



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 22 May 2026

by **C Coles MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 3 August 2026

Appeal Ref: APP/L5240/W/26/3378041

6 Central Place, South Norwood, Croydon, London SE25 4PR

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant approval required under Article 3(1) and Schedule 2, Part 3, Class MA of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended).
 - The appeal is made by Mr Mike Pons of Swallow Lifts Ltd against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Croydon.
 - The application Ref is 25/02274/GPDO.
 - The development proposed is change of use from office (Class E) to residential dwelling (Class C3).
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and prior approval is granted for change of use from office (Class E) to residential dwelling (Class C3) at 6 Central Place, South Norwood, Croydon, London SE25 4PR in accordance with the terms of the application Ref 25/02274/GPDO and the plans submitted with it.

Application for Costs

2. An application for costs was made by Swallow Lifts Ltd against the Council of the London Borough of Croydon. This application is the subject of a separate decision.

Preliminary Matter

3. The appellant has submitted a signed Unilateral Undertaking (UU) to address the concerns raised under reason for refusal 1. I will return to this later in my decision.

Background and Main Issues

4. Class MA of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development)(England) Order 2015 (as amended) (GPDO) permits a change of use of a building and any land within its curtilage from a use falling within Class E (commercial, business and service) to a use falling within Class C3(dwellinghouses).
5. It is common ground between the main parties that the proposed development complies with the limitations and restrictions as set out in Class MA of Schedule 2, Part 3 of the GPDO and I have no reason to take a different view.
6. Further to this, development is permitted under Part 3, Class MA subject to conditions (MA.2) and that before beginning the development, the developer must apply to the local planning authority for a determination as to whether their prior approval will be required in relation to specified matters.

7. The prior approval matters for Class MA in relation to this appeal comprise the provision of adequate natural light in all habitable rooms of the dwellinghouse, contamination risks and flooding risks in relation to the building, impacts of noise from commercial premises on the intended occupiers of the proposed development and the transport impacts of the development.
8. The Council has not identified harm in relation to adequate natural light to all habitable rooms of the dwellinghouse, contamination or flooding risks and impacts of noise on the intended occupiers of the proposed development and based on the information before me I have no reason to disagree.
9. Accordingly, I consider the main issue to be the transport impacts of the development.

Reasons

10. The Council is not satisfied that the access to the proposed cycle storage which would be located under the stairs, would be free and unrestricted to all users. It also contends the proposed storage would not be designed to Cambridge Cycle Parking Guide Standards (CCPGS) as there would be insufficient space to access two bicycles independently of each other or for wider/adapted bikes. I have also been directed towards London Cycling Design Standards (LCDS) 2014 which advocates cycle storage should be within an accessible location.
11. The CCPGS is general guidance dated 2008 and it is highly likely that the design of bikes and stands has moved on since the CCPGS was produced. Nevertheless, I have not been directed towards which part of the guidance the proposal would be directly in conflict with. Regardless, of this, it is clear from the evidence before me and my observations on site that there is sufficient space internally to accommodate larger and adapted cycles, although it is noted they may not fit directly underneath the stairs.
12. Whilst I note the Council's comments regarding accessibility, the door providing access to the ground floor accommodation and the cycle storage would be wide enough to accommodate larger and adapted cycles. The furniture could also be arranged internally to accommodate the free flow of the bicycles and the bicycles would therefore be in an accessible location.
13. Whilst the Council considers the proposed angled racks present accessibility issues in relation to manoeuvring cycles in and out, I am satisfied that there is sufficient overall space to enable the racks to be appropriately sited to ensure easy accessibility. I have not been provided with substantive evidence the bikes cannot be accommodated in the appeal site.
14. The Council's position is that the submitted UU, providing a restriction on parking permits, is necessary given the site's location and the car free nature of the proposal. However, given the existence of a parking space in connection with the unit, and the Council's conclusions in respect of similar applications (at Nos. 5 and 7 Central Place) where a UU was not required, I have not been provided with sufficient evidence to demonstrate the UU is necessary in this particular case.
15. For the reasons given above, the transport impacts of the development are acceptable. The Council has referred to development plan policies T3, T5 and T6 of the London Plan 2021 and SP4, SP8, DM29 and DM30 of the Croydon Local

Plan in its decision. Whilst these are material considerations, development plan policies are not determinative in prior approval applications.

Other Matters

16. I note the concerns raised regarding loss of light and loss of privacy, however, these are not matters that can be considered under a prior approval appeal and therefore have had no bearing on my decision.

Conditions

17. Development under Class MA is permitted subject to conditions at paragraphs MA.2.(5) and (6) which include that the development must be completed within a period of 3 years starting with the prior approval date; and that any building permitted to be used as a dwellinghouse by virtue of Class MA is to remain in use as a dwellinghouse within the meaning of Class C3 of Schedule 1 to the Use Classes Order and for no other purpose, except to the extent that the other purpose is ancillary to the use as a dwellinghouse.
18. The Council has suggested four conditions. The first relates to compliance with the GPDO, the second relates to time limit and the third condition seeks to ensure the development is carried out in accordance with the approved plans. I do not consider any of these conditions to be necessary as the first and second condition comprise the standard conditions under which Class MA is permitted and in relation to the third condition, the wording of my decision makes clear development is to be carried out in accordance with the plans submitted with it.
19. The fourth suggested condition relates to cycle storage, waste and recycling facilities. Given that I have found that the transport impacts of the development would be acceptable, I do not consider the condition relating to cycle storage would be necessary. Waste and recycling facilities do not relate to the subject matter of the prior approval and therefore a condition relating to these matters cannot be imposed.

Conclusion

20. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed and prior approval should be granted.

C Coles

INSPECTOR