



Officer Report

Application Number:	HGY/2026/1082
Application Type:	Full planning permission
Address:	21 Pemberton Road, Hornsey, London, N4 1AX
Proposal:	Addition of dormer extension and rooflights
Case Officer:	Josh Parker
Valid Date:	16/04/2026
Applicant:	Mr and Mrs Maqsood
Agent:	Mr John Ferguson

RECOMMENDATION

Refuse

1. SITE AND SURROUNDING

The subject site comprises a two-storey, mid-terraced Victorian property, with a lower ground floor, located within the area known as the Haringey Ladder. The property is currently subdivided into two units: a self-contained dwelling at lower ground level, with the ground and first floors accommodating a House in Multiple Occupation (HMO). The site is not located within a conservation area.

The site is located within the area covered by an Article 4 Direction which removes permitted development rights for changes of use from Class C3 (dwellinghouse) to Class C4 (House in Multiple Occupation), and therefore proposals for HMOs are required to be assessed against Policy DM17 of the Development Management DPD.

2. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The application proposes the erection of a rear dormer roof extension and the insertion of rooflights to facilitate the creation of an additional bedroom within the roof space.

3. SITE HISTORY AND ENFORCEMENT

All existing planning applications have been considered for this application.

Certificate of Lawfulness (ref HGY/2022/0085) was approved on 14.3.2022 for existing use as C4 HMO (House in Multiple Occupation) for a maximum of 6 people.

Certificate of Lawfulness (ref HGY/2022/0040) was approved on 10.3.2022 for lower ground floor as a self-contained 2 bedroom flat.

4. LOCAL REPRESENTATIONS

The application has been publicised by the way of site/press notice and letters. The number of representations received from neighbours, local groups, etc in response to notification and publicity of the application were as follows:

Representation:1 (general support but objecting on 2 grounds)

Support:0

Objection: 1

Whilst there is a general support there were two grounds which were objected on:

- No. 21 is already a densely occupied, multi-household property. While the current residents manage their refuse responsibly, the volume of waste generated means that the large bins required cannot be accommodated within the property boundary and are normally stored on the pavement. Any additional accommodation will inevitably increase the amount of refuse produced, and I would ask that the application include adequate, dedicated bin storage within the property boundary to address both the existing and any additional provision. This would benefit the street scene and neighbouring residents alike.
- Noise, the buildings plumbing and intensification means there is excessive noise.

Officer comments:

Both have been addressed below.

5. MATERIAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

The main planning considerations raised by the proposed development are:

1. Design;
2. Impact on neighbouring amenity;
3. Quality of accommodation.

Design

DPD Policy DM12 'Housing Design and Quality' states that extensions or alterations to residential buildings, including roof extensions, are required to be of a high, site-specific and sensitive design quality, and to respect and/or complement the form, setting, period, architectural characteristics and detailing of the original building, including external features such as chimneys and porches.

High-quality matching or complementary materials should be used appropriately and sensitively in relation to the surrounding context. DPD Policy DM1 'Delivering High Quality Design' requires development proposals to relate positively to their locality, while Local Plan (2017) Policy SP11 seeks the highest standard of design that responds to local context, character and historic significance. This approach is further supported by London Plan (2021) Policy D6.

From a design perspective, the proposal would introduce a modest dormer extension to the rear roof slope, set in approximately 0.2m from the roof edges in line with general permitted development guidance. The dormer would be finished in materials to match the existing roof, incorporating hanging tiles and two modest rear-facing openings. Within the context of the terrace, the dormer is considered modest in scale, subordinate to the host building, and would not raise objections in design terms.

Furthermore, two rooflights are proposed on the front roof slope, evenly spaced and positioned high on the roof plane. No objections are raised to these additions.

Overall, the development would have limited visibility from surrounding streets, would remain subordinate to the host building, and would be sympathetic to the character of the area. The proposal is therefore considered to be of acceptable design.

Impact on neighbouring amenity

London Plan Policy D6 outlines that development must not be detrimental to the amenity of surrounding housing, specifically requiring proposals to provide sufficient daylight and sunlight appropriate to their context, while minimising overshadowing. London Plan Policy D14 requires development proposals to reduce, manage and mitigate noise impacts. DPD Policy DM1 'Delivering High Quality Design' states that development proposals must ensure a high standard of privacy and amenity for both future occupiers and neighbouring residents. In particular, proposals should provide appropriate sunlight, daylight and outlook to adjacent buildings and land, and ensure sufficient privacy to avoid overlooking, loss of privacy, or other detriment to neighbouring amenity.

In addition, Policy DM17 of the Development Management DPD is of direct relevance, as it requires that HMOs do not give rise to significant adverse impacts on the surrounding neighbourhood, including cumulative impacts arising from an overconcentration of HMOs within an area. The policy seeks to ensure that proposals do not harm residential amenity, local character or the balance of housing within the community.

There are no amenity concerns arising from the addition of the dormer in terms of daylight, sunlight, sense of enclosure or privacy, given its modest scale and design.

The site is currently arranged as a lower ground floor flat, with a five-bedroom HMO accommodating up to six persons across the ground and first floors. As noted above, this arrangement was confirmed lawful through certificates issued in 2022, on the basis that the use had become immune from enforcement.

While the existing use is lawful, Policy DM17 requires that any intensification or further changes to HMO accommodation must be carefully assessed to ensure that it does not contribute to or exacerbate an overconcentration of HMOs in the surrounding area. Overconcentration is identified where clustering of HMOs results in cumulative adverse impacts on residential amenity, local character, and the availability of family housing.

As such, the existing layout has not been subject to a full planning assessment and would likely have conflicted with the Article 4 Direction and Policy DM17 protecting family housing had it been assessed on its planning merits at that time.

Officers must nevertheless consider the established on-site arrangement as the baseline and make a reasoned judgement on the proposed introduction of an additional self-contained bedroom. The proposal seeks to add one further bedroom while retaining the existing six-person HMO licence, with no changes proposed to the licensed occupancy.

In theory, this would mean that the level of intensification would not increase, as the maximum number of occupants under the existing HMO licence would remain at six. This relies on the assumption that each of the six bedrooms, each with its own ensuite and averaging approximately 19.2 sqm, would be occupied by a single individual, which is feasible in principle.

However, the building has already been subdivided between the lower ground floor flat and the upper floor HMO, and when assessed against London Plan occupancy benchmarks, the size of the bedrooms indicates a significantly higher potential occupancy under a worst-case scenario. Based

on these standards, the site in its current form could theoretically accommodate approximately 13 persons (three persons within the lower ground floor flat and up to ten persons across the five large ensuite HMO bedrooms). The addition of the dormer bedroom would increase this theoretical capacity to approximately 15 persons.

This demonstrates that, despite the licence remaining capped at six persons, the physical configuration of the building provides the capacity for a much higher level of occupation. In practice, it would be difficult for either the Council or the landlord to enforce single occupancy use of each bedroom, and the risk of intensification beyond the licensed level is therefore realistic and material.

Although the licence is in place, it would be extremely difficult to impose or enforce a condition requiring single occupancy of each bedroom. Such a restriction would be challenging for the Council to monitor and for the landlord to control on a day-to-day basis. As a result, there is a realistic risk of intensification beyond the licensed six persons, even if the licence itself remains unchanged.

There has been increasing concern expressed by local residents within the Ladder area regarding the continued introduction of HMOs and the associated impacts these developments can generate. These concerns typically relate to waste and refuse management, the intensification of individual plots, and noise and general disturbance arising from higher levels of occupancy. These issues place additional pressure on local infrastructure and services and are reflected in the representation submitted in relation to this application.

As noted in the representation, there is no adequate space within the site for refuse storage. Bins are currently stored on the public highway, and any increase in occupation would exacerbate this situation, resulting in additional pressure on the street and harm to the amenity of the area.

The cumulative impacts of the existing arrangement, combined with the addition of a further bedroom, would place additional strain on the property and surrounding area, particularly in respect of waste management and general disturbance, to the detriment of neighbouring amenity.

Quality of accommodation

London Plan Policy D6 requires housing development to achieve high-quality design, providing comfortable and functional layouts, adequate levels of daylight and sunlight, maximising dual aspect where possible, and ensuring sufficient and accessible storage space, as well as adequate provision of private or communal amenity space. Table 3.1 sets out the minimum internal space standards for new development, while Table 3.2 outlines the qualitative design considerations that should be addressed.

The proposal raises significant concerns regarding the standard and quality of residential accommodation. While the bedrooms are generously sized, benefit from good levels of natural light and ventilation, and each include an ensuite that meets London Plan space standards, and while the property benefits from access to a sizeable rear garden via the ground floor kitchen, these positive aspects do not outweigh the fundamental shortcomings of the internal layout.

The scheme fails to provide any dedicated communal living space, falling well below the expectations set out in the Haringey Standards for Houses in Multiple Occupation. The only shared facility is a single ground floor kitchen, equipped with two hobs and two sinks, with a total area of approximately 9.2 sqm (including worktop space). There is no space for dining or sitting outside of the bedrooms. As a result, occupants would be heavily reliant on their bedrooms for day-to-day activities, which represents a substandard arrangement and fails to meet the general expectation of shared facilities within HMOs.

The kitchen would also be subject to high demand, particularly during peak times such as breakfast and evening meals, given the number of occupants. The submitted plans do not provide sufficient detail to fully assess the adequacy of the kitchen's layout, storage capacity, or functionality, and no alternative arrangement has been demonstrated that would address these deficiencies. Furthermore, the kitchen appears to function as a circulation space, contributing to a cramped and impractical environment and further reducing the overall quality of accommodation.

The proposed dormer includes a sink and what appears to be a hob, suggesting the potential for quasi self-contained accommodation. This raises concerns that the space could function as an independent or semi-independent unit, resulting in a substandard form of accommodation. The functional separation between the dormer space and the HMO below would create an incoherent and poorly integrated layout, with different parts of the building serving conflicting residential functions. If the dormer were instead proposed as additional communal space, a different conclusion may have been reached.

It is also noted that, similar to the lack of refuse storage, no adequate provision is made for cycle storage. This would likely result in cycles being stored within bedrooms or being moved through the already constrained kitchen area to access the rear garden, further exacerbating the poor internal arrangement.

Taken together, the constrained internal layout, lack of communal space, inadequate cycle and storage provision, and overall functional shortcomings would result in a poor standard of accommodation that fails to meet the day-to-day needs of the intended occupants and is contrary to the relevant policies.

Conclusion

The proposed development would result in an over-intensive use of the property through the introduction of an additional bedroom within an already constrained layout. This would increase the potential level of occupation beyond that which the existing accommodation can reasonably support, leading to greater levels of activity, noise and general disturbance, to the detriment of neighbouring amenity.

In addition, the proposal would provide a poor standard of accommodation for future occupiers, due to the lack of adequate communal living space, insufficient kitchen provision, and the absence of appropriate cycle and refuse storage.

Taking all of the above into account, the proposal is considered unacceptable and is therefore recommended for refusal.

5. CIL APPLICABLE

If for HMO use not liable for CIL but if extra space added is for the purpose of an additional unit/bedsit unit then it would be.

6. RECOMMENDATION

It is therefore recommended that this application be REFUSAL for the following reason:

Refusal Reasons:

The proposed development would result in an over-intensive use of the property, through the introduction of an additional bedroom within an already constrained layout, leading to a level of occupation beyond that which the accommodation can reasonably support. This would give rise to increased activity, noise and disturbance, to the detriment of neighbouring amenity and would contribute to the cumulative impacts associated with the overconcentration of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) within the area. Furthermore, the proposal would provide a substandard quality of accommodation due to the lack of adequate communal living space, insufficient shared facilities, and the absence of appropriate cycle and refuse storage. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policies DM1, DM4 DM12 and DM17 of the Haringey Development Management DPD (2017).