



DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

Application for the change of use from 6 no. self-contained flats, 4 x 1 bed, 2 x 2 bed (class C3) to Children's Residential Home (Class C2) for a maximum of seven children between the ages of 8 and 18, with up to five carers working during the day and up to three carers working at night.

**Hillsborough House,
118 High Street,
Hurstpierpoint,
West Sussex
BN9 9PX**

The Proposal

This statement has been prepared, on behalf of Jimco Limited, to change the use of Hillsborough House, 118 High Street, Hurstpierpoint, West Sussex BN6 9EW, currently Class C3, to a Children's Residential Home, Class C2, for up to seven children between the ages of 8 and 18 with up to five carers working during the day and up to three carers working at night.

Planning Assessment

The planning policy framework is provided by

The Mid Sussex District Plan (2018)

The Hurstpierpoint Neighbourhood Plan (2015)

The Mid Sussex Design Guide

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), updated in 2024, and forms a material consideration when assessing development proposals.

The Mid Sussex District Plan is currently being reviewed and updated, and upon adoption, the new District Plan 2021-2039 will replace the current District Plan 2014-203, and its policies will have full weight.

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The NPPF states that Local Planning Authorities may give weight to relevant policies of the emerging plan according to:

the stage of preparation:

the extent to which there are unresolved objections to the relevant policies:

the degree of consistency of the relevant policies in the emerging plan to the NPPF.

Currently there are unresolved objections to most Policies in the draft Plan, and only minimal weight can be given to the Plan and this planning application should be assessed against the Policies of the adopted District Plan.

The following policies are relevant to this application:

District Plan

DP6 Settlement Hierarchy

Strategic Objectives:

2) To promote well located and designed development that reflects the District's distinctive towns and villages, retains their separate identity and character and prevents coalescence;

8) To provide opportunities for people to live and work within their communities, reducing the need for commuting;

9) To create and maintain town and village centres that are vibrant, attractive and successful and that meet the needs of the community;

12) To support sustainable communities which are safe, healthy and inclusive; and

13) To provide the amount and type of housing that meets the needs of all sectors of the community.

Evidence Base: Settlement Sustainability Review.

Development will be permitted within towns and villages with defined built-up area boundaries. Any infilling and redevelopment will be required to demonstrate that it is of an appropriate nature and scale (with particular regard to DP26: Character and Design) and not cause harm to the character and function of the settlement. The growth of settlements will be supported where this meets identified local housing, employment and community needs. Outside defined built-up area boundaries, the expansion of settlements will be supported where:

- 1. The site is allocated in the District Plan, a Neighbourhood Plan or subsequent Development Plan Document or where the proposed development is for fewer than 10 dwellings; and***
- 2. The site is contiguous with an existing built-up area of the settlement; and***
- 3. The development is demonstrated to be sustainable, including by reference to the settlement hierarchy.***

The developer will need to satisfy the Council that:

- The proposal does not represent an underdevelopment of the site with regard to Policy DP26: Character and Design; or***
- A large site is not brought forward in phases that individually meet the threshold but cumulatively does not.***

The redevelopment of the property meets the strategic objectives based on the following evidence:

2) To promote well located and designed development that reflects the district's distinctive towns and villages, retains their separate identity and character and prevents coalescence.

There is no change to the present situation.

8) To provide opportunities for people to live and work within their communities, reducing the need for commuting

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The children's residential home will provide employment for people in the local community and being centrally sited people could walk or cycle to and from work and reduce the need for commuting

9) To create and maintain town and village centres that are vibrant, attractive and successful and that meet the needs of the community.

The redevelopment would meet the needs of the community in as much as there is a need for children's residential homes as there is currently an acute shortage of this type of housing both locally and nationally.

Reference: West Sussex County Council In-House Residential Service Strategy 2019-2022

Report attached to this application

Reference: Children in care (looked after children) - statistics briefing - NSPCC Learning

Published November 2024

Reference: Children in care (looked after children) - NSPCC Learning

Published 16 September 2025

[Children in care \(looked after children\) | NSPCC Learning](#)

12) To support sustainable communities which are safe, healthy and inclusive.

The outcome of the change of use would be that the children would feel part of the community and have a feeling of belonging.

13) To provide the amount and type of housing that meets the needs of all sectors of the community.

As stated previously, there is a local, and national, shortage of children's residential homes and therefore this application goes, albeit in small part, towards fulfilling the local needs of the community.

Therefore, this application meets the requirements of DP 6

DP21 Transport

Strategic Objectives:

6) To ensure that development is accompanied by the necessary infrastructure in the right place at the right time that supports development and sustainable communities. This includes the provision of efficient and sustainable transport networks; and

15) To create places that encourage a healthy and enjoyable lifestyle by the provision of first class cultural and sporting facilities, informal leisure space and the opportunity to walk, cycle or ride to common destinations.

Evidence Base: Mid Sussex Transport Study; West Sussex Transport Plan 2011-2026.

Development will be required to support the objectives of the West Sussex Transport Plan 2011-2026, which are:

- A high-quality transport network that promotes a competitive and prosperous economy;***
- A resilient transport network that complements the built and natural environment whilst reducing carbon emissions over time.***

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- *Access to services, employment and housing; and*
 - *A transport network that feels, and is, safer and healthier to use.*
- To meet these objectives, decisions on development proposals will take account of whether:*
- *The scheme is sustainably located to minimise the need for travel noting there might be circumstances where development needs to be located in the countryside, such as rural economic uses (see policy DP14: Sustainable Rural Development and the Rural Economy);*
 - *Appropriate opportunities to facilitate and promote the increased use of alternative means of transport to the private car, such as the provision of, and access to, safe and convenient routes for walking, cycling and public transport, including suitable facilities for secure and safe cycle parking, have been fully explored and taken up;*
 - *The scheme is designed to adoptable standards, or other standards as agreed by the Local Planning Authority, including road widths and size of garages.*

The scheme provides adequate car parking for the proposed development taking into account the accessibility of the development, the type, mix and use of the development and the availability and opportunities for public transport, and with the relevant Neighbourhood Plan where applicable.

- *Development which generates significant amounts of movement is supported by a Transport Assessment/ Statement and a Travel Plan that is effective and demonstrably deliverable including setting out how schemes will be funded.*
- *The scheme provides appropriate mitigation to support new development on the local and strategic road network, including the transport network outside of the district, secured where necessary through appropriate legal agreements.*
- *The scheme avoids severe additional traffic congestion, individually or cumulatively, taking account of any proposed mitigation.*
- *The scheme protects the safety of road users and pedestrians; and*
- *The scheme does not harm the special qualities of the South Downs National Park or the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty through its transport impacts.*

Where practical and viable, developments should be located and designed to incorporate facilities for charging plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles.

Neighbourhood Plans can set local standards for car parking provision provided that it is based upon evidence that provides clear and compelling justification for doing so.

The redevelopment of the property meets the strategic objectives based on the following evidence:

6) To ensure that development is accompanied by the necessary infrastructure in the right place at the right time that supports development and sustainable communities. This includes the provision of efficient and sustainable transport networks.

There is provision for six of street parking spaces in the rear car park, accessed via south avenue and south lane. – see submitted site plan.

There are currently six parking spaces provided for the residents of the flats. There is therefore neither a loss nor gain of parking spaces.

The public parking spaces in front of the property on the High Street are limited by time allowed to park as is the public car parking in South Avenue.

Currently, as far as the applicant is aware there are traffic movement at the property at the start of the day between 7.30am and 9am and in the late afternoon between 5pm and 7pm. There are also some traffic

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movements from occupants that are on shift work leaving and returning from work at other times,

It is anticipated that children would leave and return during the morning between 7.30am and 8.30 am and return in the afternoon between 4pm and 5.30pm. during term time. It is possible that there could be two or more children could be attending the same school and so vehicle movements would be reduced. Wherever possible the applicant will attempt to reduce the carbon footprint and minimize travel journeys.

The comings and goings, whether by car or other means, are like a typical family dwelling, The home manager, also a carer would arrive most days in the morning and leave each evening. The other staff on the premises would work on a shift pattern and many of the staff would walk or cycle or use public transport. There is a bus stop almost opposite the property.

The children on placement would not require regular visits from social workers and other professionals and even so most of these meetings would take place away from the premises.

The same can be said for family visits which would take place away from the premises. The children may not see their family at all or perhaps once a year, quarterly or monthly.

It is not considered that the movements of people would have an adverse impact on the amenity of neighbours. On the west side of the

property is a residential house and on the east side there is a restaurant.

Rear Car Park viewed from South Avenue Recreation ground (South Lane) looking north.



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View from rear car park looking south towards South Avenue
Recreation Ground





In the following case: *Dale Road appeal (Appendix 3: APP/P1045/x/20/3263178)* : ‘The number of these movements is unlikely to be significantly more than the number that would be undertaken by a family and certainly not enough to result in a level of intensification in the use of the site that gives rise to concerns from a planning point of view.

Schedule Proposed use Activity may look like this

HOME MANAGER/DAILY CARER

SU N	MO N	TUE S	WEDN ES	THU RS	FRI	SA T
2	4	4	4	4	4	2

[Type here]

CARE WORKERS START/FINISH SHIFT	2	0	2	0	2	0	2
SCHOOL RUN	0	4	4	4	4	4	0
SHOPPING/SOCIAL /RECREATIONAL	4	0	0	2	0	0	4
OTHER VISITORS	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
TOTAL MOVEMENTS	10	10	12	12	12	10	10

15) To create places that encourage a healthy and enjoyable lifestyle by the provision of first class cultural and sporting facilities, informal leisure space and the opportunity to walk, cycle or ride to common destinations.

Evidence Base: Mid Sussex Transport Study; West Sussex Transport Plan 2011-2026.

The applicant would encourage staff to use public transport, walk or cycle to and from work wherever possible and practicable, the latter forms of transport would lead to a potentially healthier lifestyle

The applicant would take the opportunity to facilitate and promote alternative means of transport to the car such as walking, cycling and using public transport by providing:

Four cycling spaces are already provided in the car park on the northern side of the existing garage:

In due course provide facilities for charging electric vehicles.

The location of the property is such that there are leisure spaces very close to the property – for example:

There is access to South Avenue Recreation Ground from the rear car park of the property

South Avenue Recreation Ground

This area houses a large children's playground, tennis club and courts and bowls club and green. The play area was completely renewed in 2016 following extensive planning by the Parish Council and engagement with the local community.

The large open space is also home to the annual St. Lawrence Fair, held in July almost every year since 1313. The event attracts a visiting funfair, parade of decorated floats, children's fancy dress competition and many other arena events, craft stalls, flower marquee, refreshments of all kinds and many other side-shows

<https://www.hurstpierpoint-pc.gov.uk/community/open-spaces/>

Hurst Meadows

Hurst Meadows is one of the Parish's most important and accessible areas of publicly owned open space. Situated to the north of the village, it comprises nearly fifty acres of open grassland, hedgerows and woodland with stunning views over the Low Weald countryside. The land was transferred to the Parish Council as part of an agreement with developers that formed a key part of the Council's Neighbourhood Plan.

Hurst Meadows was opened to the public on 1 May 2018. It is managed for the benefit of the community and for the protection of the countryside. The land is adjacent to the popular Millennium Garden which links the west and east sides of the village and in 2019 the trustees of the Gardens voted to incorporate the Garden into Hurst Meadows.

Hurst Meadows is managed by the Council's Estates and Facilities Committee. The Committee has delegated some of the day-to-day operations to a working group which consists of councillors, the Estates and Facilities Manager and a local ecologist. Operations are guided by the Hurst Meadows Management Plan and the Woodland Management Plan (see below). These are dynamic documents which

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develop as we deepen our understanding of the land, its flora and fauna and the needs of the local community. The working group can often be seen surveying the wildlife, leading nature walks or carrying out conservation management tasks such as clearing docks by hand to avoid disturbing nesting skylarks!

Since acquiring Hurst Meadows, the Parish Council has planted a Heritage Orchard in Buckwilly Field with over thirty varieties of old Sussex apples. These have been carefully sourced to provide the village with a fantastic living record and community asset. In Hovel Field adjacent to the new Bramble Park development, around a hundred native trees, including oak, hazel, rowan, willow and alder have been planted. As it matures, it is hoped that this new wood will help connect the designated ancient woodland of The Wilderness (not open to the public) to the surrounding hedgerows, giving wildlife more opportunity to move around and providing food and shelter for pollinators and birds.

As well as The Wilderness, Hurst Meadows also includes Tilley's Copse small wood. This is situated behind Fairfield recreation ground and is easily accessed from the footpath that runs along the recreation ground or from the new footpath through Bramble Park. Tilley's Copse is renowned for its lovely bluebells in the spring. Both woods are part of the Woodland Trust's "Lost Woods of the Low Weald and Downs Project."

Hurst Meadows is a beautiful and peaceful place to enjoy nature. It supports an interesting and attractive variety of habitats including grassland, wildflower meadow, woodland and hedgerows and these are home to a variety of trees, plants, insects, birds and animals. Informal walks are held throughout the year to introduce residents to the flora and fauna. These are advertised widely including on the Parish Council's Facebook Page.

Since acquiring Hurst Meadows, the Parish Council has improved public access and safety by laying paths and putting in gates, signs and benches whilst at the same time being careful to preserve the character of the countryside.

There are several ways into Hurst Meadows including access via the footpath opposite the Health Centre in Trinity Road, through gates

from the Millennium Garden and from the farm track at the bottom of Marchants Close.

<https://www.hurstpierpoint-pc.gov.uk/community/hurst-meadows/>

and within a ten-minute walk there is access directly on to the South Downs National Park from South Avenue

and there is access to Millennium Gardens within a few minutes accessed through the alleyway on the opposite side of the High Street

Therefore, this application meets the requirements of DP 6

DP26 Character and Design

Strategic Objectives:

2) To promote well located and designed development that reflects the district's distinctive towns and villages, retains their separate identity and character and prevents coalescence.

4) To protect valued characteristics of the built environment for their historical and visual qualities.

12) To support sustainable communities which are safe, healthy and inclusive; and

14) To create environments that are accessible to all members of the community.

Evidence Base: CABE Good Practice Guidance.

All development and surrounding spaces, including alterations and extensions to existing buildings and replacement dwellings, will be well designed and reflect the distinctive character of the towns and

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villages while being sensitive to the countryside. All applicants will be required to demonstrate that development:

- is of high quality design and layout and includes appropriate landscaping and greenspace;*
- contributes positively to, and clearly defines, public and private realms and should normally be designed with active building frontages facing streets and public open spaces to animate and provide natural surveillance;*
- creates a sense of place while addressing the character and scale of the surrounding buildings and landscape;*
- protects open spaces, trees and gardens that contribute to the character of the area;*
- protects valued townscapes and the separate identity and character of towns and villages;*
- does not cause significant harm to the amenities of existing nearby residents and future occupants of new dwellings, including taking account of the impact on privacy, outlook, daylight and sunlight, and noise, air and light pollution (see Policy DP29);*
- creates a pedestrian-friendly layout that is safe, well connected, legible and accessible;*
- incorporates well integrated parking that does not dominate the street environment, particularly where high density housing is proposed;*
- positively addresses sustainability considerations in the layout and the building design;*
- take the opportunity to encourage community interaction by creating layouts with a strong neighbourhood focus/centre; larger (300+ unit) schemes will also normally be expected to incorporate a mixed use element.*
- optimises the potential of the site to accommodate development.*

2) To promote well located and designed development that reflects the District's distinctive towns and villages, retains their separate identity and character and prevents coalescence

The proposal does not involve any alterations to the exterior of the property and with minor alterations to the interior of the property.

4) To protect valued characteristics of the built environment for their historical and visual qualities.

The proposal does not involve any alterations to the exterior of the property and with minor alterations to the interior of the property.

12) To support sustainable communities which are safe, healthy and inclusive.

The proposal does not involve any alterations to the exterior of the property and with minor alterations to the interior of the property.

14) To create environments that are accessible to all members of the community.

The proposal does not involve any alterations to the exterior of the property and with minor alterations to the interior of the property, nor are there any changes to the external design that would cause significant harm to the amenities of existing nearby and the impact on privacy, outlook, daylight and sunlight, and noise, air and light pollution does not change.

Therefore, this application meets the requirements of DP 26

DP35: Conservation Areas

Strategic Objectives:

- 2) To promote well located and designed development that reflects the District's distinctive towns and villages, retains their separate identity and character and prevents coalescence;*
- 4) To protect valued characteristics of the built environment for their historical and visual qualities; and*
- 11) To support and enhance the attractiveness of Mid Sussex as a visitor destination.*

Evidence Base: Mid Sussex Conservation Area Appraisals; Sussex Extensive Urban Surveys; West Sussex Historic Environment Record.

Development in a conservation area will be required to conserve or enhance its special character, appearance and the range of activities which contribute to it. This will be achieved by ensuring that:

- New buildings and extensions are sensitively designed to reflect the special characteristics of the area in terms of their scale, density, design and through the use of complementary materials;***
- Open spaces, gardens, landscaping and boundary features that contribute to the special character of the area are protected. Any new landscaping or boundary features are designed to reflect that character;***
- Traditional shop fronts that are a key feature of the conservation area are protected. Any alterations to shopfronts in a conservation area will only be permitted where they do not result in the loss of a traditional shopfront and the new design is sympathetic to the character of the existing building and street scene in which it is located;***
- Existing buildings that contribute to the character of the conservation area are protected. Where demolition is permitted, the replacement buildings are of a design that reflects the special characteristics of the area;***
- Activities such as markets, crafts or other activities which contribute to the special character and appearance of the conservation area are supported;***

• *New pavements, roads and other surfaces reflect the materials and scale of the existing streets and surfaces in the conservation area.*

2) To promote well located and designed development that reflects the District's distinctive towns and villages, retains their separate identity and character and prevents coalescence;

The change of use would not affect this objective

4) To protect valued characteristics of the built environment for their historical and visual qualities;

The characteristics of the building would not be changed as there are no external changes required and only minor internal changes.

11) To support and enhance the attractiveness of Mid Sussex as a visitor destination.

There would be no impact on this aspect due o the change of use.

Therefore, this application meets the requirements of DP 35

DP41: Flood Risk and Drainage

Strategic Objectives:

1) To promote development that makes the best use of resources and increases the sustainability of communities within Mid Sussex, and its ability to adapt to climate change;

12) To support sustainable communities which are safe, healthy and inclusive.

Evidence Base: Gatwick Sub Region Water Cycle Study; Strategic Flood Risk Assessment; Water. People. Places SuDS guidance.

Proposals for development will need to follow a sequential risk-based approach, ensure development is safe across its lifetime and not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere. The District Council's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) should be used to identify areas at present and future flood risk from a range of sources

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including fluvial (rivers and streams), surface water (pluvial), groundwater, infrastructure and reservoirs.

Particular attention will be paid to those areas of the District that have experienced flooding in the past and proposals for development should seek to reduce the risk of flooding by achieving a reduction from existing run-off rates.

1) To promote development that makes the best use of resources and increases the sustainability of communities within Mid Sussex, and its ability to adapt to climate change

The applicant extracted the following from the UK Government Website (<https://check-long-term-flood-risk.service.gov.uk/risk>).

Flood risk summary

Your selected location:

Hillsborough House,

118, High Street,

Hurstpierpoint,

BN6 9PX

The highest risk of flooding at this location is from **surface water** as shown below .

Computer models used to estimate flood risk, based on the best data available.

The model does not include every local feature like kerbs, fences and walls.

Neighbouring houses in a street may have different levels of flood risk because one is on higher land or is nearer water, for example.

An area can be at risk even if it has not flooded before. If an area has flooded before, any future flooding might not cover the same area.

Flooding is hard to predict, especially further into the future. Flood risks could be bigger or smaller than what we show, and could change over time.

Flood risk and climate change

Climate change is increasing the chances of flooding, and climate models project we will see warmer and wetter winters, and more frequent and intense extreme weather events.

The models use projected rainfall, sea levels and river flows. They estimate flood risk in different ways, with different time periods.

Our flood risk data covers the following time periods:

- 2040 to 2060 for surface water
- 2036 to 2069 for rivers and the sea

But the models cannot predict exactly when the chance of flooding will go up. It could happen at any time during these time periods.

1) Surface water

Yearly chance of flooding

Very low Low Medium **High**

Yearly chance of flooding between 2040 and 2060

Very low Low Medium **High**

[Type here]

What surface water is

Surface water flooding is sometimes known as flash flooding and happens when rainwater cannot drain away through normal drainage systems.

Surface water flooding is a problem because:

- it often happens in places you don't expect, like up hills
- it's hard to predict, as heavy rain sometimes only affects a small part of an area
- where there's lots of tarmac and concrete the water has nowhere to go
-

2) Rivers and the sea

Yearly chance of flooding

Very low Low Medium High

Yearly chance of flooding between 2036 and 2069

Very low Low Medium High

What makes rivers and sea flooding more likely

Low-lying areas that are close to rivers or the sea are more likely to flood when water levels rise.

This information considers any flood defences.

Why flood defences cannot completely prevent flooding

Flood defences can help reduce the chance of flooding but cannot completely prevent it because:

- they can fail
- water could spill over the top if it is deep enough

Other flood risks

- [More about groundwater and reservoirs](#)

Groundwater

Flooding from groundwater is unlikely in this area.

Reservoirs

Flooding from reservoirs is unlikely in this area.

Built by the [Environment Agency](#)

© Crown Copyright and Database Rights 2024 [Ordnance Survey](#)

12) To support sustainable communities which are safe, healthy and inclusive.

The site is located in Flood Zone 1 which has a low probability of flooding from rivers and the sea, and there is a very low risk of flooding from both Reservoirs and Ground Water.

Surface Water Flooding in this area is classed as High Risk (this is applicable for the area of the High Street just outside the site).

Surface water flooding occurs when rainwater falls on a surface (either on or off the site) which acts as run-off and has not infiltrated into the ground or reached a drainage system.

The ground floor accommodation is above street level, and so the applicant believes that no one is endangered by surface water flooding in this instance at night and can evacuate safely.

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Hillsborough House, 18 High Street , Hurstpierpoint viewed from the High Street looking south.



<https://maps.app.goo.gl/8e38zkVKMZnKKngu8> Google Maps April 2024

The change of use does not increase the risk of flooding as there are no external alterations and so it doesn't increase the likelihood of flooding outside of the site.

<https://maps.app.goo.gl/8e38zkVKMZnKKngu8>

There are current escape routes for all occupants in place.

Therefore, this application meets the requirements of DP 41

Neighbourhood Plan

Countryside Hurst

C4 Conservation Areas:

New development in the countryside adjacent to Conservation Areas will be permitted where it does not conflict with other Countryside policies and where the settings of the Conservation Areas are conserved or enhanced.

The change of use does not impinge on the Conservation Area as there are no external alterations.

The following information relates to how the building will be used , what alterations are proposed and how the residential childrens home would operate.

Use

The property is currently arranged as 6no flats, 4 x x1 bed and 2 x bed and is currently used as a dwelling under C3 and change of use permission is sought to change the use to Children's Residential Home (Class C2) for a maximum of seven children between the ages of 8 and 18, with up to five carers working during the day and up to three carers working at night.

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Alterations

There are no external alterations planned.

There are minor alterations planned internally, and they focus on the removal of the kitchens, changing locks on doors etc and installing a CCTV system.

Some aspects of the day-to-day operation have been covered elsewhere, i.e. under DP41 Transport.

By way of background information;

1. Under Section 22G of the Children Act 1989, local authorities have a statutory responsibility to take the following actions:

General duty of local authority to secure sufficient accommodation for looked after children

(1) It is the general duty of a local authority to take steps that secure, so far as reasonably practicable, the outcome in subsection (2).

(2) The outcome is that the local authority are able to provide the children mentioned in subsection (3) with accommodation that—

(a) is within the authority's area; and

(b) meets the needs of those children.

(3) The children referred to in subsection (2) are those—

(a) that the local authority are looking after,

(b) in respect of whom the authority are unable to make arrangements under section 22C(2), and

(c) whose circumstances are such that it would be consistent with their welfare for them to be provided with accommodation that is in the authority's area.

(4) In taking steps to secure the outcome in subsection (2), the local authority must have regard to the benefit of having—

(a) a number of accommodation providers in their area that is, in their opinion, sufficient to secure that outcome; and

(b) a range of accommodation in their area capable of meeting different needs that is, in their opinion, sufficient to secure that outcome.

(5) In this section “ accommodation providers ” means—

local authority foster parents; and children's homes in respect of which a person is registered under Part 2 of the Care Standards Act 2000

In summary, as far as is practicable the local authority should ensure that children in care are provided with accommodation that is within the authority's area and meets the needs of those children.

Three reports were published in 2020 by the Children's Commissioner: The 'Children who no-one knows what to do with'.

'Private provision in children's social care'

'Stability index 2020', which points out the failings of local government to meet this responsibility.

These reports summarise the findings of three years of work by the Children's Commissioner's Office and explain the failure of both national and local government to adequately meet the needs of these children. The report (page 15) states: *Local authorities are highly reliant on the independent sector, particularly for children's residential care. Costs are increasing but it's unclear why. Given this reliance, it is imperative the market works well and that commissioning, and procurement are improved to ensure no child is placed in unsuitable care settings.*

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Recommendations: The Government should consider the barriers to creating more residential care placements to increase supply.

2. The applicant has discussions with the Social Services Department of local authorities, who have confirmed there is an urgent local need for such care homes, of the type that is being proposed.

The day-to-day operation

The proposed children's home seeks to replicate as closely as possible a normal family environment. This type of provision, which is promoted by government policy, strives to help children who often, through no fault of their own, have not had good parenting in their early years. This planning application is for change of use applicable to children who do not have special needs Class C2. Children with special needs would come under Use Class C2a.

The proposal is to register the property as a registered children's home for up to seven children aged from 8 to 18 years. They would be looked after by up to five carers working during the day, and up to three carers working at night.

Under the requirements of OFSTED, children's residential care homes must be run as closely as possible to a typical family household; while accepting staff are employed (on a rota basis) to

provide parental support to the children so many have missed in their early years.

The only physical requirements specified by OFSTED are:

- emergency lighting (no external visual distinction from normal lighting)
- locks on bedroom doors for the privacy of each child (not a material issue for planning).
- security cameras (although not essential and not materially different from a system found in many households),

Currently the property has an approved, tested and compliant emergency lighting and fire alarm system. However, locks on bedroom doors, and security cameras would need to be fitted.

In terms of fire regulations for children's residential care homes, the only physical requirement is to have fire doors on those leading to the kitchen. The physical appearance of such doors is not materially different from normal doors and has no material impact on the character of the property.

Currently there are numerous fire doors provided throughout the property acting as a barrier that stops the spread of fire and smoke, creating compartments within a building to protect escape routes and allow for safe evacuation. Fire doors are crucial for life safety, slowing down fire's progress and providing vital time for occupants to escape and for fire services to respond and control the situation.

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This planning application is to ensure that Hillsborough House meets the necessary planning requirements necessary to achieve Ofsted registration.

The proposed children's home would follow therapeutic fostering, which would be to :

- 1) support the children to build their confidence,
- 2) help them develop life skills and prepare them for life when they leave the home to look after themselves and become valued members of society.

This type of support has been found to be most effective in helping these children to have normal lives and not experience problems in later life.

Therapeutic fostering is a specialist type of foster care for children and young people who have experienced significant trauma, abuse, or neglect. It provides an enhanced level of emotional and psychological support within a stable, family home environment, aiming to help the child heal and develop healthily.

The goals of therapeutic fostering

- **Healing trauma:** Helps children overcome the lasting effects of neglect, abuse, or other adverse childhood experiences.
- **Creating security:** Builds a foundation of safety and security in a predictable, caring, and reliable relationship with the foster parent.

- "**Relational repair**": Uses new, positive relationships with carers to heal past relational traumas.
- **Understanding behaviour**: Encourages carers to empathize with the child's behaviour and its deeper meaning, rather than simply reacting to the surface-level actions.
- **Developing healthy skills**: Empowers the child to grow in confidence, regulate emotions, and develop healthy relationships.

During the day it is expected that the children would engage in various activities, plus attend a mainstream school. In some cases, the child may receive some home schooling but only while they settle in. Clearly this is no different from a family choosing to have home tutoring.

With regards to schooling, it is often the case that when young people come into care, they have missed an extensive proportion of their education or are affected in a way that they could not work effectively in a large classroom environment. Given this, they might be tutored online from home initially and tutors may not have to come to the house. They may then progress to a specialist environment with small class sizes before progressing onto mainstream. In some cases where children may have a home tutor, this is no different from an ordinary family who chooses to have their children educated at home and should not make any difference to the planning status of the use.

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The applicant has confirmed that the proposed use is to provide a stable home environment for the occupants as their main and sole residence. The length of time that a child stays at the children's residential home is more than temporary or passing. It would not operate as a 'halfway' house or provide overnight emergency lodgings.

Conclusion

The applicant aims to provide accommodation for children (8-18) with a range needs and challenges that can be aided by using Therapeutic Fostering techniques.

The children's residential home model is to create a warm and nurturing family style environment for the medium to long-term care of a small number of children. This type of provision is operated in the same manner as a recognized family home environment with adult carers, to provide consistency and stability for the children who live there.

Care is provided in small sized family units where residential carers help to develop the social and life skills needed by the children when they leave at 18. Without such homes and positive interventions, these children, when they leave residential care homes will often end up in adult institutions, suffering from long term health problems.

The applicant believes that this statement has set out the reasons why the planning application should be approved and maintains that there is little difference (in planning terms) between the proposed use as a Children's Residential Home (Class C2) and the current use as a

dwelling divided into 6 no. self-contained flats, 4 x 1 bed, 2 x 2 bed
(Class C3)

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