



Officer Report

Application Number:	HGY/2026/1732
Application Type:	Full planning permission
Address:	297 Wightman Road, Hornsey, London, N8 0NA
Proposal:	Change of Use from C3 Dwellinghouse to a 5 Bedroom / 5 Person HMO (Use Class C4)
Case Officer:	Josh Parker
Valid Date:	07/07/2026
Applicant:	Mr W Hassan
Agent:	Mr Gulraiz Ghafoor

RECOMMENDATION

Refuse

1. Site location

The subject contains a two-storey mid-terrace property located on the western side of Wightman Road. The surrounding uses are predominantly residential. The site is not located within a conservation area.

2. Description of Proposal

This is an application for a change of Use from C3 Dwellinghouse to a 5 Bedroom / 5 Person HMO (Use Class C4)

3. Relevant Planning and Enforcement history

There is no relevant planning and or enforcement cases related to the subject site however a similar application has been noted down the road:

251 Wightman Road was recently subject to a similar proposal. Application HGY/2025/3315 sought a change of use from a single dwellinghouse (C3) to a C4 HMO for up to four persons. That application was refused and subsequently dismissed at appeal (Ref. 6004670, July 2026).

4. Internal & Statutory Consultation

The following were consulted regarding the application:
LBH Public Health.

The following comments were received from consultees:

LBH Public Health

HMO overconcentration — Area already contains around nine licensed HMOs; further intensification is considered inappropriate and the property is better retained as a family home.

Overcrowding concerns — 16.4% of local homes are overcrowded (Census 2021); a five-person HMO here is likely to add to this and contribute to poor physical and mental health outcomes and increased spread of infectious diseases.

Low PTAL score — PTAL 2 is low for an HMO and may lead to car dependency and additional parking pressure.

Inadequate communal space — Rear garden exists, but indoor shared amenity space is insufficient; reliance on bedrooms would negatively affect wellbeing. Kitchen cannot realistically function as combined living/dining space.

Kitchen below HMO standards – Lacks two sets of facilities and sufficient storage, cooking space and fridge/freezer capacity for five residents, limiting ability to store food and prepare healthy meals.

5. Local Representations

The number of representations received from neighbours, local groups, etc in response to notification and publicity of the application were as follows:

No of individual responses: 2

Objecting: 2

Supporting:

The following comments were raised in the representations received:

Ladder Community Safety Partnership (LCSP)

- Property located in area subject to Article 4 Direction on HMOs. The Harringay ward has the highest concentration of HMOs in the borough. We are aware of 65 HMOs on Wightman Road alone.

- Approval would undermine the Family Housing Protection Zone. There are already existing problems with anti-social behaviour, poor maintenance and management in area covered by LCSP.

6. Assessment of Planning Considerations

The main planning considerations raised by the proposed development are:

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

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:

a. The gross original internal floor space of the existing dwelling is greater than 120m²:

Comment: The original un-extended floor space of the property is 122.5m² and therefore in excess of the minimum to be considered suitable for conversion to HMO accommodation.

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: From reviewing a June 2026 spreadsheet of registered HMOs within the borough, there were 62 HMOs registered on Wightman Road which is a large street, consisting of nos. 1-395 Wightman Road.

The majority of Wightman Road is made up of residential addresses, although there is a concentration of ground floor level commercial properties at the northern and southern ends of the street, but most of these properties also have residential properties located above.

There are also a number of places of worship, including a mosque occupying nos. 389-395, 3 churches and 2 car repair garages. From reviewing data, between nos. 250 and 320 Wightman Road, there were 16 HMOs excluding the host property, meaning out of approximately 70 units, 16 were already in HMO use, which would become 17 if the host building was included, representing 22.8% of units in this section of the street.

The specific characteristics of Wightman Road, including its high traffic volumes, narrow footpaths, and its position immediately adjacent to the rail line, mean that the street is generally less conducive to traditional family living and has historically been more suited to self-contained flats or HMO-type accommodation. Notwithstanding this, the existing concentration of HMOs within the immediate locality and along the wider street is such that further intensification risks exacerbating well-documented problems associated with an over-concentration of HMOs. These include excessive waste generation, the dumping of bulky household refuse, and wider pressures on the local environment.

A Hari8ngey produced report, 'Houses in Multiple Occupation: Housing Stock Condition and Stressors Report' (August 2023) highlights the common issues linked to high concentrations of HMOs, including elevated levels of waste-related complaints, overflowing bins and refuse mismanagement, fly-tipping associated with high-turnover properties, and poor external upkeep of HMO buildings. The report also identifies that Haringay Ward experiences a notable distribution of complaints from tenants and neighbours relating to licensed HMOs (as shown in Figure 7 and Map 5), while Figure 5 ("HMO households by ward") confirms that Haringay has the highest number of HMO households in the borough. Taken together, these indicators demonstrate a clear pattern of cumulative impact on local amenity arising from the concentration of HMOs within the ward.

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

Comment: Although the site has a low PTAL rating of 2, it is immediately adjacent to areas with PTAL levels of 4 and 5 on the Haringay Ladders, with close proximity to Hornsey Rail Station and the regular bus services on Green Lanes, and a 1km walk from Turnpike Lane. In this respect, the site is considered to benefit from satisfactory public transport accessibility.

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.

The floor plans indicate a communal kitchen / living room of 22.3m², and all bedrooms of at least or exceeding 12m² in size. A section to the rear would store 5 wheely bins and the plans show cycle storage Sheffield. The property also has a large communal rear garden.

Whilst 5 lettings would be reliant on one kitchen, if sufficient kitchen 'sets' are provided as per the Haringey HMO License standards, this can be an acceptable arrangement. Whilst the kitchen space does appear to be sufficient the rooms are modest at best and also there is a lack of living space or a sufficient dinging area where 5 persons could comfortably co-exist especially during peak times where the living spaces would be in high demand like dinner times creating a low quality of accommodation standard.

A condition could be imposed requiring further details for the storage and screening of refuse bins if the application was to be recommended for approval.

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

While all bedspaces are of an acceptable size and quality, the overall configuration of the communal facilities is inadequate, and as outlined above, the limited and poorly arranged shared kitchen space would not allow for a high standard of accommodation for the intended level of occupation.

Further comments:

Although outside the scope of the Policy DM17 assessment set out above, officers note that a property approximately 180 metres from the application site (251 Wightman Road) was recently subject to a similar proposal. Application HGY/2025/3315 sought a change of use from a single dwellinghouse (C3) to a C4 HMO for up to four persons. That application was refused and subsequently dismissed at appeal (Ref. 6004670, July 2026).

In dismissing the appeal, the Inspector concluded that Wightman Road already accommodates a high number of HMOs, and that further additions would exacerbate the issues identified in Policy DM17, including cumulative impacts on amenity, waste, disturbance, and local infrastructure. Given the proximity of the two sites and their location within overlapping postcodes, the Inspector's reasoning is considered directly relevant. It provides a clear and recent indication that additional HMOs in this part of Wightman Road would contribute to an over-concentration, reinforcing the concerns outlined above.

Impact on neighbouring amenity

London Plan Policy D6 outlines that design must not be detrimental to the amenity of surrounding housing, in specific stating that proposals should provide sufficient daylight and sunlight to surrounding housing that is appropriate for its context, while also 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 a development's users and neighbours. Specifically, proposals are required to provide appropriate sunlight, daylight and aspects to adjacent buildings and land, and to provide an appropriate amount of privacy to neighbouring properties to avoid overlooking and loss of privacy and detriment to amenity of neighbouring resident.

The proposal would see the property occupied by a maximum of 5 persons to 5 bedrooms, which is slightly greater level of occupancy that would be expected were the property used as a single family dwellinghouse. Whilst there would possibly be a slight increase in the number of comings and goings from the property in HMO use as opposed to a single-family dwelling, the intensity of residential use would not be considered to give rise to an unacceptable impact on neighbouring amenity by reason of noise or general disturbance, or waste generated through the use.

Transport considerations

London Plan Policy T1 requires all development to make the most effective use of land, reflecting its connectivity and accessibility by existing and future public transport, walking and cycling routes, and to ensure that any impacts on London's transport networks and supporting infrastructure are mitigated. Policies T4, T5 and T6 set out key principles for the assessment of development impacts on the highway network in terms of trip generation, parking demand and cycling provision.

Local Plan Policy SP7 'Transport' states that the Council aims to tackle climate change, improve local place shaping and public realm, and environmental and transport quality and safety by promoting public transport, walking and cycling and seeking to locate major trip generating developments in locations with good access to public transport. This is supported by DPD Policy DM31 'Sustainable Transport'.

It is acknowledged that the use of the premises as an HMO would lead to an intensification of the residential use in terms of anticipated number of occupants in comparison to use of the property as a single family dwellinghouse. However, HMO accommodation is more likely to have occupancy by individuals that do not own their own car in comparison to self-contained accommodation, and the site does benefit from reasonable access to public transport in the locality. There is small provision of uncovered cycle storage for at least 6 bicycles, that has not been installed however would be accessed via the side gate. Whilst guidance would suggest that these parks should be covered, this could be conditioned if the permission were to be forthcoming.

On this basis, it is considered that the development would materially result in any unacceptable impacts on highway safety or local parking conditions.

Standard of accommodation

London Plan Policy D6 requires housing developments to achieve high-quality design and deliver comfortable and functional accommodation with good access to daylight, sunlight, storage and external amenity space.

The proposal would provide five bedrooms with a maximum occupancy of five persons. All proposed bedrooms exceed the minimum floorspace requirements of the London Plan and benefit from natural light and outlook.

As mentioned above in the principle of development section, the accommodation includes a single open plan living space and a large private rear garden. Whilst the bedrooms are generally acceptable, there doesn't appear to be provisions for dining and there is only a single setoff cooking facilities, in peak times would be problematic between 5 occupants.

Overall, the accommodation would provide a comfortable and functional living environment for future occupants. The proposal therefore is contrary with London Plan Policy D6 and Development Management Policy DM17.

Conclusion

The proposal would result in an unsatisfactory standard of accommodation for future occupants, contrary to London Plan Policy D6, which requires all housing developments to achieve a high-quality design and provide layouts that support a good standard of living. The absence of sufficient dedicated communal living space, combined with the limited size and inadequate configuration of the kitchen facilities, would fail to provide an acceptable level of shared amenity and would not support a high standard of day-to-day living for multiple occupants especially during peak hours.

Furthermore, the proposal would exacerbate existing issues relating to the over-concentration of HMO accommodation already understood to be affecting the locality. The scheme would also result in the loss of a single-family dwellinghouse, a typology for which there is an identified shortage and ongoing need within the borough. This is contrary to Policy DM17(b) of the Haringey Development Management DPD (2017), which seeks to protect family housing and prevent further erosion of this stock through inappropriate conversion to HMO use.

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

7. CIL Applicable

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

8. Recommendation

The application is recommended for refusal for the following reason:

Refusal Reasons:

The proposal would result in an unsatisfactory standard of accommodation for future occupants, due to the absence of sufficient dedicated communal living space and the limited size and inadequate configuration of the kitchen facilities, therefore failing to provide an acceptable level of shared amenity needed to support a high standard of day-to-day living for multiple occupants especially during peak hours. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policy DM17 of the Haringey Development Management DPD 2017 and Policy D5 & D6 of the London Plan 2021.

The proposal would exacerbate existing issues relating to the over-concentration of HMO accommodation already understood to be affecting the locality. The scheme would also result in the loss of a single-family dwellinghouse, a typology for which there is an identified shortage and ongoing need within the borough. This is contrary to Policy DM17 of the Haringey Development Management DPD (2017).

