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## Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 1 May 2026

by **R Gravett BA(Hons) DipTP MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 27<sup>th</sup> May 2026

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### Appeal Ref: 6003516

#### 15 Caton Close, Longridge, Lancashire PR3 3RH

- 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 Mr Darren Stoker of Right Start Holdings Ltd against the decision of Ribble Valley Borough Council.
  - The application Ref is 3/2025/0713.
  - The development proposed is change of use from C3 dwellinghouse to C2 children's residential care home (solo occupancy).
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### Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for change of use from C3 dwellinghouse to C2 children's residential care home (solo occupancy) at 15 Caton Close, Longridge, Lancashire PR3 3RH in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 3/2025/0713, 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 drawings: Site Plan scale 1:200 drawing ref: TQRQM25259133919426; Proposed Ground Floor Plan drawing ref: A-01; and Proposed First Floor Plan drawing ref: A-02.
  - 3) The premises shall be used for a children's residential care home for one child only and for no other purpose (including any other purpose in Class C2 of the Schedule to the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended) or in any provision equivalent to that Class in any statutory instrument revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification.

### Preliminary Matters

2. The description of development in the decision and banner heading above has been taken from the Council's decision notice as it succinctly and accurately describes the proposal which is before me. It is also the first part of the description of development provided on the planning application form.

### Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the living conditions of neighbouring residents, with regards to noise, disturbance and on-street parking levels.

## Reasons

4. 15 Caton Close (No 15) is a semi-detached dwelling situated at the end of Caton Close, a quiet residential cul-de-sac. It is proposed to change the use of No 15 from a dwelling to a Class C2 children's care home providing residential accommodation for one child only (aged 11 to 18years).
5. The number of persons permanently occupying No 15 would not be dissimilar to its existing use as a three-bedroom dwelling, which would be suitable for a family of 2 adults with 1 or 2 children. Indeed, it is the appellant's intention that the proposal would have a 'family-style' environment with 2 adults caring for one child, and there is little evidence that it would not function in a similar way with a comparable level of activity to a family dwelling.
6. The evidence before me is that care would be provided by two staff members who would be present at the home at all-time. The submitted 'Management Plan' indicates that during each 48-hour shift, one carer would sleep overnight while the other remains on 'waking duty' if required. Staff changeover times would typically be between 10am and 11am. The care home would not be used for regular meetings, but there may be other visits from social workers or other professionals which could create irregular activity, including at times of the day considered to be antisocial.
7. These comings and goings would generate a degree of noise and disturbance, but there is little substantive evidence that the proposal would give rise to a significantly greater number of visitors than a family dwelling, even if rota patterns differed from those stated in the evidence or changed. Indeed, a family dwelling could consist of adults, children and teenagers who, in occupying the property, would generate considerable activity in the form of comings and goings for work, school and leisure activities at various times of the day and potentially at night.
8. Nevertheless, as staff would work shift patterns vehicles would come and go at certain times of the day. Two parking spaces are available on the front driveway which would be sufficient for the two staff members when they are both based at the property. However, additional vehicles may attend during staff changeovers and other visitors are also likely to arrive and leave by car.
9. The existing dropped kerb would mean that the driveway could easily be accessed, but the Highway Authority also consider that the road fronting the dwelling could accommodate an additional on-street parking space. This would block the use of the driveway and vehicles would need to manoeuvre in the road close to other nearby dwellings to allow the staff finishing their shift to leave. However, I observed sufficient space for such movements despite the narrow width of the cul-de-sac and the presence of the cars parked in front of the garages opposite. Moreover, the frequency of these vehicle movements is unlikely to be significantly greater or result in a noticeably higher level of noise and disturbance for close-by neighbours than that of the existing dwelling.
10. I observed on my site visit that not all dwellings on Caton Close or Halton Place have access to off-street parking and cars were parked on one side of Caton Close, including partially on the pavement. However, whilst I accept my site visit was a 'snapshot in time,' I saw that there was sufficient on-street parking within the vicinity of No 15 to accommodate infrequent visits by other professionals, or for changeover times of shifts, without blocking a driveway or impeding traffic.

11. It is possible that from time to time the parking associated with the proposed use could inconvenience those living nearby, but I am satisfied that it would not significantly reduce the availability of on-street parking for residents, or make it difficult for deliveries and emergency vehicles to gain access to the end of the cul-de-sac such that it would harm highway safety.
12. I therefore conclude that the proposal would not cause harm to the living conditions of neighbouring residents, with regards to noise, disturbance and on-street parking levels. It would accord with Policy DMG1 of the Core Strategy 2008-2028 (2014) and Policy LNDP3 of the adopted Longridge 2028 Neighbourhood Development Plan. These, amongst other things, require that all development must not adversely affect the amenities of the surrounding area or residential amenity for existing residents.
13. It would also align with paragraph 135 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) where it states that planning decisions should ensure that developments create places with a high standard of amenity for existing users.

### **Other Considerations**

14. I have had due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty contained in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, which requires me to consider the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, but also to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it. Protected characteristics include a person's disability and age. Representations have been made that the proposed use would infringe the right of nearby residents to a peaceful enjoyment of family homes. Article 8(1) of the First Protocol of the Human Rights Act 1998 is therefore also relevant. However, my conclusions above in respect of living conditions indicate that if planning permission were granted there would be no unacceptable interference with the rights of adjoining occupiers in this regard.
15. Children's residential care homes are subject to a separate system of regulation to ensure that properties are suitable for the children placed, and that appropriate standards of care are maintained. It is reasonable to expect that other regimes will exercise effective control of the proposed use, as necessary. Matters of safeguarding are outside the scope of this appeal.
16. The potential for the proposal to cause mental health issues for existing residents is a material consideration, but the small scale of the use, the other controls that would be in place and my conclusions in respect of living conditions, means that it is not a decisive one. Although the appeal property is semi-detached there would be sufficient separation from nearby residents to mitigate any noise caused by the activities of one supervised child.
17. Finally, I recognise the concerns which have been raised by interested parties in respect of the handling of the application by both the Council and the appellant, but this has had no bearing on the appeal which I have considered solely on its planning merits.

## **Conditions**

18. I have considered the Council's suggested conditions against the advice contained within the Framework and the Planning Practice Guidance. Where necessary, I have undertaken some minor editing in the interests of precision and clarity.
19. In addition to the standard time limit condition, I have imposed a condition requiring that the development is carried out in accordance with the approved plans for the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of certainty. To ensure the care home remains occupied only by one child as proposed and assessed, it is reasonable and necessary to limit the operation of a Class C2 use in this way.
20. I observed that the existing dropped kerb and vehicle cross-over allow easy access to the two parking spaces on the driveway, and I have no technical evidence that this arrangement causes damage to the footway or services beneath. Consequently, the parking and access provisions suggested by the Council are not necessary.
21. Finally, the conditions suggested by the Environmental Health Officer in respect of controls over site preparation and construction works are not necessary given the proposal relates to the change of use of the property.

## **Conclusion**

22. For the above reasons, the proposal accords with the development plan and there are no material considerations to indicate a decision should be taken other than in accordance with it. Therefore, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

*R Gravett*

INSPECTOR