transport network. It would therefore conflict with Policy EC2 of the LP, which amongst other things, aims for developments to demonstrate they are located appropriately with regard to road capacity, provide an appropriate level of car parking, and demonstrate that adverse impacts on the transport network are avoided.

Character and appearance

20. As well as the block paving to the frontage, a hard surfaced pedestrian access is situated to the side of the property and its adjoining neighbour leading to their gated rear gardens, which was used for bin storage at the time of my visit.
21. No details regarding the storage and collection of waste and recycling were provided with the planning application or as part of the appeal. Policy SC10 of the LP expects proposals to include such facilities to ensure there is no serious impact on the character and appearance of the area. However, whilst the proposal may result in additional waste facilities, based on my observations, I see no reason preventing the provision of adequate waste and recycling facilities at the site that would not adversely affect the site frontage and the character and appearance of the area.
22. In the absence of any compelling evidence to the contrary, I conclude that the development would not have an unduly harmful effect on the character and appearance of the area, with particular reference to bin storage. Subject to a suitable condition, the proposal would therefore accord with Policies CC1 and CC2 of the LP. Amongst other things, these policies aim to secure development that sensitively respond to an area's character and create attractive, distinctive and liveable places. The proposal would also accord with Policy SC10 of the LP, the aims of which are set out above.

Other Matters

23. I have had regard to the appellant's comments on the contribution the development would make to the diversity of household sizes, accommodation and tenure, and in relation to the economic and social objectives of the LP and the National Planning Policy Framework. However, the scale of development means any associated benefits would be limited and these would not outweigh the harm that I have found.
24. Whilst the proposal has been found to be acceptable by the Council in other respects, and noting that the property has an HMO licence for up to 6 people, these are neutral matters that do not weigh in favour of the development.

Conclusion

25. The proposal conflicts with the development plan as a whole and material considerations do not indicate that the appeal should be decided other than in accordance with it. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

N Armstrong

INSPECTOR