



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 6 October 2025

by **C Housden BSc(Hons) MA MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 31 October 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/L5240/W/25/3370036

14 Suffield Close, South Croydon CR2 8SZ

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant outline planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr Thomas Blake against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Croydon.
 - The application ref is 24/01810/OUT.
 - The development proposed is demolition of existing single storey side conservatory and erection of a detached 4 bed house.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. The planning application was made in outline form, with access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale reserved for future consideration. I therefore have dealt with the appeal on this basis and treated the submitted plans as being illustrative only.
3. A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Roost Assessment¹ (PEARA) was submitted alongside the appeal which has been reviewed by the Council and its ecological adviser. The Council has confirmed in its statement of case that in relation to the second reason for refusal 'subject to conditions the applicant has overcome this reason for refusal'², and it has not submitted any evidence to contest this reason for refusal. On this basis, I do not consider ecology to be a main issue of this appeal.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

Character and appearance

5. Suffield Close is a residential cul-de-sac with predominantly two storey detached properties. The area features consistency and rhythm through both the appearance of the properties and pattern of development which predominantly features properties set directly off Suffield Close in a regular building line which follows the road. The frontages to properties often feature grass verges and trees,

¹ By Arbtech dated 17th July 2025

² Paragraph 3.10 of the London Borough of Croydon Appeal Statement dated 18th September 2025

and with the regular gaps between the dwellings the area has a spacious and verdant feel.

6. Due to 14 Suffield Close (No 14) being situated at the end of the cul-de-sac off a turning head, it has a wider plot and is set slightly further back from the road than most properties. However, visually the plot still has a presence within the streetscene and the dwelling itself is still set broadly in line with the established pattern of development.
7. The appeal proposal would sub-divide the plot and introduce a dwelling to the side of No 14. Whilst layout is a reserved matter, by virtue of the location of the proposed plot, the dwelling would inevitably be set away from the established building line and would not directly front onto Suffield Close. As a result, the proposal would be significantly out of keeping with the well-established pattern of development.
8. The proposed plot would also appear narrow and cramped compared to the spacious plots within the wider area, particularly given the two storey dwelling of No 14 would be set directly on the proposed shared boundary. This would be unlike the majority of the properties within Suffield Close which predominantly feature gaps in the built form between the shared boundaries.
9. There would be screening of the development through the existing mature vegetation. However, this would still allow for glimpses of the proposed dwelling through the foliage, where it would be seen as out of keeping. This would allow for the harm I have described above to still be perceptible from within the streetscene. The existing vegetation would therefore not mitigate or otherwise justify the harm that I have identified.
10. The appellant has drawn my attention to a planning permission at No 3 Kingswood Way³ which has been granted by the Council and is situated near to the appeal site. This permission involves the demolition of a single dwelling and construction of multiple dwellings, including some in a backland location within this site. However, it was clear on my site visit that this site is situated outside of the Suffield Close streetscene which the appeal proposal would be seen within. As the proposed development is situated within a different context, the development at No 3 Kingswood Way is therefore not directly comparable to the appeal scheme and would not justify the harm that I have identified.
11. I have also been provided with an analysis of the grain and pattern of development of the wider residential estate, which includes additional dwellings that have been granted planning permission by the Council, and also identifies where features such as shared drives have been used in the original estate design.
12. However, all of these identified cases, with the exception of 22 Suffield Close (No 22), are situated outside of the specific context of Suffield Close that the appeal site would be seen within and therefore are not directly comparable or relevant to the appeal before me. With regard to No 22, whilst it would be positioned beyond the end of Suffield Close, the property still broadly aligns with the regular building line and pattern of development displayed in Suffield Close. Furthermore, only a very small portion of the driveway would run past its adjacent neighbour before connecting to Suffield Close. As such, it is not directly

³ LPA ref 20/05474/FUL

comparable to the appeal proposal and would not mitigate or otherwise justify the harm that I have identified.

13. The proposal would result in significant harm to the character and appearance of the area and therefore conflict with Policies SP4 and DM10 of the Croydon Local Plan (2018) (CLP) and Policy D3 of the London Plan (2021) (LP). These policies, amongst other matters, seek to ensure development is of a high quality that respects the development pattern and positively responds to local distinctiveness.

Other Matters

14. A PEARA has been submitted in support of the appeal, which has analysed the conditions of the site and evaluated the suitability of the habitats for notable or protected species. The PEARA sets out that the development would not result in direct impacts to any notable or protected species and on-site habitats subject to a range of recommendations, including working practices and site enhancements. It also confirms that any impacts to off-site habitat, including the nearby Selsdon Wood Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC), could be suitably minimised through best practice measures. Whilst I note that the PEARA erroneously states that there are no ponds present on the site or within the wider area, this has been picked up by the Council's ecological adviser, who nevertheless was content that the development could proceed on a precautionary basis given the low value to great crested newts of the on-site habitat. I am therefore satisfied that I have sufficient evidence before me to be confident that the development would not result in direct impacts to any notable or protected species and habitats, including the nearby Selsdon Wood SINC.
15. The development would provide a dwelling within an existing residential area which would contribute to the supply of housing within the borough. The proposal would also lead to a small and time limited economic benefit during the construction phase, as well as some limited social and economic benefits resulting from future occupiers. The proposal would also secure some on-site ecological enhancements. However, given the small scale of the development, these benefits would attract limited weight in favour of the proposal. The benefits would be insufficient to outweigh the harm that I have identified.

Conclusion

16. The proposal conflicts with the development plan as a whole and the material considerations do not indicate that the appeal should be decided other than in accordance with it. Therefore, for the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

C Housden

INSPECTOR