

SECTION '2' – Applications meriting special consideration

**Application No :** 12/00842/FULL2

**Ward:**  
**Penge And Cator**

**Address :** Cranbrook Court 50 Thesiger Road  
Penge London SE20 7NW

**OS Grid Ref:** E: 535868 N: 170301

**Applicant :** Tanqueray-Hewitt Limited

**Objections :** YES

**Description of Development:**

Change of use from residential institution (Class C2) to temporary accommodation for the homeless

Key designations:

Biggin Hill Safeguarding Birds  
Biggin Hill Safeguarding Area  
London City Airport Safeguarding  
London City Airport Safeguarding Birds

**Proposal**

- The proposal seeks permission for the change of use of the existing building from residential institution (Class C2) to temporary accommodation for the homeless.
- The proposal involves a material change of use of the building, and no operational development.
- The proposed accommodation would comprise 26 units providing temporary accommodation for the homeless as opposed to conventional permanent Class C3 housing. A degree of support will be provided to the tenants of the units. Communal facilities will be provided within the building which would benefit all tenants, mainly a reception area, communal room on the first floor, and plant and storage areas.
- The property will be managed by a specialist management company, who are approved by the Council's housing development team.
- The proposed use is for Cranbrook Court to accommodate homeless or potentially homeless individuals and families pending their placement in social housing or other permanent public or private sector housing.
- The minimum period of occupation would generally be around 6 months.
- Nine car parking spaces will be provided, as opposed to the existing arrangement which provides five; a cycle store would be provided adjacent to the parking area, and an amenity area and play space will be located to the east of the main block.

- The site will be managed by Orchard and Shipman (O&S), who are a private sector property management company experienced in the management of such schemes. Orchard and Shipman are approved by the Council's Housing department, and Cranbrook Court would be managed on a day-to-day basis by O&S, liaising closely with the applicant (freehold owner of the site) and the housing department of London Borough of Bromley.
- Paragraph 6.2 of the Planning Statement submitted alongside the planning application states that all prospective tenants would be nominated by the Council's housing department, having been assessed as homeless within the Borough.

## **Location**

The application site is located on the eastern side of Thesiger Road, on the corner with Parish Lane and opposite the junction with Whateley Road, and occupies a site of approximately 0.22 hectares.

The area is predominantly residential, consisting of a wide range of housing types, including terraced housing, semi-detached and blocks of flats. The former Anne Sutherland House, located to the east of the site, is being redeveloped for an extra-care housing for elderly people.

## **Comments from Local Residents**

Nearby owners/occupiers were notified of the application and the following representations are a summary of points raised:

- proposal not in accordance with London Plan 2011;
- accommodation appears undersized per unit – can only lead to poor health outcomes for tenants;
- no apparent commitment to action in respect of outreach and the various services needed to help homeless people back into secure tenancies;
- proposal must be managed impeccably and energetically, to prevent decline and despair.
- development to be sited at a crossroads on a distributor road which is notorious for fast/illegally driven traffic;
- if tenants are infirm / not alert, they will be disproportionately in danger;
- it is neither kind or moral to stuff homeless people into substandard accommodation conditions, with a management company content to delegate to the local council and others;
- many charities specialise in helping homeless people, but there appears to be no specific plan to liaise with any of these;
- only one flat (No.25) meets the minimum space standard set out in table 3.3 of the London Plan;
- the tenants may not be as transient as they may appear from the description of the development, and the standard of housing should therefore be the same as that provided on local flatted developments;

- there are social rented and affordable and private blocks of flats in close proximity of the site, without exception they all provide a better standard of accommodation than is offered here;
- approval of the proposal will lower standards and set a precedent for future development on the site;
- concentration of such uses in this part of the Borough;
- Penge already houses a disproportionate number of people with serious challenges in their lives;
- fear of crime, disturbance, noise and anti-social behaviour;
- negative impact on neighbourhood.
- unsuitable location;
- fear the management company (O&S) will not be able to manage any anti-social behaviour arising from the development;
- no local residents appear to have been consulted about the application by the applicant prior to the application being formally submitted;
- proposal is poorly designed and an overdevelopment of the site;
- parking is already a problem;
- Cranbrook Court is better suited for housing elderly people or other institutional uses;
- there is insufficient information relating to what kind of person will be using the development;
- residents referred to this facility from other Boroughs would potentially leave with a local connection and be eligible for LBB's Housing Register;
- only 8 of the 26 units would be suitable for families;
- health care and schools are already at their limits – more people will only exacerbate the problems;
- overpopulation in the area already;

Full copies of all correspondence received can be viewed on the file.

### **Comments from Consultees**

Highways Drainage provided no comments.

The Council's Highways Engineer stated that vehicular access is from Thesiger Road via an existing arrangement leading to car parking which is acceptable. Nine car parking spaces are to be provided, and although there is a shortfall of 3 spaces, the transport links and local amenities are relatively good. As such, it is considered that the proposal would not have an adverse impact on the parking and road safety within the local road network and on balance, no objection is raised.

The Crime Prevention Officer has stated in effect that each individual unit should be treated as a separate dwelling and afforded that level of security. As such, the application should be able to achieve SBD accreditation in respect of part 2 physical security, with the guidance of 'New Homes 2010' and by incorporating accredited, tested, certified products.

Thames Water stated that the application does not affect them.

Housing enforcement provided comments related to fire; lighting and ventilation; crowding and space; and general comments. No substantive objection is raised in terms of material planning considerations.

Members may be aware that the provision for short-term housing accommodation for homeless individuals within the Borough is an identified need, and that since the recession, there has been a marked increase in the number of households applying for assistance to LB Bromley under the provisions of the homelessness legislation – notably a near doubling in 2011 compared to 2010.

Housing Development provided full comments in terms of the current situation relating to the number of households applying for assistance to LB Bromley under the provisions of the homelessness legislation. The proposed scheme provides an opportunity for LB Bromley to address the housing needs and pressures, through making use of the dwellings provided. It presents a potential longer-term solution to the current situation.

The Planning Statement has confirmed that agreement has been reached with Orchard and Shipman (O&S), one of the Council's approved partners for the provision of leased accommodation used by the Council as temporary accommodation, that all tenants will be referred directly to O&S from the London Borough of Bromley's (LBB's) Housing Department.

Written confirmation was received by the Housing Department that the applicants intend to enter into a nominations agreement with the Council, and the full day-to-day management of the scheme provided by O&S.

The proposal is that the units would be used to place homeless households for the duration of the lease/ nominations period of 10 to 15 years which means that the units would be exclusively available to clients on LB Bromley's Housing Register and would be nominated by LB Bromley throughout this time period.

These clients would be sourced from people who approach the Council and/or direct letting to people whose previous residence has been within LB Bromley for at least 2 years. The Housing Service has been working with Orchard and Shipman in regard to the level of management presence including the presence of staff from the Support & Resettlement Team and other agencies/ professionals as needed. The provision of full nomination rights would ensure that the Housing Service was able to give clear and careful thought around placements to the scheme.

It is envisaged that, aside from reasons of changing circumstances (eg. increasing household size), those placed within the flats at first-let would be able to stay as long as possible until a permanent housing solution is found. This would create stability for residents and the local community.

Wheelchair accessible units

Confirmation has been received that three wheelchair accessible units (2 x two beds and 1 x one bed – units 4, 5 and 26) will be provided, with relevant adjustment to internal layouts being made by the applicants.

### Parking

Within the plans submitted, the external area appears to provide an additional 3 parking spaces bringing the total to 12 – but it is noted that the Planning Statement refers to 9 spaces. Clarification that the additional 3 spaces will be for the use of the occupiers at Cranbrook Court has been requested, however car ownership is in any event likely to be low.

## **Planning Considerations**

### Unitary Development Plan Policies

- H1 Housing Supply
- H4 Supported Housing
- H7 Housing Density and Design
- BE1 Design of New Development
- C1 Community Facilities
- T3 Parking
- T7 Cyclists
- T18 Road Safety

### London Plan Policies

- 3.3 Increasing Housing Supply
- 3.8 Housing Choice
- 6.13 Parking

Recently, Planning Policy Statements and Planning Policy Guidance notes were replaced by the adopted National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). This is also a material consideration for the determination of the application.

## **Planning History**

The original use of the building was as sheltered housing for the elderly, which was granted planning permission in the 1970s.

More recently, a certificate of lawfulness for an existing use was granted under ref. 11/02193 for use of premises as residential institution (Class C2).

## **Conclusions**

The main issues in this instance are likely to be the impact of the proposed use on the character of the residential area, the impact on the amenities of the occupants of the surrounding residential dwellings, and the impact upon existing parking levels in the surrounding road network and general infrastructure in Penge.

Given that the proposal involves the change of use of an existing property, the impact on the character of the building and area will be minimal. The building was purpose-built in the 1970s for residential use, as such Members may consider that continued residential occupation along the lines indicated and with the facilities proposed provides an appropriate and beneficial use of the site.

As there are no material changes proposed to the exterior of the building, the impact on residents in terms of visual impact/overlooking will be negligible. The possible intensity of the use is a matter that will need to be taken into account but this is not considered to be so great as to cause harm to local amenity, given other likely uses of the building.

As regards parking issues, no objections have been raised from the highways perspective in view of the relatively good transport links in the location.

Should Members find that the application is acceptable and worthy of planning permission being granted for this specific use, this should be subject to an agreement to ensure a suitable nominations agreement is completed.

Background papers referred to during production of this report comprise all correspondence on files refs. 11/02193 and 12/00842, excluding exempt information.

### **RECOMMENDATION: PERMISSION SUBJECT TO THE PRIOR COMPLETION OF A LEGAL AGREEMENT**

and the following conditions:

- |   |        |  |
|---|--------|--|
| 1 | ACA01  | Commencement of development within 3 yrs |
|   | ACA01R | A01 Reason 3 years                       |
| 2 | ACH03  | Satisfactory parking - full application  |
|   | ACH03R | Reason H03                               |
| 3 | ACH22  | Bicycle Parking                          |
|   | ACH22R | Reason H22                               |
| 4 | ACI21  | Secured By Design                        |
|   | ACI21R | I21 reason                               |
| 5 | ACK01  | Compliance with submitted plan           |

**Reason:** In order to comply with Policies H4 and T3 of the Unitary Development Plan and to protect the residential amenities of the nearby residential properties.

### **Reasons for granting permission:**

In granting permission the Local Planning Authority had regard to the following policies of the Unitary Development Plan and the London Plan:

- |     |                            |
|-----|----------------------------|
| H1  | Housing Supply             |
| H4  | Supported Housing          |
| H7  | Housing Density and Design |
| BE1 | Design of New Development  |

- C1 Community Facilities
- T3 Parking
- T7 Cyclists
- T18 Road Safety

#### London Plan Policies

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The development is considered to be satisfactory in relation to the following:

- (a) the appearance of the development in the street scene;
- (b) the relationship of the development to adjacent residential properties;
- (c) the Housing policies of the development plan;
- (d) the character of the development in the surrounding areas;
- (e) the impact on the infrastructure of the wider area;
- (f) the identified need for temporary accommodation within the Borough;
- (g) the amenities of the occupiers of adjacent and nearby properties;
- (h) and having regard to all other matters raised including concerns from neighbours.

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