



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 9 July 2025

by R C Shrimplin MA(Cantab) DipArch RIBA FRTPI FCIArb MCIL

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 01 August 2025

Appeal Reference: APP/R5510/W/25/3360554

5 Crossway, Hayes, Hillingdon UB3 3JG

- 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. P. Patel against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Hillingdon.
- The application reference is 20650/APP/2024/1895.
- The development proposed is described in the application form as “Change of use from Single Dwelling (C3) to Class (C4) 6-Bed HMO”.

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary points

2. Although the planning application form describes the existing building as “single dwellings” (plural), the decision notice and appeal form identify the existing building as a single dwelling. That is clearly correct and that is the description that I have adopted in the banner heading above.

Main issues

3. There are a number of main issues to be considered in this appeal. The first is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area (including by alterations to the frontage) and on the amenity of nearby residents (whether amenity would be harmed by undue noise and disturbance).
4. The second main issue is whether the scheme would provide satisfactory living conditions for occupiers of the proposed new residential accommodation, by the provision of adequate internal and external living space.
5. Thirdly, it is necessary to consider the adequacy of car parking and cycle storage provision in connection with the project.

Reasons

6. Crossway is part of an extensive residential area of Hayes that is laid out in the form, roughly, of a gridiron pattern. The locality is characterised by semi-detached pairs of houses placed along rather narrow streets, where there is obviously some pressure for on-street car parking. Many of the houses have their front gardens given over to off-street parking and there is a lack of soft landscaping. The area is not formally designated as a conservation area, but it has been identified in

planning policy terms as the “East & West Walk, Botwell, Area of Special Local Character”.

7. The appeal site is located close to the corner of Crossway and West Walk. The house itself is conventional in appearance, as a semi-detached house with number 7 Crossway. The building has been extended in the past and is a white, rendered building under a tiled roof. The front garden has been surfaced in concrete to facilitate car parking and is not delineated by a wall along the highway boundary. The rear garden is also largely surfaced and there is a modest outbuilding at the rear of the plot.
8. The outbuilding is described as a “store” and appears to be available to occupiers as a shared space. There is a shared “kitchen lounge” and a shared bathroom on the ground floor within the main building, while the individual bedrooms in various parts of the house are each provided with their own shower rooms. There is a small sitting room on the first floor (marked on the “existing first floor plan” as a “utility room”) but this does not appear to be accessible to all residents.
9. It is now proposed that the use of the building should be formalised as a six-bedroom (Class C4) House in Multiple Occupation (HMO). Even though the application is not described as being retrospective in nature, the submitted drawings do not show any significant physical changes to the building.
10. The ‘National Planning Policy Framework’ emphasises the aim of “achieving well designed places” in the broadest sense (notably at Section 12), while making effective use of land and encouraging economic activity. It is aimed at achieving good design standards generally, by adding to the overall quality of the area and being visually attractive and sympathetic to local character and history, although it is also recognised that appropriate change may include increased densities. The achievement of good design includes protecting existing residential amenities and providing good standards of accommodation in new development.
11. The ‘National Planning Policy Framework’ also points out the need to address concerns about the transport network (including in terms of “capacity and congestion”) and to promote sustainable transport.
12. Policies in the Development Plan reflect these general planning principles, notably Policies in ‘The London Plan 2021’, and in the ‘Local Plan: Part 1 Strategic Policies’ (adopted in November 2012) and the ‘London Borough of Hillingdon Local Plan Part 2 Development Management Policies’ (adopted in January 2020). Attention has been drawn to Policies DMHB 11, DMHB 16 and DMHB 18, among others, while Policy DMHB 5 focusses on “Areas of Special Local Character” and Policy DMH 5 relates to Houses in Multiple Occupation.
13. Policies T5 and T6 of the ‘The London Plan’ (dated March 2021) are concerned with various transport issues and detailed parking requirements are set out in the ‘London Borough of Hillingdon Local Plan Part 2 Development Management Policies’, at Appendix C.
14. The use of the building at number 5 Crossway as a House in Multiple Occupation would be very likely to amount to a more intensive use than use as a family dwellinghouse (or a dwelling occupied by not more than six residents living together as a single household), because of the potential numbers involved and the different movement patterns of people living independent lives. This more intensive use

would be likely to generate greater levels of disturbance for neighbours and I am persuaded that the change for which planning permission is sought would amount to an over-intensification of development on the site that would also harm the character of the area.

15. In reaching that conclusion, I am conscious that the physical appearance of the appeal building would not be materially changed. The proposed parking layout for the front garden area would be more intrusive, although the front boundary was not marked by a wall at the time of the site visit. The status of the front boundary wall is unclear, however, and I cannot attach real significance to the “loss of the front low boundary brick wall” that is criticised in the Council’s reasons for refusal, even though the open frontage, as it currently exists, clearly detracts from the appearance of the Area of Special Local Character.
16. In terms of the internal layout of the proposed HMO, it is plain that the individual rooms do not achieve the floorspace standards required of even the smallest independent apartments. Nevertheless, they each have private shower-rooms and some other facilities in the individual rooms. I accept, however, that this can be regarded as a reasonable requirement for modern living and attention has been drawn to Policy DMH 5 (referred to above), which sets out in broad terms the overarching requirement that an HMO should “provide satisfactory living conditions for the intended occupiers”.
17. The achievement of minimum standards for HMOs is a requirement of the licensing regime and I also accept that this has been satisfied in the present case. I note that planning policies can be considered to require a higher standard of “satisfactory living conditions” for residents, but I am not persuaded that the objection to this scheme based on space standards is sufficient to justify a refusal of planning permission, in itself.
18. I turn to the issue of parking. Parking requirements are set out in the ‘London Borough of Hillingdon Local Plan Part 2 Development Management Policies’, at Appendix C. In accordance with the Table, three spaces would be required for the proposed HMO and the nearby roads are narrow, making on-street parking more difficult, in practice. Although the shortfall is small and although the site is well located in relation to public transport routes and local services, I am not persuaded that this requirement ought to be reduced in this case.
19. The forecourt of the property can realistically accommodate only two car spaces, and the lack of adequate parking also justifies the refusal of planning permission in this case. Even so, the paving of the entire frontage of the property creates a hard and unattractive appearance, which detracts from the visual qualities of the surroundings.
20. Cycle parking would also be required but I accept that the appeal site has sufficient space to provide a suitable secure cycle store for residents and visitors, although this would need to be well sited and designed, to avoid erosion of the private amenity area. The detailed design of the installation would need to be in accordance with relevant guidance. This, however, could be dealt with by way of a planning condition and this aspect of the proposal does not give rise to a fundamental planning objection, therefore.
21. Evidently, the appeal site lies within an established urban area, which is “sustainable” in planning terms. Nevertheless, I am convinced that the objections

to the scheme, in combination, outweigh the benefits. The proposed HMO would amount to an over-intensification of use of the site, causing undue disturbance to neighbours and eroding the character of the surrounding area. This would be exacerbated by the lack of adequate parking provision.

22. Hence, I have concluded that the scheme before me would conflict with both national and local planning policies (including the Development Plan) and that it ought not to be allowed. Although I have considered all the matters that have been raised in the representations, I have found nothing to cause me to alter my decision.

Roger C. Shrimplin

INSPECTOR