

Design, Access and Planning Statement

Change of Use from Class C3 (Dwellinghouse) to Class C2 (Residential Institution)



Site Location:	1 Pascal Crescent, Shinfield, Reading, RG2 9FP
Date:	05/03/26
Planning Authority:	Wokingham Borough Council

1. Introduction

Homz has been instructed to prepare and submit a planning application to the Wokingham Borough Council for Change of Use from Class C3 (Dwellinghouse) to Class C2 (Residential Institution) at 1 Pascal Crescent, Shinfield, Reading, RG2 9FP

The proposal seeks to facilitate the use of the property as a small-scale residential children's care home accommodating up to three children, providing a supportive environment for young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties (EBD), learning disabilities (LD), and mental health needs.

The application relates solely to a change of use, with no external alterations to the building and only limited internal adjustments required to support the operational requirements of the care setting.

The development has been carefully considered to ensure it remains compatible with the residential character of the surrounding area, preserves neighbouring amenity, and delivers a socially valuable form of residential care within an established residential neighbourhood.

2. Site Description and Context

The application site is located at 1 Pascal Crescent, Shinfield, within the administrative area of Reading Borough Council.

The property comprises a two-storey detached dwellinghouse situated within a modern residential development characterised by detached and semi-detached family homes.

The surrounding area is strongly residential in character, with housing arranged along curving residential streets and cul-de-sacs typical of suburban development patterns.

According to the submitted Site Location Plan, the site occupies an area of approximately 289.84 square metres.

The property itself provides approximately:

- 85.64 m² ground floor gross internal area

- 80.53 m² first floor gross internal area

resulting in a total internal floor area of approximately 166 m².

The dwelling includes:

Ground Floor

- Entrance hall
- Two living rooms
- Kitchen/dining room
- Utility room
- WC
- Garage

First Floor

- Five bedrooms
- Multiple bathrooms and en-suite facilities
- Landing circulation

This layout provides a large residential footprint suitable for adaptation into a small-scale care home without significant structural alteration.

Photographs of the property show a traditional brick detached dwelling with pitched roof and attached garage, consistent with the surrounding built form.

Importantly, the submitted elevations confirm that no external changes are proposed, meaning the building will retain its existing residential appearance and character.

3. Proposal

The application seeks planning permission for the change of use from Class C3 (dwellinghouse) to Class C2 (residential institution) in order to establish a small children's residential care home accommodating up to three children.

The proposed use will provide a family-scale residential care environment designed to support young people with emotional, behavioural and mental health needs within a stable domestic setting.

The operation of the home will be regulated through Ofsted registration, ensuring that staffing levels, safeguarding procedures and operational management meet statutory care standards.

The proposed layout utilises the existing internal arrangement of the property, allowing the development to be implemented with minimal physical intervention.

The ground floor will function primarily as the communal living environment, including:

- Shared living room space
- Kitchen and dining facilities
- Staff supervision areas
- Utility and support spaces

The first floor will provide private sleeping accommodation, including:

- Individual bedrooms for residents
- Bathroom facilities
- Staff sleeping or office space where required

The proposed layout shown within the submitted plans indicates that the property is capable of accommodating:

- three single-occupancy bedrooms for residents
- additional bedrooms for staff accommodation or flexible operational use
- communal living areas suitable for a small residential setting.

The block plan also identifies cycle storage provision for up to six bicycles and bin storage areas, ensuring the site remains functionally suitable for the proposed use.

The development does not involve extensions, external alterations or intensification of the built form. The building will continue to operate within the scale and form of a typical dwellinghouse.

4. Planning Policy Context

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The National Planning Policy Framework promotes the delivery of inclusive communities and adequate social infrastructure.

Relevant sections include:

Paragraph 8 – Sustainable Development

The NPPF identifies three overarching objectives of sustainable development:

- economic
- social
- environmental

The proposal directly contributes to the social objective by providing accommodation for vulnerable young people requiring specialist care.

Paragraph 93

Planning decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe communities and support the delivery of local services to meet community needs.

Paragraph 96

Local planning authorities should plan positively for the provision of community facilities and services, including those required to support vulnerable groups.

Small-scale children's care homes represent an important component of the social care infrastructure, enabling young people to live in stable environments within normal residential communities.

Local Planning Policy – Reading Borough Local Plan (2019)

The Reading Borough Local Plan forms the statutory development plan for the area.

Key policies relevant to the proposal include:

Policy H3 – Affordable Housing and Specialist Housing

This policy supports the provision of specialist housing where it meets an identified need and is appropriately located.

Residential care facilities for vulnerable groups are recognised as an important element of housing provision within sustainable communities.

Policy CC3 – Living Environment

Development proposals should:

- respect the character of the surrounding area
- provide acceptable living conditions
- avoid adverse impacts on neighbouring properties.

Because the proposal retains the building unchanged externally and accommodates only a small number of residents, it remains consistent with the character of the residential area.

Policy TR3 – Access, Traffic and Highway Related Matters

Development should ensure that traffic impacts remain acceptable and that access arrangements are safe.

Given the very small scale of the facility (maximum three residents) and the domestic nature of the property, traffic generation will be comparable to a large family dwelling.

5. Planning Assessment

Principle of Development

The principle of a children's residential care home within a residential property is well established in planning terms.

Small-scale care homes are generally considered compatible with residential environments, particularly where they maintain a domestic scale and do not introduce material external changes.

The proposal accommodates only three residents, which is comparable to normal household occupancy.

Impact on Character of the Area

The development does not involve any physical changes to the building.

The property will therefore:

- retain its residential appearance
- maintain the existing built form
- remain visually indistinguishable from neighbouring houses.

The surrounding area will continue to function as a residential neighbourhood.

Residential Amenity

Due to the limited scale of the care home:

- the number of occupants will remain low
- activity levels will be comparable to a family dwelling
- no external alterations or extensions are proposed.

As a result, the proposal will not result in unacceptable noise, disturbance, overlooking or loss of privacy.

Highways and Parking

The property benefits from existing off-street parking provision via the driveway and garage area.

The scale of the care home means:

- resident numbers are very small

- staff presence is limited
- visitor numbers are controlled through the care management framework.

Traffic generation is therefore expected to be broadly similar to that of a typical household.

Social and Community Benefits

The proposal delivers significant social benefits.

Across England there is an increasing need for small, community-based children's care homes, allowing vulnerable young people to live within residential neighbourhoods rather than institutional settings.

Providing accommodation for children with:

- emotional and behavioural difficulties
- learning disabilities
- mental health needs

within a family-scale residential setting supports better social integration and wellbeing outcomes.

6. Technical Considerations

The proposal does not involve external alterations or structural changes to the building.

Accordingly:

- heritage impacts do not arise
- townscape impacts do not arise
- flood risk considerations remain unchanged
- drainage and infrastructure requirements remain unchanged.

Operational matters such as staffing arrangements, safeguarding procedures and care provision will be regulated through Ofsted registration and care sector regulation, ensuring appropriate operational management.

7. Planning Balance

The proposal provides a small-scale children's residential care home within an existing detached dwelling.

The development:

- introduces no external alterations
- maintains the residential appearance of the property
- operates at a very modest residential scale
- provides important specialist accommodation for vulnerable children.

No material harm to neighbouring amenity, character of the area or highway safety has been identified.

When balanced against the significant social benefits associated with providing residential care accommodation, the proposal represents a sustainable and policy-compliant form of development.

8. Conclusion

This application seeks planning permission for the change of use of 1 Pascal Crescent, Shinfield, Reading from Class C3 to Class C2 to facilitate a small residential children's care home accommodating up to three residents.

The proposal has been carefully designed to:

- operate within the existing residential building
- avoid external alterations
- maintain the residential character of the neighbourhood
- provide a safe and supportive environment for vulnerable young people.

The development is consistent with the objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework and the Reading Borough Local Plan, particularly in supporting the delivery of specialist residential accommodation and inclusive communities.

The proposal therefore represents a sustainable and socially beneficial development, and planning permission is respectfully requested.

The Local Planning Authority is respectfully requested to issue a Certificate of Lawfulness confirming:

The existing use of the detached building as a dwellinghouse (Use Class C3).

“ This report has highlighted that the proposed development, subject to this application for planning permission, is in accordance with the Council’s planning policies and national planning policy.

For the above reasons, the development is sustainable development and is also in accordance with national policy and guidance. Therefore, in the absence of any other material considerations to justify otherwise, it is respectfully requested that development be considered as acceptable in principle.

Should the Planning Authority request any further information to process this request **Change of Use from Class C3 (Dwellinghouse) to Class C2 (Residential Institution)**, please contact Shivam at **Shivam@homz.uk** directly as the acting agent and we will be more than happy to deliver any additional information as and when required.”