

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
PLANNING COMMITTEE
Havering Town Hall, Main Road, Romford
12 February 2026 (7.00 - 8.30 pm)**

Present:

COUNCILLORS:

Conservative Group	Carol Smith
Havering Residents' Group	Bryan Vincent (in the Chair) Robby Misir (Vice-Chair) and Philippa Crowder
Labour	Matthew Stanton

Councillors Stephanie Nunn and John Crowder were also present for parts of the meeting.

There were 7 members of the public present.

Through the Chairman, announcements were made regarding emergency evacuation arrangements and the decision making process followed by the Committee.

32 DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

There were no disclosures of interests.

33 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 14 August 2025 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

34 P0146.25 - 114 DIBAN AVENUE, HORNCHURCH ELM PARK

The Committee considered a report for planning permission that seeks to vary Conditions 2 and 3 of that planning permission to regularise various internal and external changes to the layout of the extensions as well as proposed amendments to its materials.

The report detailed the following key amendments:

Internal

- On the ground floor, there has been the subdivision and change of the area indicated on the originally approved plans as living and reception rooms to create a playroom, bathroom and spare room
- At first floor level, there is bedroom and bathroom where the original plans showed a bedroom
- At loft level, there has been the addition of a shower to the bedroom

External

- Changes to the rear window design on both the main property and its extensions
- There is one roof light within the front roof slope of the property instead of the two
- Change to the design of the roof slope of the side extension
- The first floor rear extension has been built further away from the attached shared boundary compared to the plans approved under P0047.23 and is therefore less wide (approximately 0.6m less wide)

Materials

- The side extension has been finished in brickwork whereas the approved drawings and Condition 2 required the extension to be finished in matching render. The entirety of the extension is proposed to be finished in render as part of this application however.

In accordance with the public speaking arrangements the Committee was addressed by an objector with no reply from the applicant.

The Committee heard from a local resident. It was stated that the owner purchased the property in 2021 and subsequently carried out building works with the planning application submitted only after completion of those works. It was alleged that the development as built did not accord with the approved plans.

The speaker further alleged that the property had previously been advertised on Airbnb as a seven bedroom, four bathroom holiday let. Due to its capacity, this use was said to have attracted frequent parties, resulting in persistent anti social behaviour, loud music, parking problems, blocked driveways, and repeated altercations requiring police attendance. It was also stated that there were no adequate refuse disposal arrangements in place and that the management of the short term letting failed to address breaches of house rules.

Following the alleged unauthorised short term letting use, the owner submitted a planning application for the property. The Committee was advised that this resulted in 133 objections and a petition of approximately 600 signatures. The application was subsequently withdrawn. Due to the history of the site, residents expressed serious concern regarding the potential impact of an oversized dwelling within an area characterised predominantly by two and three bedroom family homes.

Reference was made to policy wording requiring the property to be occupied as a family dwelling and clarification was requested on the definition of family and whether a limit on the number of occupants could be imposed.

It was further stated that the submitted floor plans did not accurately reflect the internal layout. The speaker disputed the officer's assessment that the plans were accurate advising that the ground floor layout did not match the approved plans. In particular, a room located at the end of the hallway was not shown and the dining area was said to be misrepresented. Concern was also raised that internal alterations were not purely cosmetic but facilitated increased occupation including the use of the hallway to access additional rooms.

The Committee was informed that the property was already under investigation by the Council which heightened residents' concerns given the applicant's history of seeking retrospective approvals. The speaker concluded by requesting that the committee carefully consider the application to ensure residents were protected from further misuse of the property.

A Councillor call-in has been received which accords with the Committee consideration criteria. The application had been called-in by a Ward Councillor, Councillor Barry Mugglestone. With its agreement Councillor Stephanie Nunn addressed the Committee on behalf of Councillor Mugglestone.

Councillor Nunn stated that the objection was being submitted on behalf of local residents, noting that the situation had been extremely distressing in an area that has been residential for nearly 100 years. It was explained that the scale and use of the extension conflicted with the Local Plan which does not support a change of use of a family dwelling where it would result in significantly greater noise than would normally be associated with such a property. Reference was also made to policy objectives requiring residents to feel safe and comfortable in their homes with adequate privacy, amenity space and security.

Councillor Nunn described the use of the property as akin to a mini hotel or function venue at times involving the erection of a marquee in the rear garden, which adversely affected neighbouring occupiers through noise, loss of privacy and an inability to enjoy their gardens. It was confirmed that this activity has currently ceased following engagement with officers however ongoing concerns remain regarding continued comings and goings and multiple occupants leading to increased vehicle movements and disturbance. The adequacy of a single parking space was questioned, with the view expressed that increased occupancy inevitably leads to increased car usage. Councillor Nunn advised that, should the retrospective application be approved, residents would closely monitor compliance with any imposed conditions. Concern was also raised regarding discrepancies between the approved ground floor plans and the development as built, with additional rooms constructed that, notwithstanding their stated use, were

considered by residents to function as bedrooms, effectively resulting in a seven bedroom dwelling. Councillor Nunn concluded by asking the Committee to consider how similar developments often subsequently become unlicensed houses in multiple occupation.

During general debate, officers confirmed that the property had been subject to several visits. These included an initial enforcement visit in 2024, a joint visit with enforcement in March 2025, and further site inspections in November 2025 and January 2026. During these visits officers met with occupants and confirmed that the property was in use as a single family dwelling.

The Committee was advised that an allegation had been made that the property was previously used as an Airbnb. This allegation prompted enforcement investigation but officers confirmed that any such activity had ceased in January 2025. The enforcement investigation remains open however officers stated that no evidence currently indicates use of the property as an HMO or continued short term let.

The Committee noted that the application before Members was not for a change of use. The proposal sought only to regularise internal amendments, including the addition and reconfiguration of bathrooms and associated minor layout changes and to approve minor external alterations from the 2023 approved plans. Officers emphasised that the property is currently and remains a C3 single family dwelling. Members were informed that any future use as an HMO would require a separate planning application, due to the Council's Article 4 Direction.

A Member expressed concern that the number of bathrooms and the internal configuration might facilitate future HMO use. Officers reminded Members must determine the application based on the proposal submitted. It was further confirmed that officers had assessed the internal layout and found it consistent with a family dwelling.

Members sought clarification on whether conditions could be applied to limit the future use of certain rooms as bedrooms or to restrict any future conversion to an HMO. Officers advised that such conditions would be unlawful, unenforceable or unnecessary as planning law already requires permission for any material change of use from C3 to HMO, hotel type accommodation or C2 care use.

In response to a Member question, officers confirmed that an informative could be added to the decision notice, clearly setting out the accepted this approach.

Members queried how any future breaches, including HMO use or short term letting beyond the permitted 90 day allowance, would be monitored. Officer stated that any future alleged breaches reported via the Council's enforcement process would be fully investigated.

Officers addressed the minor external differences between the approved and built schemes. These included a slight alteration to the roof slope of the side extension and changes to the number and design of rooflights and rear windows. Officers confirmed that these changes were minor and acceptable and did not give rise to additional harm when compared with the 2023 permission. They also noted that the extension now sits slightly further away from the boundary thereby marginally reducing its impact.

Members discussed the condition requiring rendering of the rear elevation within nine months of the decision date. Officers confirmed this was a standard timeframe but noted that the Committee could reduce it to six months if desired. No formal amendment to the condition was proposed.

Officers reminded Members that the 2023 permission remains extant and that the variations now proposed are relatively minor in nature. Officers advised that refusal based on the concerns expressed would be difficult to defend at appeal.

Following discussion and consideration the Committee Resolved to Grant planning permission subject to conditions and the additional informative regarding future change of use.

The approval was carried by three votes to 2.

Councillors Phillipa Crowder, Robby Misir and Carol Smith voted in favour while Councillors Bryan Vincent and Matt Stanton voted against the proposal.

Chairman