



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 7 January 2026

by **J Heppell BA (Hons) MA MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 23 January 2026

Appeal Ref: APP/L5240/W/25/3374394

25 Craignish Avenue, Norbury, Croydon, London SW16 4RN

- 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 Ms Brenda Yamoah against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Croydon.
 - The application Ref is 25/01812/FUL.
 - The development proposed is change of use of dwellinghouse from family housing (Use Class C3(a)) to supported housing (Use Class C2) for a maximum of five (5) adults including one (1) member of staff.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The appellant has confirmed that the property is already being used for supported housing. Section 73A of the 1990 Act allows for the submission of retrospective applications, which are subject to the same considerations as those made prior to development commencing.
3. I have taken the appellant's full name from the appeal form, as the application form contained only their surname.

Main Issues

4. The main issues in this appeal are:
 - whether there is need for supported accommodation;
 - the effect of the development on on-street parking and the highways network; and
 - the effect of the development on the living conditions of nearby occupiers with particular reference to noise and disturbance.

Reasons

Need for supported accommodation

5. The appeal site is located in a primarily residential area. The development is a change of use of the building to supported housing.
6. The policy context for supported and specialised accommodation is set by Policy H12 of the London Plan March 2021 (LP) and Policy DM2.1 of the Croydon Local

Plan 2018 (CLP). Together they offer support for such housing, provided the proposal meets an identified need. The appellant has explained that the supported housing is intended for adults with mental health needs, such as emotional, behavioural and learning disabilities, including ADHD and autism.

7. Policy H12 of the LP requires boroughs to undertake assessments of the need for supported and specialised accommodation within their area, in order to identify any shortages in capacity. The supporting text to Policy DM2.1 of the CLP confirms that Croydon's Market Position Statement (MPS) dated 2015 identified ample care and nursing home beds within the borough to satisfy demand up to 2031, and that consequently such accommodation should only be supplied where there is an identified need.
8. The most recent data on the need for supported living is contained in Croydon's Adult Social Care & Health Market Position Statement (ASCHMPS), which was published in 2023 and is a material consideration. It highlights that Croydon is a net importer of care placements, and confirms the finding of the 2015 MPS that no additional provision is required. Moreover, the lack of need for more supported accommodation in the next ten years has been confirmed by the Council's Head of Adults Placement, Brokerage and Market Management in recent correspondence.
9. The ASCHMPS specifically addresses the needs of adults with learning disabilities, including autism. It identifies an increase in the number of people being assessed and diagnosed with autism, and indicates that some will require support from health and/or social care. The document refers to a need for additional outreach and floating support to enable people to live in their own homes and for improved market oversight of supported living settings, but stops short of identifying a need for additional supported living. The evidence does not therefore support small-scale, community-based supported accommodation such as that proposed.
10. The appellant has referred me to two other documents. Croydon's Autism Strategy 2021-24 sets out priority areas, one of which is that autistic residents should be able to live in suitable accommodation. Croydon's Joint Strategic Needs Assessment assesses the current and future health and social care needs of the local community, including the provision of accommodation for those with learning difficulties. However, since neither document provides an overarching strategy for supported living in the borough, I afford limited weight to their recommendations and greater relative weight to the ASCHMPS.
11. The appellant has confirmed that all placements would be arranged through Croydon Social Services, and that the Council's Care Quality Officer has visited the property. I have been provided with emails from the Council requesting referral of their clients to Comfort Living Care, which operates the facility. However, there is a lack of information concerning the intended occupants, their disability, and their level of care. In the absence of such information, I cannot be certain that a need for the development exists.
12. The anticipated length of placements, and whether they would be medium- or long-term, is disputed between the parties, but does not have a bearing on whether or not a need exists for such placements. The lack of a Section 106 Agreement to control the occupancy of the building is neutral in the planning

balance, since no such requirement is set out in either Policy H12 of the LP or Policy DM2.1 of the CLP.

13. In the absence of a detailed, evidenced case, and notwithstanding that the property is already in use for this purpose, the need for supported accommodation has not been established. The development is therefore contrary to policies H12 of the LP and DM1.2 of the CLP, the aims of which I have outlined above.

On-street parking and the highways network

14. Although the appellant's Planning Statement refers to the appeal site having a Public Transport Accessibility Level (PTAL) of 3, which is average, the Officer Report and Appeal Statement both confirm that in fact the site has a PTAL of 2, which is regarded as poor. Whilst there are bus stops and a train station within walking distance of the site, and a range of local services and facilities close to the site in London Road, it is reasonable to expect staff and visitors to place a degree of reliance on the motor car.
15. Currently there is space for one car to park on the driveway. The appellant's plans appear to show the existing driveway being used to store bins and cycles, with parking for two cars provided centrally and adjacent to the boundary with No 26. The Appeal Statement confirms the appellant's intention to remove the front boundary wall to enable two cars to park on the site. There is however doubt as to the feasibility of this arrangement, since there is a street tree in front of the site and no dropped kerb beside the boundary wall. As I cannot be certain that a second parking space is feasible, I have made my assessment on the basis of the one parking space currently provided on site.
16. Daily visits to the site are estimated to consist of a member of staff (with two staff members present at changeover times), a manager, and 1-2 visitors. This would be similar to a residential use of the site. Craignish Avenue is wide enough for cars to park on both sides and has no parking restrictions. Whilst only a snapshot, I observed spare on-street parking capacity during my site visit on a weekday, and found no evidence of parking stress. Therefore, whilst the proposal is likely to increase roadside parking, it would not do so to the extent that danger would be caused to users of the highway as a result of parking stress. In these circumstances, a parking survey is unnecessary.
17. I conclude that the development would not have an adverse effect on on-street parking or the highways network and would accord with Policy T4 of the LP and policies SP8, DM29 and DM30 of the CLP. Together these policies require development to promote increased use of public transport, not to have a detrimental impact on highway safety or local transport networks, and to ensure that highway safety is not compromised by car parking.

Living conditions of nearby occupiers

18. The appeal site has residential properties on both sides and to the rear. The appellant has explained the characteristics of the occupants and the facility's staffing arrangements including shift patterns. Whilst the comings and goings and general level of activity are likely to be greater than that of a typical dwelling, no evidence has been provided that they would be of an intensity or character to cause noise and disturbance. I place weight on the fact that, despite the use

having commenced, interested parties have not raised concerns regarding noise or disturbance.

19. The arrangements at the facility have not been formalised into a management plan. It would have been open to me, were I minded to allow the appeal, to attach a condition requiring the approval of a management plan. I therefore place limited weight on the lack of a management plan.
20. I conclude that the development would not adversely affect the living conditions of nearby occupiers with particular reference to noise and disturbance. The development therefore accords with Policy D3 of the LP and Policy DM10 of the CLP, which together seek to protect the amenity of the occupiers of adjoining buildings.

Planning Balance

21. I have had due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty set out under the Equality Act 2010. People with disabilities, which includes mental health needs, have a protected characteristic under the Act, with a focus on the removal of environmental, attitudinal or organisational barriers.
22. The development provides supported accommodation for people with mental health needs. However, clear evidence of a need for such a facility has not been provided. Whilst it is therefore a positive consideration that the development provides supported accommodation for people with mental health needs, and does not give rise to any other harm, the conflict with the development plan outweighs the benefits of the development, and it is therefore proportionate and necessary to dismiss the appeal.

Conclusion

23. For the above reasons, the development conflicts with the development plan, when read as a whole. Material considerations do not indicate that a decision should be taken other than in accordance with the development plan. I therefore conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

J Heppell

INSPECTOR