

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	250247
Site Address:	413 Wokingham Road, Earley, Wokingham, RG6 7EL
Expiry Date:	1 May 2025
Site Visit Date:	16 April 2025
Proposal: Full application for the proposed change of use of the property to supported living accommodation (Use Class C2).	

PLANNING CONSTRAINTS/STATUS

Scale and Location of Development Proposals – Major Dev. Location (Earley)
Landscape Character Assessment Area
Green Routes and Riverside Paths Consultation Zone
JCEB Mineral Safeguarding Areas

PLANNING POLICY

National Policy	National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG)
Core Strategy (CS)	CP1 – Sustainable Development CP2 – Inclusive Communities CP3 – General Principles for Development CP5 – Housing Mix, Density and Affordability CP6 – Managing Travel Demand CP7 – Biodiversity CP9 – Scale and Location of Development Proposals
MDD Local Plan (MDD)	CC01 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development CC03 – Green Infrastructure, Trees and Landscaping CC06 – Noise CC07 – Parking TB05 – Housing Mix TB09 – Residential Accommodation for Vulnerable Groups TB21 – Landscape Character TB23 – Biodiversity and Development
Joint Minerals and Waste Plan (JMWP)	DM1 - Sustainable Development DM2 - Climate Change – Mitigation and Adaptation DM9 - Protecting Health, Safety and Amenity
Other	Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document CIL Guidance + 123 List Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Document

PLANNING HISTORY

Application No.	Description	Decision & Date
240453	Application for a Lawful Development Certificate for a Proposed change of use from a house in multiple occupation (C4) to a children's home for a maximum of three children, with up to three carers, two of whom will sleep overnight, working on a rota basis (C2).	Refused 01/05/2024

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Internal

WBC Environmental Health – No objection
WBC Highways – No objection subject to conditions. *Officer comments: Highways issues are assessed within the main report below.*
WBC Health and Wellbeing – No comments received
WBC Cleaner and Greener – No comments received

External

None

REPRESENTATIONS

Parish/Town Council	No objection
Ward Member(s)	No comments received
Neighbours	One neighbour has commented on this application and their comments are summarised below: Emergency lighting is mentioned, is this internal or external? If external, a static security bright light would have an impact. <i>Officer comments: This is dealt with in the neighbour amenity section of the report below.</i>

APPRAISAL

Site Description:

The application site is located within a pre-dominantly residential area of Earley. The site features a two storey residential property that has plenty of space for off-street parking and it also features a private rear garden.

Description of Development:

This application seeks permission to change the use of the property from use Class C3 (dwellinghouse) to C2 (residential institution). There would be no physical alterations to the property. Up to three children would live at the house, with carers working on a rota basis, and one bedroom is being converted to an office. The staffing levels will meet the individual needs of the children to ensure that their welfare is safeguarded and promoted. It is not expected that staff would be resident, instead, there would be constant supervision by means of a roster system.

Within the submitted Design, Access and Planning Statement the applicant has stated that “the only physical requirements specified by OFSTED are emergency lighting (no external visual distinction from normal lighting)”.

Principle of Development:

The National Planning Policy Framework has an underlying presumption in favour of sustainable development which is carried through to the local Development Plan. The Managing Development Delivery Local Plan Policy CC01 states that planning applications that accord with the policies in the Development Plan for Wokingham Borough will be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The site is located within settlement limits and as such the development should be acceptable providing that it complies with the principles stated in the Core Strategy. Policy CP3 of the Core Strategy states that development must be appropriate in terms of its scale of activity, mass, layout, built form, height, materials and character to the area in which it is located and must be of high quality design without detriment to the amenities of adjoining land uses and occupiers. Policy CP2 of the Core Strategy states that planning permission will be granted for proposals that address the requirements of children, including the co-ordination of services to meet their needs.

Character of the Area:

Core Strategy Policy CP3 states that planning permission will be granted for proposals that are of an appropriate scale of activity, mass, layout, built form, height, materials and character, together with a high quality of design without detriment to the amenities of adjoining land users, including open spaces or occupiers and their quality of life. Policy CP1 of the Core Strategy requires developments to maintain or enhance the high quality of the environment.

The area is largely comprised of two-storey, large, detached and semi-detached dwellings. Whilst the proposed C2 use would result in the loss of a residential dwelling, the primary nature of the proposed use would be quasi-residential and as such it is considered appropriate due to the existing residential form in the directly local area. As mentioned, there would be no physical change to the building in terms of extensions or external works, so there would be no harm in regard to this.

Neighbour Amenity:

Core Strategy Policy CP3 states that development proposals should not result in a detriment to the amenities of adjoining land users including open spaces or occupiers and their quality of life.

As no external works are proposed to the property, there are no concerns relating to overbearing, overlooking or loss of light.

With regards to potential noise and disturbance it is unlikely that the proposal would result in any significant increases on the site compared to that of a typical C3 residential use. However, any unacceptable or antisocial noise or disturbances should be suitably managed by on site staff, or, if they persisted, could become an Environmental Health issue. The anticipation of such unlikely events is not something that would warrant further assessment from a planning perspective.

As indicated above, some external lighting will be required for emergency purposes and these details are recommended to be secured by condition.

Highway Access and Parking Provision:

The Council's Highways Officer was consulted on this application, and they are satisfied that the level of use would be comparable to a standard dwelling, and therefore the proposal is not considered to have a significant impact upon the highway network.

In view of the low number of live-in staff and with the level of use being comparable to a standard dwelling, Highways are happy to accept the two existing formal spaces in this instance. Additionally, the site photos taken from a site visit on 16/04/2025 were shared with the Highways Officer and they confirmed that there is sufficient area for turning.

A condition was recommended for secure and covered cycle storage. Given that there is ample space in the back garden for a shed and such storage, it is considered too onerous and unreasonable to attach a pre-commencement condition for details of cycle storage. Accordingly, this condition is not attached.

Residential Amenity Space:

The proposed change of use would not impact upon the level of amenity space on the site.

Conclusion:

For the reasons stated above, the proposal is acceptable in local plan policy terms and therefore is recommended for approval.

The Public Sector Equality Duty (Equality Act 2010):

In determining this application the Council is required to have due regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. The key equalities protected characteristics include age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief. There is no indication or evidence (including from consultation on the application) that persons with protected characteristics as identified by the Act have or will have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to this particular planning application and there would be no significant adverse impacts as a result of the development.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL):

When planning permission is granted for a development that is CIL liable, the Council will issue a liability notice as soon as practicable after the day on which the planning permission first permits development. Completing the assumption of liability notice is a statutory requirement to be completed for all CIL liable applications.

RECOMMENDATION	
Conditions agreed:	Not required
Recommendation:	Approve

Date:	1 May 2025
Earliest date for decision:	13 March 2025

Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	
Date:	01/05/25