

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE PLANNING SUB-COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY 5 NOVEMBER 2025

Councillors Present:	Cllr Jessica Webb in the Chair.
	Cllr Michael Desmond, Cllr Jon Narcross (Vice-Chair), Cllr Clare Potter, Cllr Sheila Suso-Runge, Cllr Ali Sadek and Cllr Penny Wrout.
Apologies:	Cllr Michael Levy.
Officers in Attendance:	Laurence Ackrill, Development Management Team Leader Jessica Feeney, Governance Officer Luciana Graves, Conservation Urban Design and Sustainability Manager (virtual) Christopher Poad, Senior Planning Officer Qasim Shafi, Highways and Transport Officer (virtual) Courtney Blackwood-Swaby, Legal Officer Gareth Sykes, Governance Officer John Tsang, Development Management and Enforcement Manager Monsur Zaman, ICT Officer (Virtual)
Absent	Cllr Humaira Garasia, Cllr Shaul Krautwirt (substitute) and Cllr Ifraax Samatar.

1 Apologies for Absence

- 1.1 Councillors Garasia, Samatar and Krautwirt (Substitute) were recorded as being absent from the meeting.
- 1.2 Councillor Samatar joined the meeting remotely. Any Committee members who are accessing the meeting remotely are not counted as being 'present' for the purposes of the Local Government Act 1972 and may not vote on any items under consideration.
- 1.3 Councillor Levy had been granted dispensation, as agreed at 14 May 2025 meeting of Full Council, from the statutory requirement to attend meetings of the Council.

2 Declarations of Interest

- 2.1 It was noted that the members of the Planning Sub-Committee knew one of the objectors speaking in objection to the planning applications at agenda items 5 and 6; Councillor Margaret Gordon was a fellow Hackney Ward Councillor.
- 2.2 Councillor Potter declared that she had received an email from an objector to one of the applications on the agenda.

3 To consider any proposal/questions referred to the sub-committee by the Council's Monitoring Officer

3.1 None.

4 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

4.1 The Members considered the minutes of their previous meeting held on 8 October 2025.

Resolved:

The minutes of the previous meeting, held on 8 October 2025, were agreed as an accurate record of those meetings' proceedings.

5 2025/0760: 9 Clifden Road, Hackney, London E5 0LL

5.1 PROPOSAL: The change of use from a 6-bed House in Multiple Occupancy (HMO) (Class C4) to a 7-bed HMO (Sui-Generis).

POST SUBMISSION REVISIONS:

- Details of refuse storage have been provided within the front garden.

Giving regard to the Wheatcroft Principles, the substance of the application has not been substantially altered to the extent that determining the application on the basis of the amended plans would prejudice the views of those who were originally consulted as part of the application. As such, no further consultation exercise was carried out.

5.2 The Planning Officer introduced the application as published.

5.3 The Planning Sub-Committee heard from Stephanie Bacque and Hackney Ward Councillor Margaret Gordon, who spoke in objection to the application.

5.4 The Planning Sub-Committee heard from Josh Myers, the agent for the applicant, who spoke in support of the application.

5.5 During a discussion a number of points were raised including the following:

- The Planning Officer explained that restrictions could only be imposed on the element requiring permission (the increase from six to seven bedrooms);
- The Planning Officer confirmed that decisions were made on a case-by-case but they acknowledged the risk of costs being awarded against the Council if they refused the principle of change of use, given the appeal inspector's previous decision. The Planning Officer clarified that the enforcement investigation was open due to the complaint received, but the seven-bedroom HMO may not yet be operating;
- Responding to concerns raised about the reduction in communal living space to create the seventh bedroom and whether the accommodation met "high quality" standards, the Planning Officer

deemed the accommodation satisfactory, noting that the standard of accommodation had not been an issue in the previous appeal;

- The Planning officer confirmed that it would be difficult to prejudice future development based on past behaviour, noting that anti-social behaviour could arise from any property;
- One of the objectors reiterated their personal efforts to supervise the property and intervene in dangerous situations was due to the landlord's poor management, emphasising a community duty of care;
- On the issue of monitoring the rent cap for the proposed additional room, the Planning Officer explained that the planning obligation would include a monitoring process requiring the landlord to provide evidence that rents comply with the Local Housing Allowance (LHA) levels. This obligation would be indefinite;
- One of the Sub-Committee members raised concerns about the lack of information regarding the property's management system, which they considered crucial for residents' communication with the owner. They requested that for future similar cases, clear, direct lines of communication be provided to residents and that this message be passed on to the current owner;
- One of the objectors confirmed, regarding the reporting of anti-social behaviour, that they had contacted various departments, including the Police and the London Borough of Islington social workers. They had also acted as a witness in a court case involving a stabbing. The Planning Sub-Committee members noted that it was challenging, as a licence was a huge, time-consuming job requiring actions like recording noise and taking pictures;
- Some of the Planning Sub-Committee members felt that HMOs, like the one before them at the meeting, targeted vulnerable residents in emergency circumstances. They added that one of the bedrooms in the proposed large HMO was inadequate;
- One of the Planning Sub-Committee members highlighted a key concern that the Sub-Committee's policy, which aimed to stop HMO conversions at the expense of family houses, appeared to be disregarded due to legal provisions allowing houses to become six-person HMOs under Permitted Development Rights. They felt the current plans were in breach of policy due to the removal of a family home and the lack of any high-quality, adequate-sized amenity space.

Vote on the officer's recommendation

Vote:

For: None.

Against: Cllr Michael Desmond, Cllr Jon Narcross (Vice-Chair), Cllr Sheila Suso-Runge, Cllr Ali Sadek, Cllr Jessica Webb (Chair) and Cllr Penny Wrouth.

Abstained: Cllr Clare Potter.

On the officer's recommendation, as set out in the published application report, six Planning Sub-Committee members present voted against the recommendation.

One Planning Sub-Committee member abstained from the vote.

A motion to refuse the proposal was proposed by Councillor Jon Narcross (the Vice-Chair of the Sub-Committee) and seconded by Councillor Clare Potter.

The six Planning Sub-Committee members who voted against the application did so on the grounds of the sub-standard quality of accommodation proposed, the proposed large House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) would be detrimental to the living conditions of future occupiers. The proposed development would, therefore, conflict with policies LP1 and LP22 of Hackney Local Plan 2033 (2020).

6 2025/0840: 12 Blurton Road, Hackney, London E5 0NL

- 6.1 PROPOSAL: Use of property as a 9 bedroom 9-person large HMO (Use Class Sui Generis) with a mansard roof extension (part retrospective) and the provision of cycle and refuse storage.

POST SUBMISSION REVISIONS: None.

- 6.2 The Planning Officer introduced the application, as published. During the course of their presentation reference was made to the addendum and the following amendment to the report:

3.0 Statutory/Local Group Response

Property Licensing - The proposal appears to be acceptable, however, for the purposes of obtaining a property licence, the shower cubicles appear to be too small and should be at least 2 square metres (sqm) with a full size wash hand basin. Given each of the proposed bedrooms would exceed the minimum floor area requirements, it is considered there would be sufficient room for this to be accommodated.

(Officer comment: Whilst this would not be a planning policy requirement, the applicant is to be informed of this requirement in order to obtain a property licence.)

- 6.3 The Planning Sub-Committee heard from Eva Rothschild and Hackney Ward Councillor Margaret Gordon, who spoke in objection to the application.

- 6.4 The Planning Sub-Committee heard from Shulem Posen, of Eade Planning Limited, who spoke in support of the application.

- 6.5 During a discussion a number of points were raised including the following:
- While proposals had suggested two square metres for shower cubicles, the Planning Officer explained that this was not a strict planning policy requirement, and the rooms themselves exceed minimum internal space standards;
 - The Planning Officer clarified that if the application was refused the property would be required to operate as a small HMO for six persons, with enforcement action taken if it exceeded that number of occupants;
 - The Planning Officer clarified that the 10-year period related to immunity from enforcement action for an unlawful change of use (e.g. a small HMO to a large HMO). However, the change of use from a C3 family dwelling to a C4 small HMO did not require a specific period of time to be lawfully established;

- One of the objectors commented that the local and London plans were being exploited despite the Planning Officer's clarification. Objectors cited prior enforcement actions and repeated refusals for a mansard roof that was previously installed and removed. There were concerns raised about the property overlooking a neighbour's kitchen and the property's management. They expressed no faith in the management, noting that a door entry system had been buzzing for three weeks without resolution, and highlighted issues with other properties in the area, including past armed raids;
- The provision of an additional kitchen/dining area with seating would meet London plan policy LP22 for high-quality communal spaces, and that the Council had deemed the communal space provision acceptable, noting there was no specific requirement for a living area;
- The planning application was assessed on the basis of a nine-person HMO. The Applicant acknowledged that significant works might be necessary for large HMOs, which was common;
- The mansard was granted under a separate application, but no enforcement action would be taken against the existing floor height unless there was an objection or it contradicted the planning permission;
- The application had been described and assessed as a nine-person HMO. As the property was now lawfully a small HMO for six occupiers, policy only required securing cycle parking for the three additional bedrooms;
- The Planning Sub-Committee noted that the applicant was proposing 10 cycle parking spaces, addressing concerns related to bikes being stored in corridors;
- The Agent confirmed that only six occupants were currently living on site. They added that refusal of the application would prevent any developer incentive to address the previously raised concerns around waste;
- The Agent for the applicant suggested that the Council could impose a condition limiting occupancy to nine people, and that the proposed 10 cycle parking spaces were an enhancement that removed a fire hazard. They added that the Planning Sub-Committee should not follow the development plan if a material consideration, such as the current lawful six-room HMO use, exists, and that the change from C3 to C4 use could be permanent;
- The Agent for the applicant confirmed that they could condition the occupancy to nine persons, as suggested by the Sub-Committee. They also offered to convert the second kitchen into a lounge to address amenity space concerns, but they added this would be subject to a separate application.

Vote:

For: None.

Against: Cllr Michael Desmond, Cllr Jon Narcross (Vice-Chair), Cllr Sheila Suso-Runge, Cllr Ali Sadek, Cllr Jessica Webb (Chair) and Cllr Penny Wrout.

Abstained: Cllr Clare Potter.

On the officer's recommendation, as set out in the published application report, six Planning Sub-Committee members voted against the recommendation.

One Planning Sub-Committee member abstained from voting on the officer's recommendation.

A motion to refuse the proposal was proposed by Councillor Ali Sadek and seconded by Councillor Jon Narcross (Vice-Chair of the Planning Sub-Committee meeting).

The six Planning Sub-Committee members who voted against the application did so on the grounds of the sub-standard quality of accommodation proposed, the proposed large House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) would be detrimental to the living conditions of future occupiers. The proposed development would, therefore, conflict with policies LP1 and LP22 of Hackney Local Plan 2033 (2020).

- 6.6 Councillor Sadek acknowledged the representative for the applicant's frustration regarding anecdotes about the house's current usage. He stated that the Committee placed no weight on these individual circumstances. He added that these current anecdotes were not informative of the Committee's decision, which related to the reasons articulated by members.

7 Delegated Decisions

- 7.1 The Members considered the delegated decisions document for the period 26 September 2025 to 23 October 2025.

Resolved:

To note the delegated decisions document for the period 26 September 2025 to 23 October 2025.

8 Any Other Business the Chair Considers to be Urgent

- 8.1 The Members noted that their next meeting was on the 19th of November.

END OF MEETING

Duration of the meeting: 6.30pm - 9.20pm

Next meeting: 19 November 2025.

Chair of the Planning Sub-Committee, Councillor Jessica Webb.