



Appeal Decisions

Site visit made on 11 November 2025

by **K Williams MTCP (Hons) MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 11 December 2025

Appeal A Ref: APP/M5450/W/25/3371709

7 View Close, Harrow HA1 4ST

- 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 Samuel Weiss, View Close Estates Ltd against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Harrow.
 - The application Ref is PL/0493/25.
 - The development proposed is Change of use from HMO (Class C4) to Large HMO for 8 persons (Sui Generis); external alterations to the rear at ground floor level.
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Appeal B Ref: APP/M5450/W/25/3371776

7 View Close, Harrow HA1 4ST

- 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 Samuel Weiss, View Close Estates Ltd against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Harrow.
 - The application Ref is PL/0500/25.
 - The development proposed is Change of use from HMO (Class C4) to Large HMO for 9 persons (Sui Generis); rear dormer; insertion of rooflights; alterations to the rear fenestration.
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Decision

1. Appeal A is dismissed.
2. Appeal B is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

3. As set out above, there are two appeals at 7 View Close. Both appeals propose the change of use of the building from a House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) that can accommodate up to six people (Use Class C4)¹ to a small HMO. Appeal A seeks permission for a HMO that can accommodate up to eight persons with external alterations. Appeal B is for nine persons and alterations include a rear dormer and altered fenestration.
4. Two planning permissions² were granted in November 2024 to convert the appeal building into two three-bedroom self-contained units. However, the property subsequently changed into a HMO under permitted development rights³ to a small HMO prior to the implementation of these permissions and before the appeal planning applications were validated in February 2025.

¹ Class C4. Houses in multiple occupation - The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (the UCO).

² Council References: PL/1802/24 and PL/2424/24

³ contained in Schedule 2, Part 3, Class L of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2025 (the GPDO)

5. The Council has raised no objections to the physical alterations proposed for either appeal. Based on my observations, I see no need to disagree and my decision is therefore focussed on the effects of the proposed change of use. The appeals were refused for the same reasons, therefore, whilst I have considered each appeal on its own merits, because the issues arising in the two appeals are similar, and to avoid duplication, I have dealt with the two appeals together where appropriate and unless indicated otherwise.

Main Issues

6. The main issues are the effect of the proposal on the living conditions of occupiers of neighbouring homes and the effect on the character of the area.

Reasons

7. The appeal site comprises an extended two-storey semi-detached property with a substantial rear garden and space for parking at the front of the site. It is positioned at a tangent, towards the head of a residential cul-de-sac. It adjoins 8 View Close. The area is characterised by similar semi-detached properties. View Close is narrow and homes are located close to the footway and to each other. From my observations I have no reason to doubt that neighbouring properties are family homes or single households in self-contained flats.
8. I recognise that the provisions of the GPDO permit a change of use of a building falling within Class C3 to a use falling within Class C4. It is a reasonable assessment that the occupation of the property by six unrelated individuals would be at the upper limit of what may be acceptable in this context. Nevertheless both appeal schemes would be a further intensification over and above the Class C4 occupation threshold.
9. The appellant contends that the Council has accepted the intensification of the property into two family homes. The potential number of occupants within two households or one single substantial property could include a large family with children or other adults/teenagers also living fairly independently. However, it is extremely likely that there would be shared activity taking place such as combined trips to work and school, shopping and other guests visiting the entire household, which marks them apart from HMO accommodation.
10. The proposed rooms would be single occupancy, therefore adults living independent lives would be expected to reside there. Given that single households even with a number of persons are likely to share activity, there would likely be an increased number of separate comings and goings and associated visitors and deliveries compared to one large or two smaller single households and the six-person HMO.
11. The use of the use of main entrance and driveway at the front of the property would in my view be increased. The entrance point to the grounds of the property is channelled into a very narrow space between low fencing. All residents and visitors would have to walk almost in front and very close by a ground floor window at No 6. As the appeal semi-detached building is set at an angle, this layout would provide clear views of all comings and goings from the main ground floor window of No 8. There is also limited space at the head of the cul-de-sac without dropped kerbs. Therefore deliveries or vehicles dropping people off would not be possible

without obstructing driveways to other homes or being very noticeable given the close arrangement of homes.

12. Overall, given the closely spaced orientation of neighbouring homes every movement to the property would be able to be observed in very close quarters. The aforementioned activities, which could easily occur throughout the day and evening would result in associated noise such as talking when greeting visitors or deliveries and door closing, which can often be heard by those within semi-detached properties, and those close by.
13. I have not been provided with the layout of the approved flats, or the layout of the property before it was used as a HMO. However, the existing plans before me show two rooms are vacant adjacent to the adjoining property party wall at first floor. Both proposals would therefore introduce new residents next to the party wall of No 8, where none are shown to have been previously independently accommodated even with the six-person HMO scheme.
14. Both proposals also show a similar communal layout consisting of kitchen and dining facilities. The dining area is not particularly large nor is there other communal internal space for relaxing, entertaining, watching television, listening to music or other day to day activities. Given the proposed arrangement, the bedrooms are likely to be used more intensively than those in a dwelling or a self-contained flat, and those more so in Appeal B for nine residents given no additional communal provision is made.
15. I have no details regarding whether any soundproofing has been provided, but the proposals would introduce largely independent accommodation next to the adjoining home at first floor. Sound from the new rooms in combination with multiple occupiers and their TVs/music could cause noise and disturbance to the occupiers of No 8 in particular. This could be problematic throughout evening when noise levels would generally be lower or when windows are ajar. There could also be disturbance to other residents within the appeal property.
16. Whilst the aforementioned examples of noise and activity are common to most neighbourhoods the potential proposed development would in my view involve a level of activity, even with only two more occupiers, beyond what would be appropriate in this setting (and therefore three occupiers also). The close knit relationship of the properties at the front of the site are likely to exacerbate the effects. On a regular basis noise and activity associated with eight or nine individual households is likely to result in disturbance, which would be detrimental to living conditions of future residents and the occupiers of neighbouring homes. It would make homes or garden areas less enjoyable to use as a result. Overall, these effect can have significant implications on the existing quality of life of residents and how the area functions.
17. However, whilst remaining residential the overall character of the area would also be harmed by the incongruity and disturbance of the activity associated with the proposals. I find the occupation of a large single family home, two households with three-bedrooms and the operation of the six person HMO would not result in the same or worse harm than the appeal proposal because of the increased likelihood of shared activity, likely reduced intensive use of rooms and fewer residents. Consequently, the existing use of 7 View Close as an HMO, or flats does not justify the appeal schemes.

18. I therefore conclude that the proposals would be harmful to the living conditions of the occupiers of nearby neighbouring homes and rooms, and the character of the area. The proposal would therefore be contrary to the aims contained within the London Plan, (March 2021) Policies D3 and D14 and Harrow Core Strategy (February 2012) Policies CS1, DM1, DM26 and DM30. Together and insofar as they relate to the main issue these seek to protect the living conditions of neighbours against the effects of noise and activity and ensure proposals respond to the character of the area.
19. The Council has not clearly identified which parts of the Residential Design Guide the proposal would not accord with. Therefore I am unable to reach a conclusion on that document.

Other Matters

20. I have been referred to an appeal decision on Boxtree Road in Harrow, and as I was also the Inspector for that appeal, I am familiar with the details of the case. Boxtree Road is a wider thoroughfare, featuring properties laid out in a more spacious and linear manner, which afforded greater privacy than is present at this appeal site. Existing plans in that appeal demonstrated bedrooms already in use for HMO accommodation adjacent to the neighbouring property, but the proposed additional room was sited away from the internal party wall. That proposal was also only for one additional resident/household within the property. Furthermore, unlike the current appeal, the Council did not raise objections or consider that the proposal warranted refusal due to the intensification resulting from one additional person within the HMO, relative to the character of the area or neighbouring occupiers. As such, that appeal did not turn on the same matters as this case.
21. It is not a principle of law that like cases must always be decided alike. In any event, I have exercised my judgment based on the individual merits of the appeals before me. I do not consider them sufficiently similar to have an overriding outcome on this appeal because of the following differences between the character of the area, the positioning and orientation of that dwelling, the internal layout of the rooms, and the lower number of residents who would reside in that property.
22. The C4 HMO had been operational for only a short period when the planning applications were submitted, and for a similarly brief time when the appeal was subsequently lodged. Furthermore, it is uncertain whether the existing property has been occupied at its maximum capacity of six persons and comments from interested parties suggest this may not have been the case at the time of the initial planning application. Consequently, the lack of complaints regarding the current six-bedroom HMO operation does not provide sufficient justification to permit a development that has otherwise been identified as harmful.
23. Although interested parties have raised various other matters, other than referenced, these have not been found to be harmful by the Council. The physical alterations to the building would not visibly harm the character or appearance of the area or the living conditions of existing nearby residents. Additionally, the Council has determined that despite the low Public Transport Accessibility Level the good accessibility to local shops renders the proposed parking levels acceptable, ensuring no harm to highway safety would occur. Furthermore, the proposed developments would not result in an over-concentration of HMOs in the

area. However, these are matters that weigh neither in favour of nor against the appeal.

24. The proposed development would contribute to the supply and mix of housing in the area and provide an alternative type of residential accommodation. Although some economic benefits could be attributed to the proposal, these are not quantified and are likely to be small.
25. Notwithstanding the policy support for such proposals within the London Plan and Core Strategy, there is a requirement to consider the effects on the living conditions of the occupiers of neighbouring properties and the character of the area. Therefore, when set against the identified harm, particularly given the scale of development, the benefits are ultimately outweighed.

Conclusion

26. The proposals conflict with the development plan and the material considerations do not indicate that the appeal should be decided other than in accordance with it. For the reasons given above the Appeal A and Appeal B should be dismissed.

K Williams

INSPECTOR

Appendix 1

List of those who have appealed

Reference	Case Reference	Appellant
Appeal A	APP/M5450/W/25/3371709	View Close Estates Ltd
Appeal B	APP/M5450/W/25/3371776	View Close Estates Ltd