

## **DM 26/0540 Planning application for 5 Orchard Close**

**Lindfield Rural Parish Council acknowledges the significant number of objections submitted by the community in Scaynes Hill. The following comments address those concerns in the context of relevant planning legislation.**

### **Community engagement**

The Localism legislation places clear emphasis on early and meaningful engagement with Parish Councils and local residents. While not mandatory for smaller applications, the absence of such engagement can allow concern and mistrust to develop—particularly where sensitive residential uses are proposed.

In this case, the original submission lacked key supporting information, including a clear Statement of Purpose, accessible background detail on the proposed children's home, and signposting to relevant Ofsted reports. This significantly limited residents' ability to assess the proposal on an informed basis and contributed to local concern.

The LRPC Chairman, Clive Laband, subsequently engaged directly with the applicant, James Sadler, to explain the nature of residents' objections. This proved to be a constructive and positive exchange, demonstrating the value of open dialogue.

For the proposal to succeed, meaningful two-way engagement is essential to support the integration of the home—and its young residents—into the community. It is equally important that the applicant clearly demonstrates understanding of, and responsiveness to, neighbour concerns.

**A temporary one-year planning permission** is considered the most proportionate means of achieving this. It would allow a clear proof of concept to be demonstrated in practice, provide reassurance to local residents, and evidence the applicant's commitment to good management and community integration. Subject to satisfactory operation, renewal on a permanent and unrestricted basis would be expected.

**The applicant has therefore been asked to amend the application to seek a 12-month temporary permission.**

### **Intensity of Use / Proposed Solution**

Given the significant concerns arising from the intensity of this new and untested use of the premises, Lindfield Rural Parish Council requests that, if the application is approved, a similar and appropriate 1- year condition to that applied in *DM24/2894* "*Given the need to balance the ongoing viability of the premises with ensuring residential amenity is safeguarded, it is considered that a trial period of 12 months*" ..... *so as to allow the impact upon local residents to be monitored.*"

Such a condition would align with Policies DP26 and DP29 of the Mid Sussex District Plan, the MSDC Design Guide (2.2.3)—which emphasises the protection of the district’s natural and built environment—and the NPPF.

**MSDC has a well-established, and successful track record of issuing temporary planning permissions to balance planning objectives with sustainable policy delivery, while ensuring that neighbouring residential amenity is protected.**

## **Summary of Concerns**

- The submission currently lacks verifiable evidence, benchmarking, or a clear track record of operation.
- The proposal seeks to deliver an “integrated, family-focused environment” for vulnerable young people; however, the location offers limited social interaction, poor public transport, and reduced access to essential amenities compared with nearby towns.
- The site is significantly deficient as a cohesive, family-based setting for children who require enhanced care and support.

## **Full Permission vs. Temporary 1-Year Permission**

Granting full, unrestricted permission at this stage would risk failing to protect local community and the very children the facility is intended to support. It could also create a socially incohesive use that MSDC would struggle to monitor effectively.

A temporary one-year permission would allow the applicant to demonstrate:

- the viability of the proposed children’s home
- the suitability of the location
- the impact on neighbouring residents
- the effectiveness of the care model

If the model, as hoped, proves successful for both the children and the community, a full permission could then be considered. If not, MSDC would retain the ability to intervene and secure a more sustainable long-term solution.

## **Parking**

All premises related parking must be restricted to the application property - Under no circumstances can the user/patron related parking facilities at the Millenium Hall be used to support this business. This should be a condition of any planning permission.

## **Conclusion**

**In recognition of the significant concerns raised by residents, LRPC supports the application only on the basis of a temporary one-year permission, enabling the applicant to provide a demonstrable proof of concept, as detailed above.**

**If a temporary permission is not applied, LRPC objects to the application for the reasons outlined above.**