

The Hermitage
Residential Institution
Twyford
RG10 9EJ

Planning Statement

April 2025



PLANNING STATEMENT incorporating DESIGN AND ACCESS

THE HERMITAGE, 65 LONDON ROAD, TWYFORD, RG10 9EJ

Change of use from Bed & Breakfast Accommodation (C1) to Residential Institution (C2)

1. Introduction
2. The Property
3. The Proposal
4. Staff and parking
5. Community Impact
6. Planning History

1 INTRODUCTION:

This Planning Statement is provided in support of a planning application for Change of use from Bed & Breakfast Accommodation (C1) to Residential Institution (C2) providing healthcare and educational services to children in a residential setting.

There will be a maximum of five children accommodated at any one time.

The application is for a change of use only and proposes no physical alterations to the property.

Residential Institutions fall under class C2 of the Use Classes Order and therefore the change of use requires planning permission.

The Applicant is a company called Kindnest, working in association with The Children's Homes Association and the National Association for Gifted Children.

Kindnest have links to long established and prestigious institutions such as Kingswood Private School and the City of London College. Their plan is to not just provide another residential institution for children but rather working to create better futures for those young people.

The structure of the new use comprises of a staff team of eleven and a maximum of five children. The staff hierarchy is as follows

Registered Individual

Registered Manager

Deputy Manager

4 No. Seniors

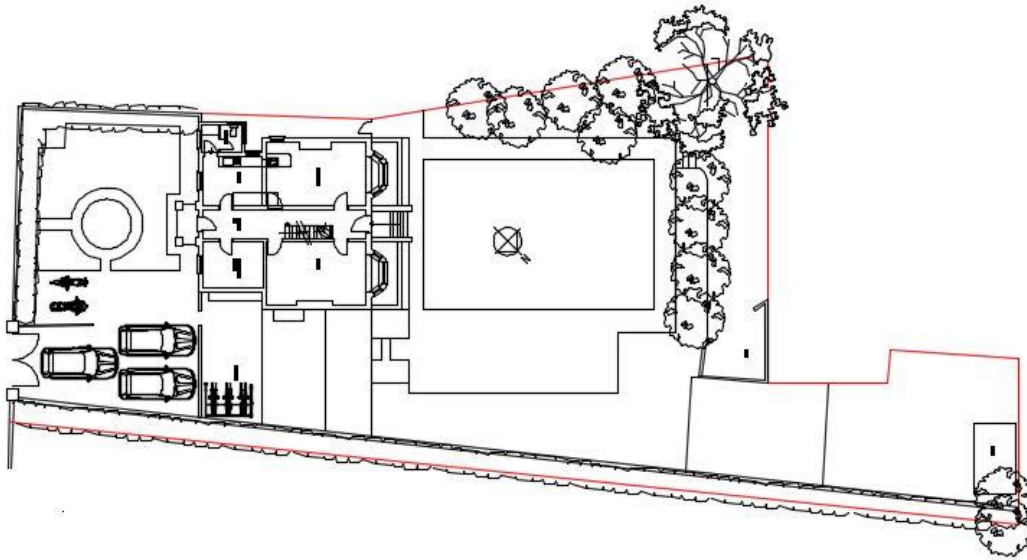
4 No. Social Workers

Of which two will work at the property overnight, so there is always at least one staff member awake

2 THE PROPERTY:

The site is a large residential property located off a main road into Twyford (within the Conservation Area). The property, previously known as Kent Lodge is located on a large plot at No 65 London Road, Twyford. It comprises a detached two storey red brick building with basement and faces south-west onto London Road. It currently includes three off-road parking spaces.

London Road is a busy mixed use road with residential properties mainly near No 65. Since 1992, it has been used as a bed and breakfast hotel.



CURRENT LAYOUT:

The layout of the property currently comprises an entry hall, open plan kitchen and dining room with a small scullery and toilet in an extension to the side. Ground floor also includes a large drawing room and an office. While doors are wide enough for wheelchair access, there is currently no wheelchair accessible bathroom/toilet facilities available on that floor.

Stairs leads up to first floor which comprises a large ensuite bedroom and three additional bedrooms. There is also a "family bathroom".

Basement is accessed by a narrow timber stairs and comprises a bedroom, living room, shower room and laundry. There are also two storage areas which would not be accessible to the children. Ceiling heights in the basement are lower than the main house.

OUTDOOR: The property is accessed from London Road via secure electric gates. There is parking for three cars on the drive with space to the side for the storage of waste and recycling bins. Bicycles could be stored in the rear garden. The main garden is to the rear of the house and is screened from the street providing an excellent outdoor, private amenity space.

Permit parking is also available on the main road.

WASTE AND RECYCLING: The waste and recycling will be stored in separate bins and stored to the side of the dwelling, adjacent to the drive as existing. As is the existing process, bins will be brought to the front of the house to be collected. Use of the garden and noise generation will be proportionate to a residential dwelling with a family residing therein.

EMERGENCY VEHICLE ACCESS: Emergency access is through the main gate entrance. The entrance is on the main London Road. The residence is approximately 11M from the entrance. All points in the dwelling will be within 45M from the fire appliance, in accordance with Approved Document B of the Building Regulations. Fire appliances can park on the driveway. Access can also be achieved by a laneway to the left of the site.

3 THE PROPOSAL:

The property is not currently registered as a Residential Institution but staff have already been recruited to start work as soon as possible as the need for this sort of accommodation in the local area is urgent. An OFSTED application is also in the pipeline in preparation for occupation of the premises.

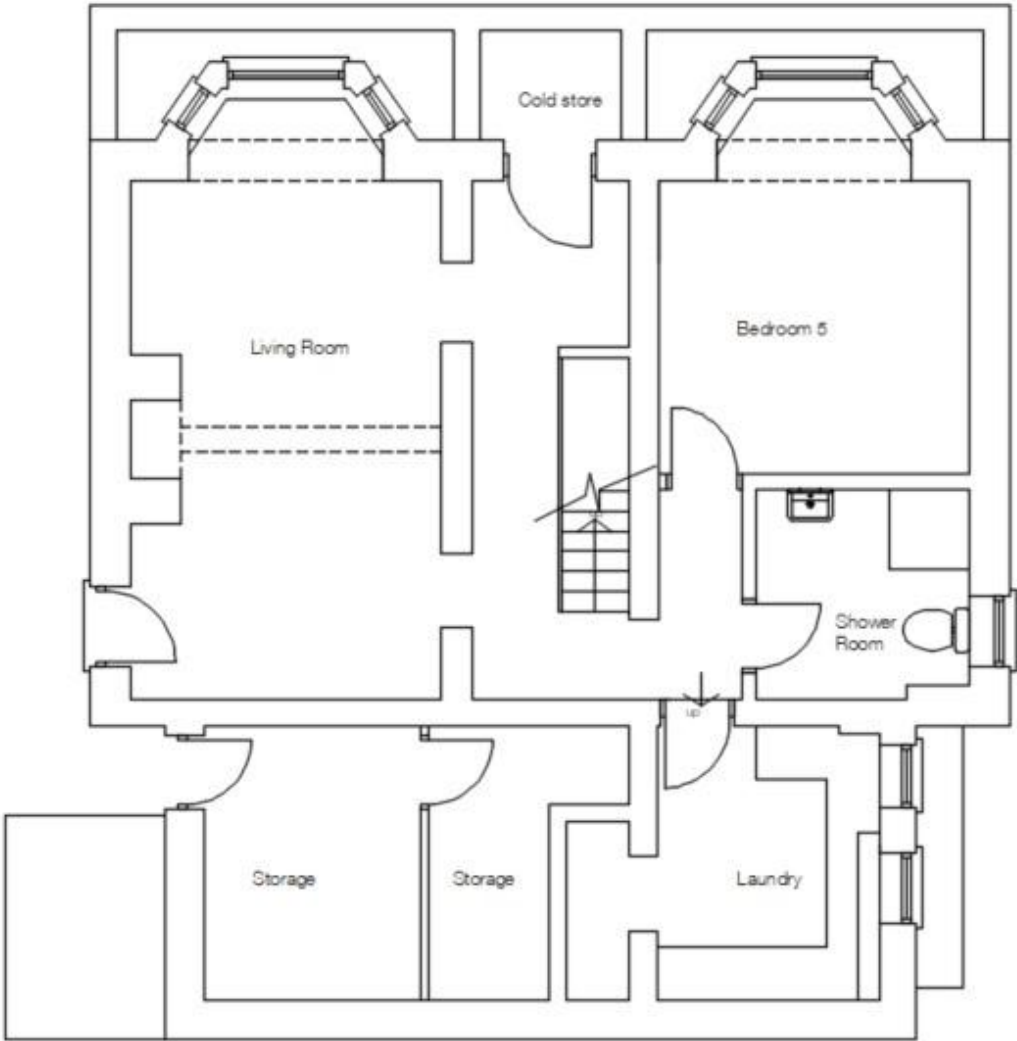
The application proposal is for the change of use of a Bed & Breakfast (class C1) to a Residential Institution (Class C2).

The purpose of the application is to enable the creation of a Residential Institution for children that have been taken into care permanently. The property will become a long-term home for up to five vulnerable children. The home will have a staff presence at all times appropriate to the level of care required, with staff working shift patterns. Staff will not be counted as full-time residents such that the use is consistent with use class C2.

According to the OFSTED report, children's social care data in England 2017 to 2018; main findings "there is a growing demand for children social care services and it shows the decrease, nationwide, in the number of local authority homes and an increase in the number of privately run homes". The proposed home would help with the increased demand for children social care services and give the children a home and community to belong.

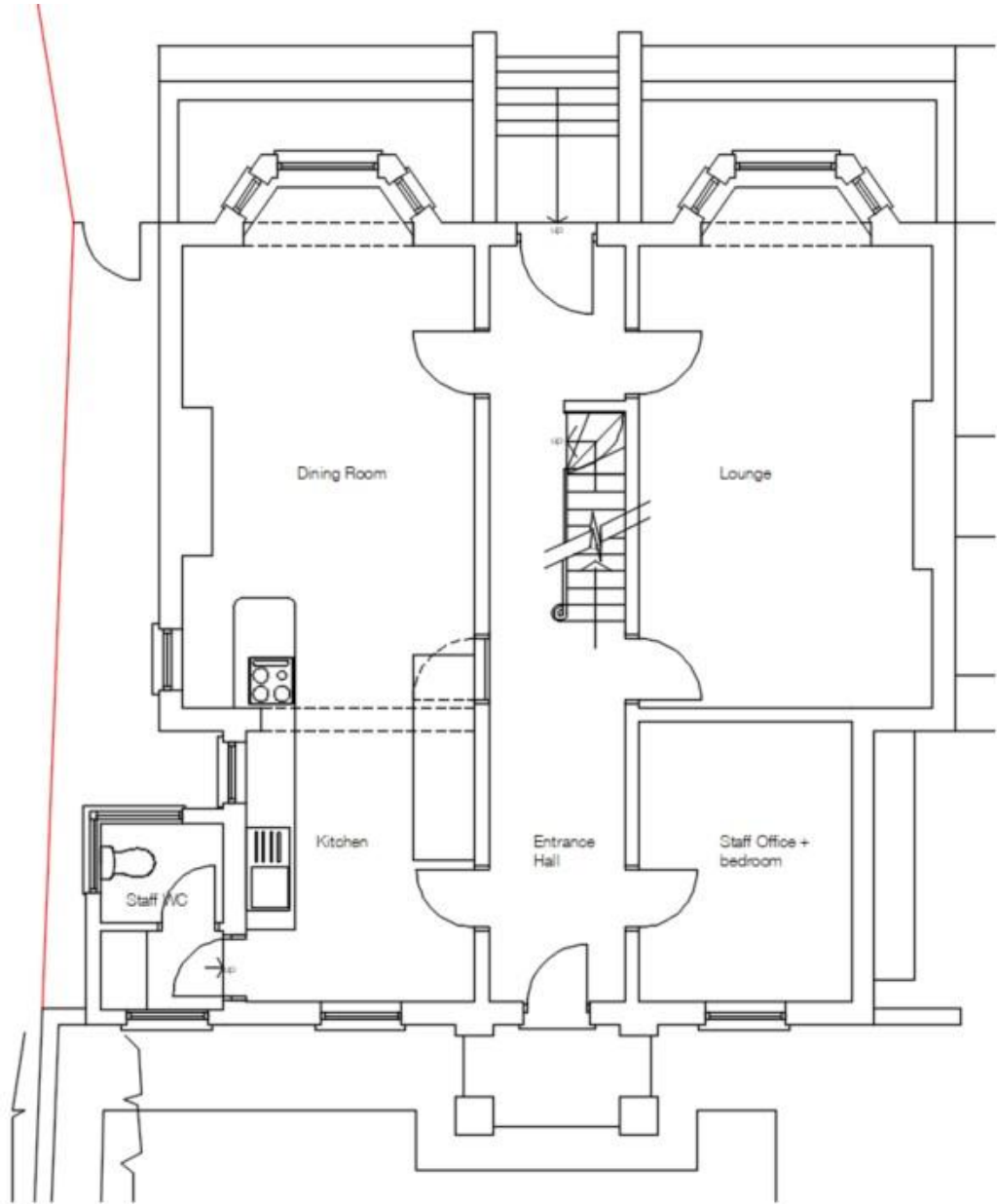
The proposed home would house up to five children. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] They would attend local health care facilities and schools which are close to the house where possible. This home will be a permanent home for these children aged 8-18.

Physical restrictions on normal movement within the home (e.g. stairgates or high handles on doors) are used only in relation to a child where the restriction has been agreed within their placement plan (and care plan if appropriate) and are used only where necessary satisfactorily to safeguard and promote that child's welfare. Such restrictions for one child do not impose similar restrictions on other children.



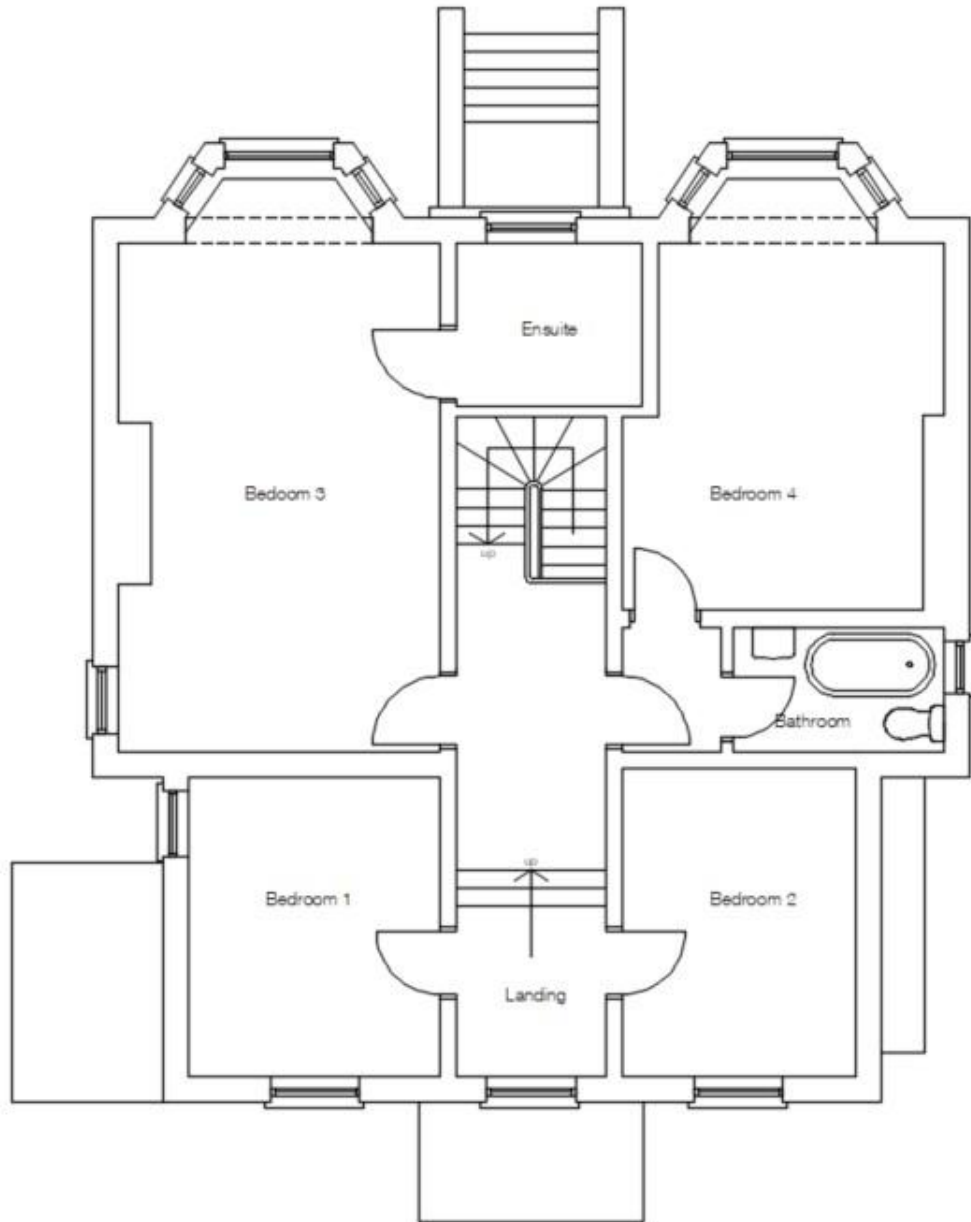
PROPOSED LR GROUND FLOOR

1-60



PROPOSED GROUND FLOOR

1-60



PROPOSED FIRST FLOOR

1-60

BATHROOM FACILITIES:

Baths, showers and toilets are sufficient in number and standard to meet the children's needs for privacy, dignity and safety, and are readily accessible from sleeping and recreational areas of the home. Staff (not children) will be able to open the doors to bathrooms, showers and toilets from the outside in case of emergency.

The house does not currently have bathrooms or toilets which are accessible to wheelchair bound disabled young people.

Staff will use the same facilities as the children, but there is a clear understanding that they may not use them when young people are present.

THE ACCOMMODATION FOR EACH CHILD:

Each child will have a bedroom, of a suitable size, with a suitable bed and bedding, seating, storage for clothes, lockable or otherwise safe storage for personal possessions, a window with curtains (or other window covering), lighting sufficient to read by, carpet or other appropriate floor covering, and heating.

It is not anticipated that children will be sharing bedrooms. A child would only share their bedroom where they have agreed to the arrangement to share such as with a close sibling if that was the children's preference. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Each child will be given opportunities to have a say in the general décor, furnishings and upkeep of the home if they wish

Facilities will be provided for children to study at the home. These will be quiet, have sufficient seating and desk/table space, are adequately lit, have adequate storage for books and study materials, and are available when needed for study purposes. There will also be facilities for children to pursue personal hobbies at the home, with sufficient and secure storage for safekeeping of materials.

PRIVATE MEETING SPACE

There will be spaces in which children can meet privately with visitors and space for private activities, play and recreation which do not affect other children's routine activities.

4 STAFF & PARKING:

Maximum of eleven will be employed at the home. None of the staff will reside at the property, but two staff members will stay overnight, with sleeping facilities available for one of those staff.

Staff sleep in rooms are not part of the communal living area, and will be located on the ground floor by the front door, sufficiently close to children's bedrooms to respond to children's night time needs.

The highest number of staff on site at any one time is likely to be seven members of staff during the weekday afternoon shift. During other periods there would be fewer staff on site. Staff numbers would be temporarily higher for a very short period of time at staff handover during shift changes. The level of staffing would be lower at weekends, with staff working different shift periods on a weekend day.

Onsite parking for up to 3 cars and two motor cycles is provided as well as a bicycle rack to house up to 6 cycles. With additional permit parking available on street.

Additional visitor parking is available at public car parks within short walking distance from the residence.

5 COMMUNITY IMPACT:

We have produced a separate "Good Neighbour" document which outlines the plan in place to better understand community interaction and impact. It is extremely unlikely that the level of occupancy of this relatively small Residential Institution will give rise to amenity impacts to neighbouring residents materially greater than could reasonably be expected from occupation of the property as a Bed & Breakfast Hotel.

There are many care-related uses that run smoothly with no complaint in residential areas, and generally, residential areas are the most suitable place for such uses. Wokingham Borough Local Development Framework Adopted Core Strategy Development Plan Document January 2010 Section 2.33 - Small group home states:

"As far as possible these children will be placed within their wider family and friends network, or with foster carers. Where such arrangements cannot be made favourably, children will live in a small group home."

This home at 65 London Road is proposed to be a specialist provision for children from high-risk situations and is explicitly supported by policy CP2 of Wokingham's adopted Core Strategy; which sets out the following:

"to ensure that new development contributes to the provision of sustainable and inclusive communities (including the provision of community facilities) to meet long term needs, planning permission will be granted for proposals that address the requirements of ...b) Children, young people and families, including the co-ordination of services to meet their needs"

There are often objections on the grounds of anti-social behaviour. Dealing with antisocial behaviour in children's care homes requires a balanced approach that combines clear

boundaries, consistent routines, and compassionate support. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Establishing trust through positive relationships, active listening, and non-judgmental communication is key to helping children feel safe and understood. Behaviour management strategies will focus on de-escalation, teaching social skills, and encouraging accountability rather than punitive measures. Additionally, involving mental health professionals and offering tailored therapeutic interventions can support long-term behavioural change and emotional development.

The existing dwelling is detached in its own very pleasant grounds. These measures will minimise and alleviate anti-social behaviour. The community needs for these residential institutions is great, and outweighs the potential of anti-social behaviour.

The local need for these institutions is addressed in the supporting document; Berkshire Children's Care Home Needs Report.

6 PLANNING HISTORY:

Application No: F/2007/2743 - 65 London Road, Twyford (HW) Expires: 31/12/07
Proposal Erection of a detached building to create Bed and Breakfast accommodation.
Retrospective.

39784- part residential to Bed and Breakfast use approved (08/10/92)

43323- coach house to Bed and Breakfast use approved (02/11/94)

F/2006/8995 - detached building for Bed and Breakfast use refused (21/02/07) on the grounds of over-intensification of the use of the site and the loss of a residential dwelling.

F/2007/1159 - erection of a detached dwelling to create Bed and Breakfast accommodation. Retrospective. Resubmission of F/2006/8995. Refused (20/06/07) on the grounds of over-intensification of the use of the site and the loss of a residential dwelling.

Development Plan Designations Category A Settlement Conservation Area Groundwater Zone 3 Relevant Policies Wokingham District Local Plan - WOS3 Berkshire Structure Plan - DP5, EN4 Good Practice Guide on Planning for Tourism, Annex A PPG15-Planning and the Historic Environment