



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 9 December 2025

by **S Brook BA (Hons) MA MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 22nd January 2026

Appeal Ref: APP/M0655/W/25/3374086

113 Lovely Lane, Warrington WA5 1TZ

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Bright Future Homes against the decision of Warrington Borough Council.
 - The application reference is 2025/00846/FUL.
 - The development proposed is Change of use from detached family dwelling (Class C3) to children's residential home (residential institution Class C2).
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for change of use from detached family dwelling (Class C3) to children's residential home (residential institution Class C2), at 113 Lovely Lane, Warrington, WA5 1TZ, in accordance with the terms of the application reference 2025/00846/FUL, and the plans submitted with it, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with drawing no's 728.09-P01 Revision A – Location Plan, 728.16-P09 Revision A – Existing and Proposed Site Plan, 728.16-P10 Proposed Plans.
 - 3) This permission is for the use of the premises as a residential children's care home for a maximum of 3 children (up to the age of 18) at any one time, and for no other purpose, including any other purposes falling within Use Class C2 of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended), or any Order revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification.
 - 4) The existing car parking provision in the rear yard of the premises shall not be reduced in size and shall be kept available at all times for the parking of motor vehicles by staff and visitors to the premises and shall be used for no other purpose.

Applications for costs

2. An application for costs was made by Bright Future Homes against Warrington Borough Council. This application is the subject of a separate decision.

Preliminary Matters

3. A plan showing frontage parking has been provided but is labelled 'For information only' and it is not included on the list of plans considered by the Council on the

Decision Notice. While I note some discussion of this alternative parking plan by both parties, as it does not form one of the application plans, I have not considered it further.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is whether the proposal would make suitable provision for the parking of vehicles, with due regard to highway safety and the living conditions of nearby residents in respect of access to vehicle parking.

Reasons

5. The host property is a detached, 5-bedroom dwelling, with accommodation over three floors. It is of a sufficient size to accommodate a larger family, as it could conveniently accommodate 2 adults and 4 children. A fenced garden exists to the front, with a yard providing off road parking for 3 cars at the rear, accessed from a rear lane off Goulden Street. The area is predominantly comprised of compact terraced housing, with a number of commercial uses along Lovely Lane. The Royal Warrington Hospital is nearby.
6. The appeal scheme would provide supervised care for the accommodation of a maximum of 3 children between 8 and 18 years. Support workers would operate on a 24-hour shift basis, with two support workers present during daytime shifts and one support worker present overnight. The Council acknowledge that this is a sustainable location, however, should these support workers travel by car, then two parking spaces would be required during the day and one at night. Private transport may also be required for day to day commuting of the children. Visitors, such as family members, other management staff or social workers, may also require parking, if travelling by car, for face-to-face meetings.
7. Given the predominantly terraced form of housing in the area, the commercial activity and the proximity to the hospital, it is not surprising that on street parking in the area is prevalent. The main parties agree that on street parking is heavily relied upon, and while only a snapshot in time, I observed that parking in the area was congested.
8. Nevertheless, it is proposed that support staff would utilise the off-street parking spaces at the rear of the property. Two support workers would park on site during the day, with the third space reserved for daily commuting. One support worker would park overnight.
9. The Highway Authority suggests that typically children's residential care homes attract higher trip rates and require more car parking than a dwelling of comparable size. However, I have been provided with no substantive evidence to support this, and I note that the proposal is to accommodate up to 3 children, while the dwelling as a family home, could easily accommodate more.
10. From the available evidence, I see no reason to consider that the proposal would give rise to a greater demand for parking than use of No 113 as a family home, or a greater amount of comings and goings. As a family home, it is feasible that each resident adult, as well as any older children of driving age, could have access to separate vehicles. In addition to this, there would likely be frequent visitors, not all of which would utilise the parking at the rear of the site, instead taking up any

available on street parking. Comings and goings associated with accessing work, school or social activities would be similar for the existing and proposed use.

11. The Council accepts that the care element of the proposal would be relatively small scale with only a limited number of staff, and that while the proposal would inevitably result in frequent comings and goings associated with staff change over, school runs, social activities and visitors, the level of activity is unlikely to significantly exceed that of a 4+ bedroom family dwelling.
12. The existing off street parking area is constrained in terms of its size, and the access to it. I am advised that these spaces would not meet the Council's standard for off-street parking set out within its Supplementary Planning Document, Standards for Parking in New Development, March 2015. Nevertheless, 3 cars were parked in the yard at the time of my site visit. The parking of 3 vehicles at any one time would involve tandem parking, requiring the moving of one vehicle to allow others to exit. Access to the rear lane off Goulden Street is narrow and manoeuvring is constrained by parked cars on the street to either side of the entrance. Parked vehicles within the back lane, would further constrain access/egress and manoeuvring.
13. Nevertheless, these are the conditions at present and so they would impact existing residents, as well as any future users. I have no firm evidence to suggest that support workers would not be visiting the site regularly, and so they would become familiar with these physical conditions, in the same way that current or former residents would have done. Therefore, any manoeuvring requirements resulting from the constrained nature of the access and parking area would be dealt with by future users in a similar way to existing users, and any consequent impacts on the demand for on street parking would be similar also. As comings and goings would not increase significantly over and above the existing situation, I cannot conclude that there would be any increased risk for users of this narrow access.
14. I am advised that there are occasions when vehicles park in this rear lane and block access altogether. If this is the case, then this would impact future users in the same way it presumably affects existing users, and any consequent demand for on street parking as a result, would again be similar, given my conclusions that the intensity of use would not significantly increase. I agree with the Highway Authority, that for simplicity, visitors would utilise on street parking. However, as this is likely to be the case for visitors to the existing dwelling, this would be unlikely to result in a significant increase in demand for on street parking, over the existing situation.
15. Each day, there will be short periods of time where there is a changeover of staff and the tandem nature of the parking would need to be navigated. If this were not managed effectively, then there could be a greater demand for parking on street, albeit small. However, as this would be a managed facility, I see no reason why some sort of arrangement could not be made to allow the changeover of parked vehicles effectively, as support workers would soon become familiar with the circumstances. There is no substantive evidence to suggest that future staff or visitors would block the rear lane, or park so as to prevent access by emergency vehicles.

16. Overall, I find that the proposal would not generate any significant increase in comings and goings, or demand for on street parking, over and above the use as a family home, and while the nature of the proposal would change, the available parking would continue to be utilised in a similar manner. On this basis, I see no requirement for the proposal to be supported by a survey of capacity for on street parking.
17. To conclude, the proposed development would make suitable provision for the parking of vehicles, with due regard to highway safety and the living conditions of nearby residents in respect of access to vehicle parking. Therefore, the proposal would not conflict with policies ENV8 and INF1 of the Warrington Local Plan 2021/22-2038/39, (Adopted 2023), which collectively and amongst other matters, require that new development protects existing occupiers in the surrounding area from potential impacts, including the effect and timing of traffic movement to, from and within the site and car parking, so as to ensure no adverse impact on the local community or highway safety.

Other Matters

18. My attention has been drawn to other development permitted within this area, as well as an appeal decision for a C2 use in Burnley¹. I have given due consideration to the details available for these other developments. However, I have determined the appeal based on the individual circumstances of this case.
19. It has been suggested that the parking arrangements do not reflect the land registered to the property. However, I have not been provided with any evidence to support this claim.
20. Interested parties suggest that the rear yard provides an emergency exit for the warehouse to the rear. At my site visit, I was able to see that a door from this warehouse connected to the yard. The submitted information indicates that this door is no longer utilised. Nevertheless, I see no reason why the appeal scheme, which would use the yard for parking in a similar way as the existing dwelling, would change the circumstances associated with the use of this warehouse exit, if it is retained.
21. An interested party has highlighted the number of tenanted properties in the area, and considers that a lack of objection to the proposal should not be taken to mean a lack of interest. Nevertheless, I must determine the appeal based on the evidence before me.

Conditions

22. I have considered the conditions suggested by the Council with regards to the tests set out in the National Planning Policy Framework and the Planning Practice Guidance, along with the appellant's response. Conditions specifying the time limit for implementation of the permission and the approved plans are necessary in the interests of certainty.
23. I have included a condition which restricts the use to a residential home for the care of up to 3 children. This is the basis on which the proposed development has been found to be acceptable in relation to parking provision and any subsequent implications for highway safety and the living conditions of nearby residents. A

¹ APP/Z2315/W/24/3356537

more intensive use, or an alternative use within the C2 use class could have differing implications in this regard, which would require further scrutiny.

24. A condition to retain off street parking provision for future users of the development is reasonable and necessary as this level of parking provision has been a consideration in the acceptability of the proposal.
25. The suggested condition preventing any team training or team meetings on the premises lacks precision and would be overly restrictive, given the primary purpose of the use. While staff arriving and departing at the premises could generate some noise and disturbance, the scale of the proposal is small and such movements are unlikely to be significantly different from residents arriving or departing from properties within the area, which they can do in an unrestricted manner. Therefore, a condition restricting the timing of shift changeovers is not reasonable or necessary. Nor am I convinced that a scheme for external lighting is necessary to make the development acceptable, given that the rear lane has street lighting.

Conclusion

26. The proposal would accord with the development plan and there are no material considerations to indicate that a decision should be made other than in accordance with it. Therefore, the appeal should be allowed.

S Brook

INSPECTOR