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**16th July 2026**

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**Planning Application 25/01276/FUL**

**Change of Use from a Dwellinghouse (Use Class C3) to a Children's Care Home (Use Class C2)**

**15 Neighbrook Close, Redditch, Worcestershire, B97 5YA**

**Applicant: Mr B Hartles & Hingua Homes**  
**Ward: Webheath And Callow Hill**

The case officer of this application is Mrs Alison Young, Planning Officer (DM), who can be contacted on Tel: 01527 881280 Email: [alison.young@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk](mailto:alison.young@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk) for more information.

**Site Description**

The application site is a detached, four-bedroom dwelling fronting onto the turning head of a cul de sac in a residential area in the Webheath neighbourhood of Redditch. The area is residential and the neighbouring properties are all of a similar scale and design to the application property. There is an existing driveway to the front of the site and a front garden which the plan shows can accommodate additional parking spaces, with four spaces proposed in total on the drive and frontage. The site has an enclosed rear garden which links to another part of Neighbrook Close. There is an off-road parking area to the side elevation of 15 Neighbrook Close and its rear garden.

The site is in close proximity to a bus stop on Springvale Road and the shop, recreation ground and other facilities within Webheath are within walking distance of the site.

**Proposal Description**

The proposed internal layout of the property has one child's bedroom on the ground floor and two children's bedrooms on the first floor with a further store/ boxroom and an en-suite staff member bedroom on the first floor. The ground floor would have an open plan kitchen, dining and living area, utility area and downstairs cloakroom. The existing small garage would be retained. No external alterations are proposed to the property itself.

The application seeks the change of use of the property from a C3 dwelling to a C2 residential institution to allow full-time care for up to 3 children. The supporting information states that the children would be between 8-17 years old and would have emotional and behavioural difficulties or other specific needs.

The home would provide 24-hour staffing and whilst not a planning matter, the supporting information confirms that the care service would be operated by Hingua Homes a registered care provider and the service would be regulated by Ofsted.

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## **Relevant Policies :**

### **Borough of Redditch Local Plan No. 4**

Policy 1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

Policy 2: Settlement Hierarchy

Policy 20: Transport Requirements for New Development

Policy 39: Built Environment

Policy 40: High Quality Design and Safer Communities

### **Others**

National Planning Policy Framework (2024)

National Planning Practice Guidance

## **Relevant Planning History**

24/00211/FUL	First floor side extension providing an additional bedroom with an en-suite over the existing garage & ground floor extension, together with single storey rear kitchen/dining/family room extension with mono pitch roof	Granted	18.04.2024
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## **Consultations**

### **WRS - Noise**

No objection to the application.

### **Worcestershire County Council Highways**

No objection subject to conditions. They note that cycle parking can be provided within the retained garage and recommend conditions requiring the laying out of the access, and proposed 4 parking spaces.

## **Public Consultation Response**

24 neighbour letters were sent in relation to this application and letters of objection from 14 individuals were received in response

The representations collectively raised the following concerns:

- Residential amenity impacts (noise and disturbance)

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- Parking pressure, parking is already limited and used by local schools
- Highway and pedestrian safety
- Character of the area - operational activity would lead to an over intensification of use
- Suitability of the location – limited access to bus services and facilities
- Loss of a family dwelling

A number of other issues have been raised which are not material planning considerations.

## **Assessment of Proposal**

### **Whether a Material Change of Use has Occurred**

Development is defined in Section 55 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as the carrying out of building, engineering, mining or other operation's in, on, over or under land; or the making of any **material** change in the use of any buildings or land.

Where activity results in a material change of use of a building to a different use class, then planning permission will be required. Depending on the circumstances of each case, a children's care home will either fall into a C2 or C3 use classification.

- Class C2 of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order as amended refers to "use for the provision of residential accommodation and care to people in need of care".
- Class C3(b) of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order as amended refers to "use as a dwelling house by not more than six residents living together as a single household, (including a household where care is provided for residents)."

If a children's home was being run on the basis of children being looked after by a permanent occupant of the dwelling, there would usually be no change of use and therefore no requirement for planning permission. This is regardless of whether the individuals living together are related as family members. However, if care is provided on a shift pattern basis, it is likely that a change of use from C3 to C2 will occur.

Notwithstanding the above, it should further be noted that a change of use from C3 to C2 may not amount to a **material** change of use that requires planning permission. If there is no material difference in activity to that of a dwellinghouse, and no greater level of disturbance or amenity impact, then no **material** change of use has occurred. The issue will ultimately be a matter of fact and degree in each individual case. The key issues are the numbers of residents involved, whether or not staff work shift patterns or have a permanent residence at the site and the materiality in planning terms of any change of use.

With regards to the current proposal, there would usually be three children and three members of staff present at the property between 8am and 10pm. In addition to this there would often be a registered manager there during weekdays between 9am and 5pm and

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two waking night staff between 9.30pm and 8.30 am. Other visitors are expected to be infrequent although no details have been provided.

Whilst there would be staff on duty 24 hours a day and 7 days a week, there would be no staff living at the property. Staff would therefore operate on a shift pattern basis, with day shifts taking place between 8am-10pm and night shifts operating between 9:30pm-8:30am. The comings and goings arising from the proposed shift pattern and changeover of staff would have a material impact to character. Whilst shift patterns would be consistent and there would only be two shifts per day, changeover of staff would be a regular, daily occurrence and during periods of staff handovers, there could be a total of 5 staff present at any one time. Therefore, as a matter of fact and degree and having regard to relevant appeal decisions which have considered this matter, officers conclude that a ***material*** change of use from C3 to C2 would arise in this instance and therefore it is correct that planning permission is sought.

## **Principle of Development**

The application site is located within the Webheath and Callow Hill ward, within an urban area of Redditch, which is defined in Policy 2 of the Borough of Redditch Local Plan no. 4 (BoRLP4) as a sustainable location for development.

The proposal would result in the loss of 1 C3 dwelling but would provide care and a place of residence for up to 3 children. Officers consider that care residences, in the same way as C3 dwellinghouses, should be in sustainable locations offering occupiers good access to local services such as schools. In this regard the principle of development is considered acceptable.

## **Character and Appearance**

Policy 39 of the BoRLP4 states that development should contribute positively to the surrounding environment. Policy 40 requires development to be of a high design quality.

The external appearance of the dwelling would be unchanged and the only physical alterations to the site would be the creation of two parking spaces on the existing front garden in order to provide four spaces altogether, with two on the existing driveway. Concerns have been raised by local residents that the proposed commercial use would not be in keeping with the local character. However, the external appearance of the building would not be altered and would still reflect a residential property. The proposed parking area would require the removal of some of the existing planting at the property although there would still be space for planting to be retained or replaced on the corner and to the side of the parking area. The grass area to the frontage of the property is not part of the site and not within the ownership of the Applicant.

Therefore, having regard to the above, the development is considered acceptable in terms of character and appearance and would meet the requirements of policies 39 and 40 of BoRLP4.

## **Residential Amenity**

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Paragraph 135(f) of the NPPF states that planning decisions should seek a high standard of amenity for existing and future occupants of land and buildings. Consideration should therefore be given to the impact of the proposed change of use on the residential amenity of surrounding properties, including the impacts arising from the operation of the care service and the associated comings and goings.

The shift patterns indicate that staff would be on a shift pattern of 8am to 10pm for daytime staff and 9.30pm to 8.30am for night staff. The changeover of staff would see the arrival of up to 3 cars around 8am and leave around 10pm. It is also expected that a registered manager would arrive and leave the site usually at 9am and 5pm on weekdays. Other visitors are expected to be more infrequent and therefore not cause a significant impact.

The property faces onto the turning circle of a cul de sac and there are residential properties to one side of the site, to the front and also to the side at the rear. Much of the disturbance from the operation of the care home would arise from the front parking area of the property; this lies directly next to the parking area and garage of number 14 Neighbrook Close. No 13 faces out towards the driveways of Nos 14 and 15. Whilst car movements may be higher than the former C3 use of the property, they would still be relatively infrequent within a 24 hour period and would be expected at specific times rather than unrestrained. Officers note that comings and goings may happen at late hours in the case of a dwellinghouse where occupiers work shift patterns.

Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS) have been consulted in relation to noise and nuisance matters and have raised no objections. They have highlighted, however, that they can only comment on predictable noise. With regards to the level of noise made by the children placed at the care home this would be dependent on the behaviour of the individuals living at the property and the degree of control and supervision by staff rather than the proposed use being inherently noisy. The characteristics of the individuals and operational matters such as staff supervision are not planning matters, however and the service would be regulated by other controls, such as Ofsted. The supporting information submitted with the application states that the operator is committed to ensuring the home integrates seamlessly with the surrounding residential character, that it would be operated to mimic a typical family home, that staff would be highly trained to manage behaviour in a supportive and professional manner, that any potential disturbance would be minimised especially during unsociable hours and that no external alterations to the property are proposed.

The scale of the use in this instance is relatively small, and a planning condition could be attached to the permission to restrict the number of children in the care home to be no more than 3.

Whilst the NPPF sets out that fear of crime should not undermine quality of life, the proposed use in this case involves children 8-17 years old who would be supervised 24 hours a day by responsible adults.

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Based on the above considerations it is concluded that there are no reasons to refuse the application on residential amenity grounds.

**Highways**

Worcestershire County Council Highways have reviewed the proposal and have taken into account the number of staff and the shift patterns associated with the proposed use and consider that the 4 parking spaces available which are shown on the site layout plan as on the driveway and existing frontage to the property are acceptable. The existing garage is to be retained and the Highway Authority has stated that it would therefore be available for cycle parking. A condition to create a parking area on site for 4 vehicles is considered reasonable and necessary in order to prevent the displacement of vehicles on the highway for sustained periods of time.

**Public Consultation Responses**

Letters of objection have been received from 14 individuals. A summary of the issues raised that have not already been covered in the report and an officer response to these issues are provided below, however regard has been had to the full contents of all submissions whilst drafting this report and forming the recommendation.

<b>Concern raised</b>	<b>Officer response</b>
<b>Character impacts</b> Neighbrook Close is a cul-de-sac and neighbouring residents have stated that a staffed care home use would be out of keeping with the established residential character and with the demographic profile of existing residents.	There is no policy restriction against children's homes in residential areas and the use is not unacceptable in principle. More relevant is the scale of the use and the impacts that would arise in practice. In this case the use would have some similarities to a family home, albeit there would be additional comings and goings from staff changeovers etc which have been considered. With regards to the scale of the use, a condition has been recommended to limit the number of children to a maximum of 3 that would be looked after at the property.
<b>Highway safety, traffic and parking impacts</b> Several comments refer to existing congestion and parking demand in Neighbrook Close, especially linked to nearby schools and that reliance on on-street spaces would make the existing parking problems worse. Concerns regarding the regularity of delivery vehicles and turning-circle issues have also been raised. Increased risk to pedestrian	The increased number of traffic movements arising from the change of use in the context of the surrounding area would not be significant and has not been raised as a concern by the Highways Officer. Whilst there would be more comings and goings expected with the proposed use, changeover of staff would only typically be twice a day and other visitors would not be regular and therefore similar to a typical dwelling. The parking area can accommodate staff numbers, except potentially during staff changeover times. The

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<p>safety. Access for emergency vehicles.</p>	<p>proposed use would therefore not add significantly to the existing parking demands for on street parking that could cause congestion. Additional cars at a property are again something that can happen at a typical dwelling. The staff shift changes would not be at the school drop off and pick up times that it is stated cause congestion and parking issues in the Close. There is a footpath to the front and side of the site and pedestrians would not have to walk around the turning circle and in general footpath provision is good in the local area and local amenities/services can be walked to.</p>
<p><b>Sustainability of the location</b> Bus service and lack of facilities for children</p>	<p>The site is located within the urban area of Redditch and there is regular bus between Washford and Redditch with the nearest stop in close proximity to the site. It is accepted however that the buses do not run after 7pm. The site is accessible to facilities including a recreation ground which is within walking distance.</p>
<p><b>Residential amenity impacts (noise/disturbance)</b> The proposal would create more noise, disturbance, footfall and activity than a normal family home, particularly due to 24-hour staffing, shift changes and visitors.</p>	<p>It is not expected that there would be 24/7 activity at the property, given that this would provide a home for 3 children and staff changeover would be infrequent throughout the day. A family home of this size could reasonably house 3 children. Whilst activity levels may exceed those of a typical dwelling, this isn't in itself reason to refuse planning permission. A noise survey has not been requested by WRS and is not considered necessary in this instance.</p>
<p><b>Safety, security and layout</b> Resident profile (needs, behaviour). Effects on elderly/vulnerable residents)</p>	<p>Consideration needs to be given to the land use rather than personal characteristics of occupants. Matters relating to safeguarding and care provision are regulated under separate legislative regimes (e.g. Ofsted).  There is no evidence of likely impact of anti-social behaviour arising from the use. Assumptions about the behaviour of future occupants cannot be made.</p>
<p><b>Suitability of property</b></p>	<p>The proposed use would provide care for up</p>

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The dwelling is a standard 3–4 bed house not designed for institutional care, layout and site constraints limit suitability for the intended use.	to 3 children, which could reasonably occupy a family home of this size. Space for staff and a carers bedroom has also been provided and the property has an enclosed rear garden area. Other regulations are in place to control operational matters.
<b>Loss of family dwelling to local housing supply.</b>	Whilst this is noted, the loss of housing would only be very small. The proposal would also provide a place of residence for looked after children. Paragraph 63 of the NPPF sets out that the housing needs of looked after children also need to be addressed.
<b>Need for a children’s home</b>	There is no requirement for the Applicant to demonstrate need and the application must be assessed on its merits. The proposed change of use from a dwellinghouse to a children's home is considered acceptable in principle and there are no technical planning reasons to withhold the grant of planning permission.
<b>Other Impacts</b> Impact to property values	Impact on property values is not a material planning consideration.

**Conclusion**

Having regard to the sustainable, residential location of the site, the proposed change of use of the residential property to a children’s care home is considered acceptable in principle.

There are no outstanding objections from consultees, and it is concluded that there are no issues of highway safety or severe road network impacts that would warrant refusal. Whilst there would likely be an intensification of activity at the site due to the change of use, it is not considered to be so significantly adverse as to cause unacceptable noise or amenity impacts to neighbouring residents.

Taking all matters into account, including all third party representations that have been received, it is considered that the change of use is acceptable subject to conditions.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

**That having regard to the development plan and to all other material considerations, planning permission be GRANTED subject to the following conditions:**

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**Conditions:**

- 1) The development to which this permission relates must be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date of the grant of this permission.

Reason: In accordance with the requirements of Section 91(1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

- 2) The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the following plans and drawings:  
25126-01 Ground and first floor plan  
25126-02A Site and location plan

Reason: To provide certainty to the extent of the development hereby approved in the interests of proper planning.

- 3) The property subject to this application shall only be used as a residential care home for up to 3 children at any one time and shall be used for no other purpose (including any other purpose in Class C2 of the Schedule to the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (or in any provision equivalent to that Class in any statutory instrument revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification).

Reason: to provide certainty of the proposed development and limit the scale of the use in order to protect the amenity of neighbours.

- 4) The Development hereby approved shall not commence until the access and 4 car parking space provision shown on Site and Location Plans Job No. 25126\_Drawing No. 02 have been provided. These areas shall thereafter be retained and kept available for their respective approved uses at all times.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety

- 5) The Development hereby permitted shall not be first occupied until sheltered, safe, secure and accessible cycle parking for 2 cycles have been provided on site. The cycle parking shall thereafter be kept available for the parking of bicycles only.

Reason: To encourage sustainable modes of transport

**Procedural matters**

This application is being reported to the Planning Committee because the number of objections received exceeds that which can be considered by officers.

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