

DELEGATED DECISION

- Please select each of the categories that enables this application to be determined under delegated powers
 - Criteria 1 to 5 or criteria 7 to 9 must be addressed for all categories of application, except for applications for Certificates of Lawfulness, etc.

APPROVAL RECOMMENDED: GENERAL

Select an Option

1.	No valid planning application objection in the form of a petition of 20 or more signatures, has been received	☐
2.	Application complies with all relevant planning policies and is acceptable on planning grounds	☐
3.	There is no Committee resolution for the enforcement action	☐
4.	There is no effect on listed buildings or their settings	☐
5.	The site is not in the Green Belt (but see 11 below)	☐

REFUSAL RECOMMENDED: GENERAL

6.	Application is contrary to relevant planning policies/standards	☐
7.	No petition of 20 or more signatures has been received	☐
8.	Application has not been supported independently by a person/s	☐
9.	The site is not in Green Belt (but see 11 below)	☐

RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

10.	Single dwelling or less than 10 dwelling units and/or a site of less than 0.5 ha	☐
11.	Householder application in the Green Belt	☐

COMMERCIAL, INDUSTRIAL AND RETAIL DEVELOPMENT

12.	Change of use of retail units on site less than 1 ha or with less than 1000 sq. m other than a change involving a loss of A1 uses	☐
13.	Refusal of change of use from retail class A1 to any other use	☐
14.	Change of use of industrial units on site less than 1 ha or with less than 1000sq.m. of floor space other than to a retail use.	☐

CERTIFICATE OF LAWFULNESS

15.	Certificate of Lawfulness (for proposed use or Development)	☐
16.	Certificate of Lawfulness (for existing use or Development)	☐
17.	Certificate of Appropriate Alternative Development	☐

CERTIFICATE OF LAWFULNESS

18.	ADVERTISMENT CONSENT (excluding Hoardings)	☐
19.	PRIOR APPROVAL APPLICATION	☐
20.	OUT-OF-BOROUGH OBSERVATIONS	☐
21.	CIRCULAR 18/84 APPLICATION	☐
22.	CORPSEWOOD COVENANT APPLICATION	☐
23.	APPROVAL OF DETAILS	☐
24.	ANCILLARY PLANNING AGREEMENT (S.106 or S.278) where the Heads of Terms have already received Committee approval	☐
25.	WORKS TO TREES	☐
26.	OTHER (please specify)	☐

The delegation powers schedule has been changed. Interim Director of Planning, Regeneration & Public Realm can determine this application

Case Officer:

Signature:

Date:

A delegated decision is appropriate and the recommendation, conditions/reasons for refusal and informative's are satisfactory.

Team Manager:

Signature:

Date:

The decision notice for this application can be issued.

Director / Member of Senior Management Team:

Signature:

Date:

NONE OF THE ABOVE DETAILS SHOULD BE USED IN THE PS2 RETURNS ODPM

Item No. **Report of the Head of Development Management and Building Control**

Address: 5 GERRARD GARDENS EASTCOTE PINNER

Development: Change of use into a wheelchair accessible HMO (Use Class C4) and amendment to fenestration

LBH Ref Nos: 157/APP/2026/147

Drawing Nos: #01029749-65671F
 Planning, Design and Access Statement
 Service Agreement (Dos and Don'ts)
 Existing Plans
 Proposed Plans
 Existing and Proposed Elevations
 Accessible Homes
 Property & Service Standards
 Temporary Accommodation Welcome Pack

Date Plans received: 19-01-26 **Date(s) of Amendments(s):**

Date Application valid 19-01-26

1. SUMMARY

The application seeks planning permission for the change of use of the existing three-bedroom bungalow to a 4-bedroom wheelchair accessible HMO within Use Class C4, together with a minor rear fenestration alteration involving the blocking up of an existing rear door.

The provision of wheelchair accessible accommodation is acknowledged as a public benefit. The proposal would remain residential in nature, retain the existing off-street parking provision, and would not result in unacceptable harm in respect of design, highways, flooding or biodiversity.

However, the proposal would result in the loss of a self-contained three-bedroom dwelling capable of family occupation. In addition, the proposed layout would fail to provide satisfactory living conditions for future occupiers, by reason of the absence of a separate communal living/dining room, the limited shared kitchen provision, and the poor relationship between Bedrooms 3 and 4 and the communal rear garden, which would result in unacceptable loss of privacy, noise and disturbance.

The application is therefore recommended for refusal on grounds of principle and poor living conditions for future occupiers.

2. RECOMMENDATION

REFUSAL for the following reasons:

1. NON2 Principle of Development

The proposed development, by reason of the change of use of the property from a self-contained dwellinghouse to a 4-bedroom wheelchair accessible HMO within Use Class C4, would result in the loss of a dwelling capable of family occupation and has failed to demonstrate that this loss would be justified having regard to the Council's adopted housing mix objectives. The proposed HMO would also fail to demonstrate compliance with the Council's adopted policy framework for HMOs, having regard to substandard living conditions. The proposal would therefore represent an unacceptable and over-intensive form of HMO accommodation in this location, contrary to Policies DMH 2 and DMH 5 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part Two (2020), Policies H9 and H10 of the London Plan (2021), and the objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024).

2. NON2 Living Conditions for Future Occupiers

The proposed development, by reason of its constrained internal layout, absence of a separate communal living/dining room, limited shared kitchen provision, and poor relationship between Bedrooms 3 and 4 and the shared rear garden, would fail to provide satisfactory living conditions for future occupiers. In the absence of adequate internal communal accommodation, the rear garden would be likely to function as the principal communal/social space, resulting in unacceptable overlooking, loss of privacy, noise and disturbance to the occupiers of Bedrooms 3 and 4. The proposal would therefore provide a substandard form of accommodation and fail to deliver a high-quality residential environment, contrary to Policies DMH 5, DMHB 11 and DMHB 16 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part Two - Development Management Policies (2020), Policy D6 of the London Plan (2021), and Paragraph 135(f) of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024).

INFORMATIVES

1. I52 Compulsory Informative (1)

The decision to REFUSE planning permission has been taken having regard to all relevant planning legislation, regulations, guidance, circulars and Council policies, including The Human Rights Act (1998) (HRA 1998) which makes it unlawful for the Council to act incompatibly with Convention rights, specifically Article 6 (right to a fair hearing); Article 8 (right to respect for private and family life); Article 1 of the First Protocol (protection of property) and Article 14 (prohibition of discrimination).

2. I71 LBH worked applicant in a positive & proactive (Refusing)

In dealing with the application the Council has implemented the requirement in the National Planning Policy Framework to work with the applicant in a positive and proactive way. We have made available detailed advice in the form of our statutory policies from the Local Plan Part 1, Local Plan Part 2, Supplementary Planning Documents, Planning Briefs and other informal written guidance, as well as offering a full pre-application advice service in order to ensure that the applicant has been given every opportunity to submit an application which is likely to be considered favourably.

I53 Compulsory Informative (2)

The decision to REFUSE planning permission has been taken having regard to the policies and proposals in the Hillingdon Local Plan Part 1 (2012) and Part 2 (2020) set out below, including Supplementary Planning Guidance, and to all relevant material considerations, including The London Plan (2021) and national guidance.

DMH 1	Safeguarding Existing Housing
DMH 2	Housing Mix
DMH 4	Residential Conversions and Redevelopment
DMH 5	Houses in Multiple Occupation
DMHB 11	Design of New Development
DMHB 16	Housing Standards
DMHB 18	Private Outdoor Amenity Space
DMT 1	Managing Transport Impacts
DMT 2	Highways Impacts
DMT 5	Pedestrians and Cyclists
DMT 6	Vehicle Parking
LPP D3	(2021) Optimising site capacity through the design-led approach
LPP D4	(2021) Delivering good design
LPP D6	(2021) Housing quality and standards
LPP H9	(2021) Ensuring the best use of stock
LPP H10	(2021) Housing size mix
LPP D14	(2021) Noise
LPP T4	(2021) Assessing and mitigating transport impacts
LPP T5	(2021) Cycling
LPP T6	(2021) Car parking
LPP T6.1	(2021) Residential parking
NPPF12 -24	NPPF12 2024 - Achieving well-designed places
NPPF4 -24	NPPF4 2024 - Decision making
NPPF5 -24	NPPF5 2024 - Delivering a sufficient supply of homes

NPPF8 -24 NPPF8 2024 - Promoting healthy and safe communities

NPPF9 -24 NPPF9 2024 - Promoting sustainable transport

3. CONSIDERATIONS

3.1 Site and Locality

The application site comprises a single-storey bungalow located at 5 Gerrard Gardens, Eastcote/Pinner. The property is situated within an established residential area characterised predominantly by residential dwellings of a similar scale and appearance. The site contains a front driveway, which provides off-street parking for three cars, and a rear garden.

The site is not subject to any specific heritage, conservation or Green Belt designation.

3.2 Proposed Scheme

The application seeks planning permission for the change of use of the existing bungalow from a dwellinghouse to a 4-bedroom wheelchair accessible HMO within Use Class C4, together with a minor fenestration alteration comprising the blocking up of an existing rear door, with the finish to match the existing building.

The proposed accommodation would provide four single-occupancy bedrooms, each with an accessible ensuite. A shared wheelchair accessible kitchen would be provided, although no separate communal living or dining room is proposed. The existing rear garden and front driveway, providing three off-street parking spaces, would be retained.

3.3 Relevant Planning History

157/APP/2012/453 5 GERRARD GARDENS EASTCOTE PINNER

Single storey side/rear extension involving demolition of existing garage to side (Application for a Certificate of Lawful Development for an Existing Development)

Decision: 08-05-2012 Approval

157/APP/2011/1420 5 GERRARD GARDENS EASTCOTE PINNER

EXTENSION (SECTION 191)

Decision: 18-07-2011 No Further
Action(P)

Comment on Planning History

No comment

4. Advertisement and Site Notice

4.1 Advertisement Expiry Date: Not applicable

4.2 Site Notice Expiry Date: Not applicable

5. Comments on Public Consult

Neighbouring occupiers were consulted on 01/04/2026, with the consultation period expiring on 24/04/2026.

A total of 48 individual objections were received. In addition, a petition objecting to the proposal was received and contains 159 signatures. In the event that the application were recommended for approval, the petition alongside the number of objections would trigger reporting to Planning Committee.

Councillor Nick Denys has also confirmed support for the residents' petition against the proposed HMO.

Comments were also received from David Simmonds CBE MP, Member of Parliament for Ruislip, Northwood and Pinner. The MP raised concerns that works may have been completed after the introduction of the Article 4 Direction and queried whether the application could be heard at Planning Committee in the event of an approval.

The objections received raise the following concerns:

1. Loss of a family dwelling and erosion of family housing stock.
2. The proposed HMO would be out of character with Gerrard Gardens, which is described as a quiet residential street mainly occupied by families and elderly residents.
3. Over-intensification of a modest bungalow and concern that the property is too small to accommodate four unrelated occupiers, particularly wheelchair users.
4. Poor internal living conditions, including the absence of a separate living/dining room, limited communal space, inadequate kitchen provision, and insufficient space for wheelchair users and disability equipment.
5. Concern that the use would operate more like self-contained bedsits or temporary accommodation rather than a conventional C4 HMO.
6. Increased noise, activity, comings and goings, and general disturbance to neighbouring residents.
7. Concerns regarding anti-social behaviour, safety and security, including reference to alleged incidents and previous issues at another property in Gerrard Gardens.
8. Increased parking pressure and highway safety concerns, particularly given the narrow nature of the road, nearby schools, school-run activity, carers, accessible taxis, visitors and deliveries.
9. Refuse and waste management concerns, including allegations of unbagged waste, alcohol containers and refuse not being collected.
10. Concern that works and/or occupation may have commenced before planning permission was granted, including references to an access ramp/platform, key safes, viewings and alleged occupation.
11. Concern that works were carried out after the Article 4 Direction came into force.
12. Concern that approval would set a precedent for further HMOs in the area.
13. Pressure on local services and infrastructure.
14. Impact on property values.

Planning Officer Comment:

The material planning considerations raised have been carefully considered within the relevant sections of this report, including the principle of development, loss of family housing, internal living conditions for future occupiers, neighbouring amenity, highways/parking, refuse arrangements, design/external alterations, and the planning balance.

The concerns regarding the limited communal accommodation, suitability of the layout for wheelchair users, loss of a family-capable dwelling and the relationship between bedrooms and shared amenity space are noted and form part of the reasons for refusal.

The representations from Councillor Nick Denys and David Simmonds CBE MP are noted. In respect of the request for the application to be heard at Planning Committee, the petition and number of objections would trigger committee reporting in the event of a recommendation for approval. However, as the application is recommended for refusal, it can be determined under delegated authority in accordance with the Council's adopted procedures.

Concerns regarding parking and highway safety have been reviewed by the Highway Authority, who raised no objection to the proposal having regard to the retained off-street parking provision. Matters relating to alleged unauthorised works or occupation are noted and may be considered separately under planning enforcement legislation; however, the planning application must be determined on its planning merits. Matters relating to property values and assumptions regarding the personal characteristics of future occupiers are not material planning considerations.

6. Local Plan Designation and London Plan

The following Local Plan Policies are considered relevant to the application:-

Part 1 Policies:

PT1.BE1	(2012) Built Environment
PT1.H1	(2012) Housing Growth
PT1.EM8	(2012) Land, Water, Air and Noise

Part 2 Policies:

DMH 1	Safeguarding Existing Housing
DMH 2	Housing Mix
DMH 4	Residential Conversions and Redevelopment
DMH 5	Houses in Multiple Occupation
DMHB 11	Design of New Development
DMHB 16	Housing Standards
DMHB 18	Private Outdoor Amenity Space
DMT 1	Managing Transport Impacts
DMT 2	Highways Impacts
DMT 5	Pedestrians and Cyclists

DMT 6	Vehicle Parking
LPP D3	(2021) Optimising site capacity through the design-led approach
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LPP H9	(2021) Ensuring the best use of stock
LPP H10	(2021) Housing size mix
LPP D14	(2021) Noise
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NPPF12 -24	NPPF12 2024 - Achieving well-designed places
NPPF4 -24	NPPF4 2024 - Decision making
NPPF5 -24	NPPF5 2024 - Delivering a sufficient supply of homes
NPPF8 -24	NPPF8 2024 - Promoting healthy and safe communities
NPPF9 -24	NPPF9 2024 - Promoting sustainable transport

In addition: Planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The Development Plan for the London Borough of Hillingdon currently consists of the following documents:

The Local Plan: Part 1 - Strategic Policies (2012)

The Local Plan: Part 2 - Development Management Policies (2020)

The Local Plan: Part 2 - Site Allocations and Designations (2020)

The West London Waste Plan (2015)

The London Plan (2021)

Material Considerations

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2024) is also a material consideration in planning decisions, as well as relevant supplementary planning documents and guidance.

7. MAIN PLANNING ISSUES

7.1 Impact on the amenities of the occupiers of neighbouring residential properties

Policy D3 of the London Plan (2021) states that development proposals should deliver appropriate outlook, privacy and amenity.

Policy DMHB 11 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part Two - Development Management Policies (2020) states that all development will be required to be designed to the highest standards and incorporate principles of good design. Development should not adversely impact the amenity, daylight and

sunlight of adjacent properties and open space. The Council will resist proposals where there is an unreasonable level of overlooking between habitable rooms of adjacent residential properties or onto private open spaces. This is supported by Policy DMH 5, which requires HMOs to not have a detrimental impact upon the residential amenity of adjoining properties.

Paragraph 135(f) of the NPPF (2024) states that planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible, which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users.

External Alterations

The proposal does not include any extension to the building. The external works are limited to the blocking up of an existing rear door, with the finish to match the existing building. Given the limited scale and rear-facing location of this alteration, the works would not result in an unacceptable loss of light, outlook, privacy or sense of enclosure to neighbouring occupiers.

Accordingly, no objection is raised in respect of the physical alteration to the building in amenity terms.

Proposed HMO Use

The application seeks planning permission to change the use of the existing dwellinghouse to a 4-bedroom single occupancy wheelchair accessible House in Multiple Occupation within Use Class C4. The proposed occupation would therefore be materially smaller in scale than a large sui generis HMO, and the use would remain residential in nature.

The submitted management information is noted, including weekly inspections, tenant responsibilities, procedures for dealing with anti-social behaviour, and the provision of emergency contact arrangements. In respect of neighbouring occupiers, the proposed HMO would accommodate up to four persons and would retain the existing residential character of the use. Having regard to the limited scale of occupation, the absence of substantive external alterations and the availability of management controls, the proposal is not considered to result in unacceptable harm to neighbouring amenity sufficient to sustain a separate reason for refusal on this basis.

The proposal would therefore not conflict with relevant parts of Policy D3 of the London Plan, Policies DMH 5 and DMHB 11 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part Two, and paragraph 135(f) of the NPPF, specifically with respect to the impact on neighbouring occupiers.

7.2 Impact on Street Scene

Hillingdon Local Plan: Part One Strategic Policy BE1 seeks a quality of design in all new development that enhances and contributes to the area in terms of form, scale and materials; is appropriate to the identity and context of the townscape; improves the quality of the public realm and respects local character.

Policy DMHB 11 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part Two - Development Management Policies (2020) requires development to be designed to the highest standards and incorporate principles of good design. Policy DMHB 12 requires development to be well integrated with the surrounding area.

Policy DMHD 1 requires alterations and extensions to dwellings to avoid adverse cumulative impacts on the character and appearance of the street scene, achieve a satisfactory relationship with adjacent dwellings, respect the design of the original house and use matching materials.

The application does not propose any extensions to the building. The proposed external works are limited to the blocking up of an existing rear door, with the finish to match the existing external materials. The alteration would be located to the rear of the property and would be limited in scale. It would not materially alter the overall appearance of the bungalow or be prominent within the street scene.

The proposed HMO use would remain residential in nature and, as a matter of land use, would not in itself be considered out of character within this established residential area. The character and appearance assessment therefore relates primarily to the minor physical alteration proposed.

Given the limited scale and rear-facing location of the works, the proposal would not result in harm to the character and appearance of the host dwelling or surrounding area. The development is therefore considered acceptable in design terms and would comply with Policies BE1, DMHB 11, DMHB 12 and DMHD 1 of the Hillingdon Local Plan.

7.3 Traffic Impact/Pedestrian Safety

See below.

7.4 Carparking & Layout

Policy DMT 6 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part Two - Development Management Policies (2020) requires development to accord with the Council's adopted parking standards, unless it can be demonstrated that any departure would not result in an adverse impact on the surrounding highway network. Policies DMT 1 and DMT 2 seek to ensure that development does not give rise to unacceptable transport or highway safety impacts.

The application site is located within a residential area and has a PTAL rating of 1b, which represents very poor public transport accessibility. The existing frontage provides three off-street parking spaces, which would be retained as part of the proposal. The Highway Authority notes that for an HMO accommodating up to 4 persons, two parking spaces would be required based on the standard of one space per two occupants. The proposed retention of three off-street spaces is therefore considered acceptable and would avoid material on-street parking displacement.

The Highway Authority also notes that bin storage should be provided within 10 metres of the highway boundary and assumes that the existing waste collection arrangements would continue. No objection has been raised in this regard.

Accordingly, the proposal is not considered to result in unacceptable parking stress, congestion or highway safety impacts, and would comply with Policies DMT 1, DMT 2 and DMT 6 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part Two - Development Management Policies (2020), and Policies T4 and T6 of the London Plan (2021).

7.5 Urban Design, Access and Security Considerations

INTERNAL AMENITY SPACE

Policy DMH 5 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part Two (2020) requires Houses in Multiple Occupation to provide satisfactory living conditions for future occupiers. This is supported by Policies DMHB 11 and DMHB 16 of the Hillingdon Local Plan and Policy D6 of the London Plan (2021), which seek to secure a high standard of residential accommodation.

The proposed development would provide four single-occupancy bedrooms, each served by an accessible ensuite. The submitted Planning, Design and Access Statement identifies the rooms as measuring between 16.2sqm and 18.6sqm, and states that each room would include a small fridge

and washing machine. The bedrooms would therefore exceed minimum space standards in quantitative terms. However, compliance with minimum bedroom sizes alone does not ensure an acceptable standard of accommodation.

The principal concern relates to the lack of adequate communal accommodation. The proposal would provide a shared kitchen of approximately 7.5sqm, with no separate communal living room or dining room. This would represent a poor arrangement for a 4-person HMO.

In the absence of any separate living or dining room, the rear garden is likely to function as the principal communal/social space for future occupiers. This would result in a poor relationship with Bedrooms 3 and 4, which would have their primary outlook towards the shared rear garden. The use of the garden by occupiers would give rise to unacceptable overlooking, noise, disturbance and loss of privacy to the occupiers of those bedrooms.

The submitted management information is noted, including weekly inspections and rules relating to the use of communal areas. However, management controls would not overcome the inherent shortcomings of the physical layout, including the lack of meaningful communal internal space and the direct relationship between private bedroom accommodation and the shared rear garden.

Taken together, the constrained communal accommodation, absence of a separate living/dining room, and poor privacy relationship between Bedrooms 3 and 4 and the shared garden would result in substandard living conditions for future occupiers. The proposal would therefore fail to provide a high-quality residential environment, contrary to Policy DMH 5 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part Two (2020), Policies DMHB 11 and DMHB 16, Policy D6 of the London Plan (2021), and Paragraph 135(f) of the NPPF (2024).

EXTERNAL AMENITY SPACE

Policy DMHB 18 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part Two (2020) requires developments to provide adequate and usable private outdoor amenity space for occupants.

The application site benefits from a rear garden which would be retained for use by future occupiers. In quantitative terms, the rear garden is considered sufficient to serve the proposed 4-person HMO. However, the usability of this space is compromised by its direct relationship with Bedrooms 3 and 4, as set out above.

Accordingly, whilst no objection is raised to the amount of external amenity space, the relationship between the garden and the internal layout contributes to the poor standard of accommodation for future occupiers.

INCLUSIVE ACCESS

The accessible nature of the proposed accommodation is acknowledged and weighs in favour of the proposal. The applicant states that the property has been adapted to serve wheelchair users, with accessible bedrooms, ensembles and a shared accessible kitchen.

However, the provision of accessible accommodation does not, in itself, overcome concerns regarding the overall quality of living conditions. Users should be provided with accommodation that is not only physically accessible, but also affords adequate communal space, privacy, outlook and day-to-day amenity. For the reasons set out above, the proposal would fail to achieve this.

SECURITY

Policy DMHB 15 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part Two (2020) seeks to ensure that development incorporates measures to minimise opportunities for crime and anti-social behaviour.

The proposed development does not introduce any physical features that would compromise the security of the site or neighbouring properties. The submitted management information includes procedures for inspections, tenant responsibilities and dealing with anti-social behaviour. No objection is therefore raised in respect of security.

7.6 Other Issues

PRINCIPLE OF DEVELOPMENT

The development plan comprises the Hillingdon Local Plan Part 1 and Part 2, the London Plan and other adopted development plan documents. The starting point for this assessment is therefore the adopted policy framework, with the Council's latest housing evidence forming a material consideration in the interpretation and application of those policies.

The application seeks planning permission for the change of use of the existing dwellinghouse to a 4-bedroom wheelchair accessible House in Multiple Occupation within Use Class C4. The proposal is therefore assessed against the Council's adopted housing mix and HMO policies, in particular Policies DMH 2 and DMH 5 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part Two (2020), together with Policies H9 and H10 of the London Plan (2021).

The applicant states that works to convert the property commenced prior to the introduction of the Council's borough-wide Article 4 Direction. However, the lawful planning use of a property is determined by its actual use and occupation, rather than its physical layout, internal configuration, or capability of being occupied as an HMO. A material change of use to a small HMO within Use Class C4 only occurs where the property is occupied by between three and six unrelated individuals living together as separate households. No substantive or verifiable evidence has been submitted to demonstrate that the property was lawfully occupied in this manner prior to the Article 4 Direction coming into force. In the absence of such evidence, the lawful use of the property is considered to remain as a dwellinghouse within Use Class C3, and the application has been assessed on that basis.

Policy DMH 2 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part Two (2020) relates to housing mix. The supporting text states that the Council's information on housing need indicates a substantial borough-wide requirement for larger affordable and private market units, particularly three-bedroom properties. Policy DMH 2 requires the provision of a mix of housing units of different sizes in residential development to reflect the Council's latest information on housing need.

The existing property is a self-contained three-bedroom dwellinghouse capable of family occupation. Whilst the proposal would remain residential in a broad sense, it would no longer provide a conventional self-contained dwelling capable of meeting family housing needs. The proposal would therefore reduce the availability of family-capable accommodation and has failed to demonstrate how this loss would be justified having regard to the housing mix objectives of Policy DMH 2.

Recent appeal decisions support the Council's approach to resisting the unjustified loss of family-sized dwellings. At 28 Station Approach, South Ruislip (LBH ref. 64458/APP/2024/1215; appeal ref. APP/R5510/W/24/3354486), the Inspector dismissed an appeal for the conversion of a four-bedroom dwelling into two smaller flats. The Inspector found there was an identified need for family housing in the Borough and that the proposal would result in the loss of a family unit, with no

compelling evidence that the smaller units would directly free up other family housing. The Inspector also noted that underoccupation would not justify the permanent loss of the property as family housing. Similarly, at 23 Skipton Drive, Hayes (LBH ref. 9462/APP/2024/3224; appeal ref. APP/R5510/W/25/3360999), the Inspector dismissed an appeal for the conversion of a family dwelling into two flats, finding that the proposal would unacceptably reduce the supply of family housing in the Borough, contrary to Policy H10 of the London Plan and Policy DMH 2 of the Local Plan.

The proposal has also been assessed in the context of the Council's borough-wide Article 4 Direction relating to HMOs. The Article 4 Direction does not amount to a prohibition on HMOs. Rather, it ensures that proposals for the conversion of dwellinghouses to HMOs are brought within planning control and assessed against the adopted development plan, including Policy DMH 5.

There is no substantive evidence to demonstrate that the proposal would result in an overconcentration of HMOs within the immediate area for the purposes of Policy DMH 5. It is also noted that the Highway Authority raises no objection to the proposed level of parking provision. However, the proposal must still provide satisfactory living conditions for future occupiers and comply with the wider development plan.

In this case, the proposal would result in the loss of a dwelling capable of family occupation and would fail to provide a high-quality residential environment for future occupiers. The proposed change of use is therefore not considered acceptable in principle. The development would be contrary to Policies DMH 2 and DMH 5 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part Two (2020), Policies H9 and H10 of the London Plan (2021), and the objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework.

BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN

Mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain came into force on 12 February 2024 and applies to development under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 unless an exemption applies. The statutory framework requires development to deliver a minimum 10% biodiversity net gain, secured through the biodiversity gain condition, unless the development falls within one of the prescribed exemptions.

The proposal relates to the change of use of the existing dwellinghouse to a 4-bedroom wheelchair accessible HMO, together with a minor fenestration alteration comprising the blocking up of an existing rear door. The existing driveway, garden areas and external layout would otherwise be retained.

On this basis, the proposal would not result in the loss of more than 25sqm of onsite habitat with biodiversity value and there is no indication that priority habitat would be affected. The proposal is therefore considered to fall within the de minimis exemption from mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain.

Accordingly, no objection is raised in respect of Biodiversity Net Gain. The proposal is considered acceptable in this regard and would not conflict with Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, as inserted by the Environment Act 2021, Policy G6 of the London Plan (2021), or the biodiversity objectives of the NPPF.

FLOODING AND DRAINAGE

Policies SI 12 and SI 13 of the London Plan (2021) require, in summary, that flood risk is minimised and mitigated and that surface water run-off is managed as close to source as possible.

Policies DMEI 9 and DMEI 10 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part Two - Development Management Policies (2020) require flood risk to be mitigated and resist development which would increase flood risk or fail to make adequate provision to control surface water run-off.

The application site is located within Flood Zone 1, where there is a low probability of flooding from rivers or the sea. The proposal would not involve any extension to the building, increase in built footprint, or material increase in impermeable hardstanding. The change of use and minor rear fenestration alteration would not give rise to significant flood risk or drainage impacts.

The development is therefore considered acceptable from a flood risk and drainage perspective.

PLANNING BALANCE

The proposal seeks planning permission for the change of use of a three-bedroom dwellinghouse within Use Class C3 to a 4-bedroom wheelchair accessible House in Multiple Occupation within Use Class C4, together with a minor fenestration alteration comprising the blocking up of an existing rear door. The proposal has been assessed against the development plan as a whole, including Policies DMH 2 and DMH 5 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part Two (2020), Policies H9 and H10 of the London Plan (2021), and all other relevant material considerations.

It is acknowledged that the proposal would provide wheelchair accessible accommodation for up to four occupiers. This is a public benefit and is attributed positive weight. It is also acknowledged that the proposal would remain residential in nature, would not be inherently out of character within the residential area, would retain the existing off-street parking provision, and would not result in unacceptable harm in respect of design, highways, flooding or biodiversity.

However, these benefits must be weighed against the identified harms. The proposal would result in the loss of a self-contained three-bedroom dwelling capable of family occupation. Whilst this is not relied upon as a freestanding objection in isolation, it attracts moderate weight against the proposal when considered in the context of Policy DMH 2 and the objective of maintaining an appropriate mix of housing stock within the Borough.

The most significant harm arises from the poor standard of accommodation that would be provided for future occupiers. The proposal would provide no separate communal living room or dining room, with the shared kitchen forming the only internal communal space. In the absence of adequate communal internal accommodation, the rear garden is likely to function as a principal communal/social space. This would result in a poor relationship with Bedrooms 3 and 4, which would have their primary outlook towards the shared rear garden, causing unacceptable overlooking, loss of privacy, noise and disturbance for future occupiers of those rooms.

The submitted management arrangements are noted, including regular inspections and procedures for dealing with anti-social behaviour. However, management measures would not overcome the inherent shortcomings of the physical layout or the poor relationship between private bedroom accommodation and shared communal space.

Taken together, the accessible nature of the accommodation and the provision of four HMO rooms do not outweigh the loss of the family-capable dwelling and the failure to provide satisfactory living conditions for future occupiers. The proposal would conflict with the development plan when read as a whole, and there are no material considerations which indicate that planning permission should be granted.

The application is therefore recommended for refusal.

8. Reference Documents

Hillingdon Local Plan: Part One - Strategic Policies (November 2012)
Hillingdon Local Plan: Part Two - Development Management Policies (January 2020)
Hillingdon's Local Plan Part 2 Site Allocations and Designations (2020)
Hillingdon Design and Accessibility Statement: Accessible Hillingdon (2017)
The London Plan (2021)
National Planning Policy Framework (2024)
Hillingdon Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2025)
Private Rental Sector and Houses in Multiple Occupation: Housing Stock Condition and Stressors Report, MetaStreet (2025)
Full Council report relating to the borough-wide HMO Article 4 Direction

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