

106 Penland Road,
Haywards Heath,
West Sussex
RH16 1PH

4th December 2025

Mr. Hamish Evans,
Planning officer,
Planning Department
Mid Sussex District Council

Dear Mr. Evans,

Re DM/25/2830 – 65 Balcombe Rd., Haywards Heath
Application for change of use from C3 Residential to C2

I am writing to strongly object to the application by the owner to change the above dwelling from a residential property to a children's care home.

The application states that "it is considered that the change of use from C3 to C2 use does not amount to a "material" change of use however I would contend that this supposition is wholly incorrect as it is a significant "material" change of use for the following reasons:-

My property directly adjoins No.65 Balcombe Road, the boundary fence in my back garden is shared and runs the width of both properties gardens so any change of use from the current Residential status to what will be in essence a commercial status will have a direct impact on my family. I am a parent of three teenage daughters all of whom are at crucial stages in their development studying for GCSE's, A'Level's and University Exams. There could not be a more critical time for my daughters in their respective academic pursuits two of them have their study desks in their bedrooms that directly look onto the garden of No.65 and for that reason I would be extremely concerned by any possible noise nuisance that this significant change of use would have in the garden and the house.

The Balcombe and Penland Road surrounds are currently a purely residential area where residents enjoy a high degree of peace and quiet and I believe any change from Residential status not within the bounds of normal residential use would be unwelcome and disruptive and could potentially

impact residents including my daughters negatively and possibly significantly. This could be at any time and particularly on weekends and when relatives visit the home.

Every child deserves a home however a children's home run by a commercial operation should be located away from other properties. Troubled teenagers who may have a history of addictions could mean loud music, shouting, swearing and disturbances especially at night, this would have huge concern for any parent of three daughters. High need children that need a fully staffed operation and supervision need a place where they can be themselves and express themselves in a location that will not impact the quality of life of residents that back on and surround their property who are seeking and have the right to expect peace and quiet in the sanctuary of their homes and gardens.

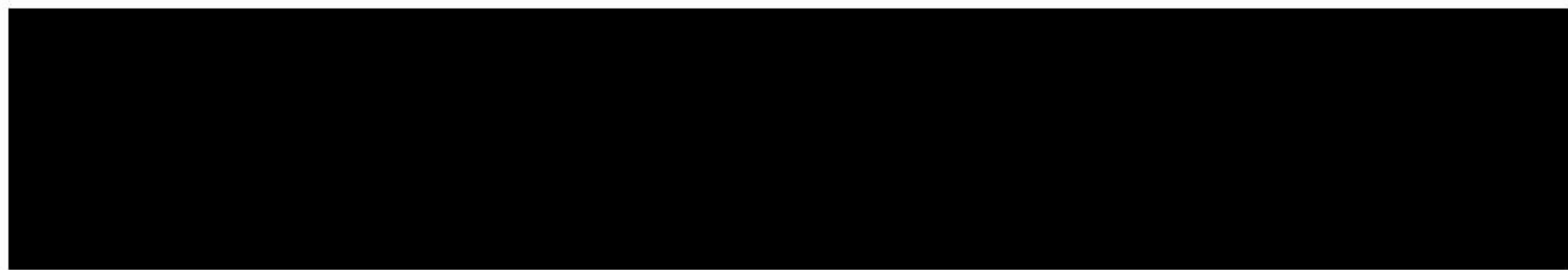
I also contend that No. 65 Balcombe Rd is a wholly inappropriate property for a commercial operation that would require a high volume of car movements of relatives, staff, health workers, social workers, police to name but a few. The number of daily trips stated in the planning application is underestimated precisely because of the commercial nature of the operation and it is therefore by definition not a standard residential property. Staff and children's safety will be at a higher degree of risk as the Balcombe Road is fast and very busy and the driveway of No 65 will not fit more than 6 cars and if it did that would necessitate backing out to exit on to this busy road with limited visibility a highly dangerous driving maneuver. Walking even has safety concerns to access the property, narrow pavements that would not be great for children who are walking to this property from Haywards Heath town, you have to cross over twice as there isn't a continuous pavement from top to bottom.

Novo Healthcare is a commercial operation so it is highly likely that once they have secured the property that they would try to accommodate more children in this large five-bedroom property to maximise their profits, this would only compound any noise and disturbance issues with the obvious potential to significantly change the nature of this peaceful residential area. The presence of shift-based, non-resident care workers providing 24-hour supervision constitutes a materially different use from a single residential dwelling.

I would like to highlight to you and MSDC that there is already evidence that the Government is very concerned about excessive profiteering by unscrupulous private companies charging sky-high fees for substandard placements for vulnerable children. I refer you to this OFSTED report <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/ofsted-annual-report-warns-against-profiteering-in-childrens-homes-sector> this stated local authority spending on looked-after children rose from £3.9bn in 2015-16 to £8.1bn in 2023-24, taking the average annual cost for each looked-after child to £97,200.

I would therefore respectfully urge you for the range of reasons outlined above to reject this application.

Yours sincerely,

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