

Planning statement

Site: 98 Elm Road, Earley, Wokingham

Proposal: Variation of condition 3 to allow long-term residential children's care (C2)

Applicant: Oyster Supported Living

Introduction

This statement supports a Section 73 application to vary Condition 3 of the existing C2 permission. The current condition restricts the use to short-term respite care. The applicant seeks approval to operate the property as a long-term residential children's home for up to four children. No physical alterations are proposed.

Background

The property already benefits from C2 use. The only limitation is the wording of Condition 3, which prevents long-term placements.

The applicant has engaged with Wokingham Borough Council Children's Services. In written correspondence dated 6 May 2026, the Home Finding Team confirmed interest in the proposal and invited further discussion, noting the council's need for additional local placements.

Proposed use

The home will accommodate up to four children aged 7 to 17. Children may have neuro-developmental needs, learning difficulties, autism, physical disabilities, emotional and behavioural needs, complex health needs, sensory needs or an EHCP.

The home will provide a structured, therapeutic, stable environment with 24-hour staffing. Children will live at the property as their long-term home.

Planning justification

No change to use class

The proposal remains within Class C2. The application seeks only to vary a restrictive condition.

Meeting local need

Wokingham Borough Council has confirmed interest in expanding local children's home capacity. The proposal directly supports this objective.

No additional impact on the area

The management plan confirms predictable, low-impact operation:

- four staff on duty during the day
- one waking night and one sleep-in staff overnight
- manager on site during office hours
- all visits pre-planned
- minimal vehicle movements

- no children left unsupervised

This results in a stable pattern of activity with no greater impact than a typical family home.

Policy alignment

The proposal supports national and local policy objectives relating to community needs, safeguarding and stability for children.

Conclusion

The variation of Condition 3 is modest, justified and supported by local need. The council is asked to approve the revised wording to allow long-term residential children's care within Use Class C2.