

Planning Statement – Change of Use from C3 to Children’s Home (Use Class C2) at

159 Milton road, Cowplain, Waterloooville, PO8 8SF

1. Introduction

Mainstay Housing and Support Ltd is an independent organisation led by experienced social care professionals. Our mission is to support Hampshire in meeting the growing demand for suitable housing for looked-after children. The Hampshire area faces a significant shortfall in family-style accommodation for children in care.

This planning application seeks permission for the change of use of a residential property from Class C3(a) (Dwellinghouse) to Class C2 (Residential Institution) to operate as a children’s home. The proposed home will accommodate up to four looked-after children, aged 7 to 17 years at the point of admission.

The home will be registered with Ofsted and will operate in full compliance with the Children’s Homes (England) Regulations 2015, providing 24-hour care in a nurturing, family-style environment.

2. Proposed Development

2.1 Change of Use

A full planning application is submitted for the change of use from Use Class C3(a) to Use Class C2 to facilitate a children’s home offering short- and medium-term placements for up to four children.

2.2 Staffing and Occupancy

The home will be professionally staffed 24 hours a day to ensure continuity of care and safeguarding. Staffing arrangements are as follows:

The home will be staffed 24 hours a day by two care professionals working in 12-hour shifts (8:00 AM – 8:00 PM and 8:00 PM – 8:00 AM). During the night shift, one member of staff will be on a "sleep-in" duty, while the second will be on a "waking night" shift. A staff rota will be implemented to ensure minimal traffic and that staff handovers occur with only one team change at a time.

2.3 Operational Model

- The home will operate as a single, stable household with shared communal areas and individual bedrooms for each child.
- Carers work in shifts but will provide consistent support to foster secure relationships.
- Daily routines, including shared mealtimes and escorted school attendance, will replicate family life.
- Children will be supported to access healthcare, education, leisure, and local amenities always accompanied by staff.

2.4 Care and Support Provision

- Placement decisions will be guided by impact assessments and compatibility checks to ensure a safe, supportive environment.
- The home is not a medical facility, but staff will be first aid trained, and medical needs will be managed through existing NHS pathways.
- Staff will undergo enhanced DBS checks and mandatory training including safeguarding, behaviour management, and medication administration.

2.5 Transport and Parking

- Up to two vehicles will be used for school runs, appointments, and community activities.
- These will be parked on-site within the existing designated parking area (as shown in the accompanying block plan).
- The level of vehicle use is consistent with a typical residential household and will not impact local traffic or parking availability.

3. Planning Assessment

3.1 Use Class Justification

The proposed use falls under Use Class C2 due to the need for 24-hour care, professional staffing, and regulatory oversight, which distinguishes it from a standard residential dwelling (C3).

3.2 Residential Character and Amenity Impact

Visits to the home will be limited to approved professionals and designated family members, strictly by appointment. Our aim is to maintain a quiet, low-traffic environment. Any external appointments for the children will be attended with staff support.

The nature and scale of the proposed children's home is comparable to a typical family household and is designed to integrate seamlessly within the neighbourhood:

- Resident numbers (4 children + staff) are in line with larger family homes.
- Staffing presence is similar to that of adults in multi-generational households.
- Carer shift patterns result in normal levels of comings and goings.
- Visits from social workers or professionals will be by appointment, managed discreetly.
- No adverse impact on residential amenity is anticipated, with noise and activity levels remaining within normal domestic limits.

3.3 Alignment with Local Policy Objectives

The proposal aligns with the aims of Havant Borough Council Council's planning policies by:

- Providing a much-needed facility for vulnerable children within a residential setting.
- Supporting social inclusion and safeguarding through community-based care.
- Maintaining the residential scale and character of the property.
- Ensuring minimal disruption to the local area in terms of traffic, noise, and visual impact.
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4. Conclusion

This application presents a carefully considered proposal for a small-scale, Ofsted-regulated children's home that provides high-quality, family-style care for up to four vulnerable children.

The proposed use is appropriate for the location, aligns with both local and national planning policies, and directly addresses a pressing social care need in Hampshire. This is clearly reflected in Hampshire County Council's **Market Position Statement: Children's Residential Care**, which outlines the authority's commitment to increasing the number of children's homes within the county. The Statement notes:

"We will continue to work with our partner providers, including active engagement with those looking to expand and potential new entrants to the market, to develop and maintain strong working relationships to ensure that we have the right homes, of the right quality, in the right place to meet the needs of Hampshire children."

You can view the full document here:

[Market Position Statement: Children's Residential Care](#)

We respectfully request Hampshire Council's support in granting permission for the proposed change of use.

