



Officer Report

Application Number:	HGY/2026/1855
Application Type:	Full planning permission
Address:	45 Buller Road, Tottenham, London, N17 9BH
Proposal:	Change of use of the property to a five-Bedroom/six-Person House in Multiple Occupation (Use Class C4 HMO) (Retrospective application)
Case Officer:	Neil McClellan
Valid Date:	01/07/2026
Applicant:	Mr J Wu
Agent:	Mr Sammy Chan, OPS Chartered Surveyors

RECOMMENDATION

Refuse

1. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

This is an application for the retrospective change of use of a dwellinghouse (Use Class C3) to a small-scale six-bedroom House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) for a maximum of six residents (Use Class C4).

2. SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

The application property is a two-storey mid-terraced dwellinghouse, with an existing ground-floor rear extension and a converted loft incorporating a rear dormer extension. The site is not located within a conservation area.

The site is located within the area of the borough covered by an Article 4 Direction removing permitted development rights for changes of use from Class C3 to Class C4. It is also within Haringey's designated Family Housing Protection Zone.

3. RELEVANT PLANNING AND ENFORCEMENT HISTORY

The following history is considered relevant to the current application.

HMO/2018/00777 – Enforcement investigation into the unauthorised conversion of dwelling house (Class C3) into an HMO. Investigation is ongoing with further action pending the outcome of the current planning application.

OLD/1988/0177 – Planning permission granted for then erection of a single storey rear extension kitchen and dining room extension front extension and storm porch at entrance with glass panels.

4. REPRESENTATIONS

One objection has been received from a nearby local resident raising the following concerns:

- There are already a significant number of HMOs on this street and in the wider area. The lack of space for wheelie bins to the front of these properties means that there is already a rubbish and fly tipping problem. The increase in occupancy resulting from an additional HMO will exacerbate this problem.
- There is also significant noise pollution at night from the various residents that the proposed HMO may exacerbate.

Officer comment: The matters raised by the objector and Councillor are dealt with in the report below.

5. MATERIAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

The main planning considerations raised by the proposed development are:

1. Principle of development.
2. Standard and quality of residential accommodation.
3. Impact on neighbouring amenity.
4. Transport considerations.

Principle of Development

HMO accommodation plays an important role in meeting particular housing needs, especially for low-income residents, young people and those needing temporary accommodation, however as set out in Haringey's Development Management DPD 2017 (Para. 3.36) there are broader concerns in respect of losing family units to conversions, with HMOs heavily concentrated in the east of the Borough, with this leading to what it describes as "a significant loss in the availability of family housing for which there is strong need."

As such Policy DM17 set out specific criteria that is required to be met to allow approval of the conversion of a home to an HMO within the area covered by the Article 4 Direction, specifically:

a. The gross original internal floor space of the existing dwelling is greater than 120sqm.

Comment: Policy DM17 sets out a number of criteria that must be met for such a conversion to be considered acceptable. One of the fundamental requirements is that the original, unextended gross internal floor area (GIA) of the property must be at least 120 sqm for a conversion to an HMO to be considered acceptable. Based on the submitted plans, the original unextended house would have a gross internal floor area (GIA) of approximately 83 sqm and therefore falls significantly short of this requirement. In line with the requirements of Policy DM17, this measurement excludes the existing full-width single-storey rear extension and the existing dormer extension, which increase the property's existing floor area to approximately 120 sqm.

The property lies within Haringey's Family Housing Protection Zone and, as such, there is a particular need to maintain the borough's supply of small to medium-sized family homes in this area. Furthermore, Policy DM17 specifies that the 120 sqm minimum threshold applies to the original unextended floor area. The reason for this is that most of the borough's family housing stock is capable of being extended to meet the 120 sqm threshold. If extensions were taken into account when assessing compliance with the threshold, very little of the borough's stock of small to medium-sized family housing would be protected from conversion. This would undermine the purpose of the Article 4 Direction and the Family Housing Protection Zone, and could contribute to unbalanced and unsustainable communities.

b. They do not give rise to any significant adverse amenity impact(s) on the surrounding neighbourhood, including cumulative impacts arising from an overconcentration of HMOs within an area.

Comment: Haringey's current adopted HMO policy (DM17) does not define what constitutes an 'overconcentration'. Haringey has recently published its draft replacement Development Plan, which proposes introducing a more stringent definition of overconcentration in relation to HMOs. The draft policy proposes that where 5% or more of dwellings within a ward, or 10% or more of dwellings within a street, are licensed as HMOs, this would be considered an overconcentration. While the draft replacement Development Plan is at an early stage of consultation and therefore carries little weight in the determination of planning applications, it does indicate the direction of travel for the Council's approach to HMO policy and helps address a gap in the existing policy.

The current policy adopts a local or neighbourhood-based approach to what might be considered an overconcentration. As such, it would not be appropriate at this stage of the plan-making process to apply the more strategic ward-level threshold. However, the 10% threshold for an individual street provides a useful indicator of what might be considered an overconcentration at a more local level, particularly as the draft policy is based on up-to-date data.

The applicants have provided an analysis of the number of existing HMOs within the street. There are currently three licensed HMOs on the street. The addition of the application property (which is currently unlicensed) would increase this to four HMOs on a street comprising 49 dwellings, representing approximately 8% of the total housing stock. This falls below the 10% threshold referred to above. This analysis is supported by Haringey's register of licensed HMOs.

Based on the above assessment, the proposal is not considered to result in an overconcentration of HMOs within the street.

c. They are accessible by public transport, cycling and walking.

Comment: The site is located within an area with a Public Transport Accessibility Level (PTAL) of 4, which is considered to provide a moderate level of accessibility. A number of bus services are available within a 5 to 7-minute walk of the site. Bruce Grove London Overground and National Rail Station is located approximately 600 metres from the application property, equivalent to a 7 to 9-minute walk.

Sufficient space exists to provide adequate refuse storage to the front of the property. The proposed block plan demonstrates that adequate secure cycle storage can be provided to the rear. Whilst not ideal, the provision of cycle parking to the rear is considered an acceptable compromise given the constraints of the site.

d. They provide high quality accommodation that satisfies the relevant policies of the Local Plan, including internal space standards, provision of a satisfactory level of amenity space for occupants, and adequate and convenient refuse storage and collection.

Comment: The five bedrooms meet the required licensing standards for single occupancy. The property contains one communal kitchen and a separate dining room. The two loft bedrooms each benefit from an en-suite shower room and WC. Additional communal bathroom facilities, comprising shower/bath and WC facilities, are provided on the ground and first floors. All residents have access to the property's small rear garden. Overall, the property is considered to provide a satisfactory standard of accommodation.

e. Where non-self-contained, have exclusive use of a kitchen or space within a shared kitchen for each household.

Comment: Haringey's licensing standards for HMOs require that one kitchen is provided for every three lettings. Where this cannot be achieved, it is acceptable to provide two sets of kitchen facilities (i.e. two sinks and two cookers) within a single kitchen, provided that there is sufficient space for multiple occupants to use the facilities simultaneously and that no bedroom is located more than one floor above or below the kitchen. The kitchen is shown to be capable of accommodating two sinks and two cookers and, therefore, the proposal is considered to comply with this licensing requirement.

Impact on neighbouring amenity

In terms of the use, the increase in occupancy from a small dwellinghouse to a five-bedroom, six-person HMO would result in a material increase in activity. The change from occupation by a single family or household to occupation by six unrelated adults, each with their own working patterns, visitors and associated activities, is likely to result in a material increase in noise and general disturbance, to the detriment of the residential amenity of adjoining occupiers.

Transport considerations

As stated above, the site has a Public Transport Accessibility Level (PTAL) of 4, which is considered to provide a moderate level of accessibility. A number of bus services are available within a 5 to 7-minute walk of the site. Bruce Grove Station is approximately 860 metres from the application property, equivalent to a 7 to 10-minute walk.

The use of the property as an HMO is not considered to have a greater impact on parking conditions than its previous use as a single-family dwelling. An HMO of this size does not meet the threshold for designation as a 'car-free' development. Furthermore, rented accommodation and HMOs generally generate lower levels of car ownership than owner-occupied housing. Equally, there is no evidence to indicate that the proposed HMO use would result in a level of vehicle ownership or demand for on-street parking greater than that associated with a comparable residential property.

Sufficient space exists to provide adequate refuse storage at the front of the property. The proposed block plan demonstrates that adequate secure cycle storage can be provided to the rear. Whilst not ideal, the provision of cycle parking to the rear is considered an acceptable compromise given the site's constraints.

Recent Appeal Decisions

There have been a number of appeals dismissed by the Secretary of State relating to the refusal of similar applications within Haringey. One of the most recent is a decision dated 14 October 2025 (Ref: APP/Y5420/W/25/3370728), which dismissed an appeal against the Council's decision to refuse planning permission for the conversion of a similarly sized terraced house into a six-bedroom HMO at 41 Woodside Gardens, N17.

In dismissing the appeal, the Planning Inspector concluded that the development would result in the loss of a small to medium-sized family dwelling within a designated protection zone, contrary to the aims of the development plan. The Inspector also found that the proposal had the potential to harm the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers through increased noise and disturbance. This harm carries significant weight and is not outweighed by the benefits of the scheme.

Conclusion

The proposed retention of the property as an HMO would result in the loss of a small to medium-sized family dwelling for which there is an identified need and would lead to increased noise and general disturbance, to the detriment of neighbouring residential amenity.

All other relevant policies and considerations, including equalities matters, have been taken into account. Planning permission should be refused for the reasons set out above.

6. CIL APPLICABLE

The increase in internal floor area would not exceed 100 sqm. and therefore, the proposal is not liable for Mayoral or Haringey's CIL charge.

7. RECOMMENDATION

The application is recommended for refusal for the following reasons:

Refusal Reasons:

The proposed conversion of the single-family dwelling into an HMO would result in an unacceptable loss of family housing for which there is an identified need. The original un-extended floor area of the property also fails to meet the minimum floor space standard set out in the Council's adopted HMO policy. As such the proposal would be contrary to London Plan policy, Local Plan Policy SP2, and DM17 of the adopted Development Management, Development Plan Document (2017).

The proposed conversion of the single-family dwelling into an HMO occupied by six independent adults, each with their own working patterns, visitors and associated activities, is likely to result in a material increase in noise and general disturbance, to the detriment of the residential amenity of adjoining occupiers. As such, the proposal would be contrary to London Plan Policy D6, Local Plan Policy SP2, and Policy DM17 of the adopted Development Management Development Plan Document (2017).