

Caroline Grist

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 15 December 2025 23:03
To: Caroline Grist
Subject: DM/25/2550 Hillsborough House , 118 High Street Hurstpierpoint BN6 9EW

Importance: High

Dear Caroline

DM/25/2550

May I add further information to this planning application to clarify some of the comments made?

Is it the case that the proposed children's home is to be delivered with West Sussex County Council

My wife and I have been foster carers for 13 years and as such we feel we are well placed to comment.

There is a shortage of children's residential places both locally and nationally.

If an authority does not have a suitable place for a child, then a request is made to adjoining authorities to try and place the child as close as possible to the child's birth parent(s). Brighton and Hove Council, East Sussex County Council, West Sussex County Council and Surrey County Council work together as a group.

I am able to state for example that looked after children in Brighton and Hove's care have been placed in children's residential homes in Lancing, Shoreham and Ditchling amongst other locations. Hillsborough House, 118 High Street, Hurstpierpoint is situated in West Sussex and it is because of its geographical location that I had submitted underlying evidence of a shortage of places in that county.

Is there a particular need for a children's home in Hurstpierpoint

There is evidence that approximately 7% of children's residential homes are in the South East and 7% of children's residential homes are in the South West.

Property prices are lower in the north than in the south, generally speaking, and lower priced property would provide a better rate of return for those operators that are profit maximisers.

There is a need for more children's residential homes in this area, and from speaking from experience I am aware of looked after children from West Sussex and Brighton and Hove being placed in Peterborough, Loughborough, Nottingham, Liverpool, Manchester and the Lake District as there were no suitable places for these children locally.

What was the rationale for providing for 7 children, given the references to 2-4 children being housed together

Hillsborough House, 118 High Street, Hurstpierpoint is a large detached Victorian House that was a 7 bedroom residential property up to the mid 70's before becoming a solicitors office up to 2018 and the subsequently converted into 6 self contained flats that can potentially accommodate 12 people. I am aware that there has been an increase in the size of sibling groups coming into care. In Brighton and Hove there have been groups of 9, 7 and 6 coming into care in the last 6 months or so. This adds to fostering pressure and the break up of sibling groups.

There are many examples of LDC planning applications for COU from C3 to C2 based on 2 to 4 children which I assume is possibly due to the subjective view of 'material change'

The number of children to be looked after and concerns raised regarding the potential intensity of the use.

I do not agree that there is an intensity of use.

The property is located in a semi commercial area, with residential houses to the west and commercial properties to the east. To the north there are both commercial and residential properties. There are numerous comings and goings of people and traffic and I do not believe a change of use would be a material change in the intensity of use. In fact, I would go as far as to say, that the intensity of the proposed use would be less than when the property was used by a firm of solicitors and more lately as 6 flats.

Planning Condition

I regret that I do not agree that a planning condition is appropriate as stated in an objection.

The condition proposed is:

Prior to the commencement of the use of the children's home, a Management Plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The MP shall include the following details:

- a) Details of vehicle movements and parking arrangements related to residents, staff, deliveries and other services associated with the use.*
- b) Details of how any instances of disturbance or noise related to the use of the property will be monitored and managed.*

The use shall not operate other than in accordance with the approved Management Plan.

The building has been a seven bedroom residence in the past it could be returned to that use (subject to p.p.) and be able to accommodate a very large family.

A children's home must be regulated and registered with OFSTED (since the end of 2024), before it can operate, as it's a criminal offence to run one without registration, which involves proving suitable management, policies, and a safe environment to protect children. OFSTED inspects these homes to ensure quality care, compliance with regulations, and positive outcomes for children, focusing on safety, well-being, and access to local resources like schools and healthcare.

Key aspects of Ofsted regulation include:

Mandatory Registration: Any place providing care and accommodation for children (beyond just lodging) must register with OFSTED

- **Key Roles:** A Registered Provider (organisation/person), a Responsible Individual (representing the provider), and a Registered Manager (personally registered with Ofsted) are required.

- Rigorous Application: The process involves detailed applications (Forms SC1, SC2), risk assessments, business plans, and policies to show suitability.
- Ongoing Inspection: Ofsted inspects homes regularly (at least twice yearly) to judge the quality of care and compliance with regulations.
- Focus on Outcomes: Inspections assess if children achieve positive outcomes, have stable environments, and can access necessary support.
- (If the home provides significant healthcare, it may also need registration with the Care Quality Commission (CQC).)

The management plan referred to by a member of the public is in Hatfield and relates to an LDC /PP application for 2 children . The property is situated in a residential cul de sac within walking distance of Hatfield Hospital and Hatfield University. It might be that there are local parking pressures in this vicinity and that a management plan might be required for this application. However, there is no parking pressure , as substantiated by the Highways report for this application.

In the case of (Adur and Worthing District Council) AWDM/0206/24 - 285 Upper Shoreham Road, Shoreham By Sea, a management plan was not required for COU C3 to C2 for 5 children between the ages of 8 and 18.

As planning follows the property and not the person, and amongst other requirements OFSTED require a management plan that is reviewed frequently. Therefore, OFSTED would regulate Hillsborough House, 118 High Street Hurstpierpoint if it were to operate as a children's residential home.

OFSTED's requirement is set down in law.

- Children's Homes (England) Regulation 2015
- Care Standards Act (CSA 2000)
- Government Guidance - Children's Homes and Health Care : registering with OFSTED or CQC (Updated 19 July 2024)

Any person carrying on or managing a children's home that provides care and accommodation must register with OFSTED in respect of that individual children's home. Failure to do so is an offence under section 11 of the CSA 2000.

Therefore, as the proposed planning condition is covered by legislation, I believe that the proposed planning condition is not required.

Kind Regards

