



**WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL**

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACTS

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (ENGLAND) 1990

Mr David Smith
Wokingham Borough
Council
Development Team
Shute End
Wokingham
RG40 1BN

NOTIFICATION OF APPROVAL OF PLANNING PERMISSION

Application Number: 231453
Applicant Name: Wokingham Borough Council
Site Address: 29 Stanton Close, Earley, Wokingham, RG6 7DX
Proposal: Full application for change of use from a residential dwelling house to childrens home.
Date of Decision: 15 August 2023

Wokingham Borough Council in pursuance of its powers under the above Acts and Regulations hereby **grants permission** for the above development to be carried out as stated in the application and the accompanying plans submitted to the Council subject to compliance with the following conditions, the reasons for which are specified hereunder.

Conditions and Reasons

1. Timescale - The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.
Reason: In pursuance of s.91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by s.51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).
2. Approved details - This permission is in respect of the submitted application plans and drawings numbered/labelled 'Location Plan', 'Site Plan' and 'Existing Floor Plans' received by the local planning authority on INSERT. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details unless other minor variations are agreed in writing after the date of this permission and before implementation with the Local Planning Authority.
Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and to ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the application form and associated details hereby approved.
3. Restriction of change of use - The premises shall be used only for accommodating and caring for vulnerable children and for no other purpose, including any other purpose in Class C2 of the Schedule to the Town and Country

Planning [Use Classes] Order 1987 (as amended) or in any provision equivalent to that Class in any statutory instrument revoking and re-enacting that Order [with or without modification].

Reason: In granting this permission the local planning authority has had regard to the special circumstances of this case, being the care of vulnerable children, and wishes to have the opportunity of exercising control over any subsequent alternative use in the interests of the amenities of the area. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP1 & CP3.

4. Within 3 months of the date of permission, the applicant shall submit evidence to the Local Planning Authority to demonstrate that parking for two vehicles parallel to one another can be accommodated on the site. Should further works be required to accommodate the parking, a scheme will be submitted and approved by the Local Planning Authority and shall be implemented within six months from the date of this permission.

Reason: In the interest of highway safety and amenity. Relevant policy CP6 of the Core Strategy and CC07 of the MDD Local Plan.

Informatives

1. Please note that if the works carried out depart from the scope of this planning permission and a retrospective application under Section 73A is subsequently required, there may be CIL liability implications. The scope of any retrospective planning application will cover the chargeable development for the purposes of CIL, this will include past works that are unauthorised and any additional future works included within the planning permission. If the total floorspace of these works is over 100sqm, they will be liable to pay CIL. In such cases, no CIL exemption can be claimed, and payment will become due immediately as development for which planning permission is granted under a subsequent Section 73A or Section 177(1) application must be treated as commencing on the day any such planning permission is granted. Any demolished floorspace will not be able to be considered for offsetting if the relevant building is not on the land on the day that the permission is granted.

2. The Local Planning Authority has acted positively and proactively in determining this application by assessing the proposal against all material considerations, including planning policies and any representations that may have been received and subsequently determining to grant planning permission in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development as set out in the NPPF.

3. The applicant is asked to monitor noise levels from the use and should issues continually arise, review mitigation methods to limit the impact upon neighbours.

4. It is recommended that the applicant ensures ongoing community engagement is carried out to ensure the success of the home.

Signed

MHead

Marcia Head
Head of Development Management - Place & Growth
Date: 15 August 2023

PLEASE READ THE NOTES ISSUED WITH THIS DECISION NOTICE BELOW



WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACTS TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (ENGLAND) 1990

Other statutory legislation: This decision notice relates to the above stated acts and regulations only and does not constitute approval under any other legislation.

The Town & Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) Order: This decision has been made in accordance with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and in the requirement to work with the applicant in a positive and proactive manner.

Officer Report: An officer report explaining the decision will be available to view online.

Purchase notices: If either the local planning authority or the Secretary of State refuses permission to develop land or grants it subject to conditions, the owner may claim that the owner can neither put the land to a reasonably beneficial use in its existing state nor render the land capable of a reasonably beneficial use by the carrying out of any development which has been or would be permitted. In these circumstances, the owner may serve a purchase notice on the Council which will require the Council to purchase the owner's interest in the land in accordance with the provisions of Chapter I of Part VI of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

Appeals to the Secretary of State: If your application has been **refused** by the Borough Council or **granted subject to conditions** that you are not happy with, you have the right to appeal to the Planning Inspectorate (under Section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990). This must be within the timeframes set out below. Please note an extension of time for lodging an appeal is unlikely to be granted except in special circumstances.

12 weeks from the decision date above in the case of a refusal of a 'householder' application:
Being the refusal of an application for planning permission to alter or extend a house, or for works within the curtilage of a house; or,
Being the refusal to approve details submitted as required by a condition imposed on a permission granted for a householder application.

12 weeks from the decision date above in the case of a refusal of a 'minor commercial' application:
Being the refusal of an application for development of an existing building or part of a building currently in use for purposes in Use Classes A1, A2, A3, A4 and A5

where the proposal does not include a change of use, a change to the number of units, development that is not wholly at ground floor level and/or does not increase the gross internal area of the building.

6 months from the decision date above in the case of all other appeals made under s78(1) or s20 of the above Acts relating to a decision on a planning application or listed building/conservation area consent application.

6 months from the decision date above in the case of any appeal made under s78 (2) of the Act in respect of a failure to give a decision within the statutory period.

The Planning Inspectorate is an Executive Agency reporting to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government. The Inspectorate has an online appeals service with information and guidance about the process. You can submit [full application appeals](#) and [householder application appeals](#) with the new appeals service. [Other application types](#) should be submitted on the current appeal service. Alternatively, you can obtain a form from the Planning Inspectorate at Temple Quay House, 2 The Square, Temple Quay, Bristol, BS1 6PN, 0303 444 5000 or through the [Inspectorate's website](#). Please note all documents will be published online by the Planning Inspectorate and therefore you should not include personal information you do not wish to be displayed in this way. This includes personal information of third parties.

In the event of a grant of planning permission, please note the following:

Discharge of Conditions: This consent may contain conditions that require further approval by submission of an application for approval of details reserved by condition and the appropriate fee. Application forms can be obtained for this purpose by visiting the [Planning Portal](#).

Street Naming and Numbering for new dwellings: If this notice relates to approval of new dwellings, please ensure that you contact the Council at least 16 weeks before the commencement on site to arrange for an address and post code to be allocated. Details can be obtained from streetnamingandnumbering@wokingham.gov.uk. Failure to contact the street naming and numbering department at least 16 weeks before commencement on site will result in the addressing and post code for the development being delayed.

Access to privately owned land: The applicant is reminded that this permission does not give right of entry to land not in the ownership of the applicant. Permission must be sought from any other landowner(s) if access is required.

Gas Mains and Services: Building over a gas main or service that is located within your site could cause damage to pipework or potential gas leaks within buildings. You should check for information relating to services within your site at [Home - LinesearchbeforeUdig \(lsbud.co.uk\)](#) and contact the Plant Protection Team at SGN on 0800 912 1722 or plantlocation@sgn.co.uk.

Building Regulations: The development subject to this permission may also require Building Regulation approval to ensure it is built to national safety, design, and environmental standards. The Council's Local Authority Building Control (LABC) service offers a full range of plan approval, inspection, and associated services through an ISO9001 nationally accredited team of qualified building surveyors. These surveyors work closely with the Council's planning department to ensure the appropriate construction of your build. To find out more visit the Council's [Building Control website](#) or call 0300 790 0580 to speak to a member of the team.

Fire Regulations: In accordance with the Berkshire Act 1986, when Building Regulation applications are submitted for building(s) or extensions, the Local Authority will reject the plans unless, after consultation with the fire authority, they are satisfied that the plans show the following:

- i) That there will be adequate means of access for the fire brigade to the building(s) or the extended building(s); and,
- ii) That the building(s) or extension(s) will not render inadequate any existing means of access for the fire brigade to a neighbouring building.

Application Number	Expiry Date	Parish	Ward
231453	11 August 2023	Earley	Maiden Erlegh;

Applicant	Wokingham Borough Council
Site Address	29 Stanton Close, Earley, Wokingham, RG6 7DX
Proposal	Full application for change of use from a residential dwelling house to children's home.
Type	Full
Officer	Emma Campbell
Reason for determination by committee	Applicant is Wokingham Borough Council

FOR CONSIDERATION BY	Planning Committee on Wednesday, 9 August 2023
REPORT PREPARED BY	Assistant Director – Place and Growth
RECOMMENDATION	APPROVAL subject to conditions and informatives

SUMMARY
This planning application is before the planning committee as the application is made on behalf of Wokingham Borough Council and involves an increase in staff members. The application site consists of a three-bedroom semi-detached two-storey dwelling which has been used as a residential dwelling. There is a rear residential garden and paved driveway parking for at least two vehicles. The application seeks consent to change the use of 29 Stanton Close from a residential unit (C3) to a residential institution (C2) in order to care for vulnerable children with specialist needs. There would be no associated construction or building works to accommodate this. The scheme performs a substantial social role in the provision of living accommodation to vulnerable children, thus complying with Core Strategy Policy CP2 and policy TB09 of the MDD Local Plan. There is a real need for local children to be placed in homes within the Borough, rather than being placed in residential homes far from their homes. This need far outweighs any technical loss of a single residential dwelling and the minor conflict with Core Strategy CP3. The proposed change of use results in a development which would not adversely impact the character of the area. Likewise, the proposal would not result in any undue harm to the residential amenities of neighbouring properties, nor would there be any parking or highway safety concerns. Paragraphs provide further details of these considerations and, subject to conditions, the application is recommended for approval.

PLANNING STATUS
• Major Development Location • Bat Roost Habitat Suitability • Great Crested Newt Consultation Zone

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY		
Reference	Description	Decision and Date
PD/298/59	Garage	Approve 7 August 1959
65/58	Semi-detached dwelling	Approve 8 April 1958
19/58	Layout	Approve 11 February 1958

SUMMARY INFORMATION
For Commercial Site Area – 356 m² Existing Use – Residential Dwelling (68 m²) Proposed Use – Residential Institution (68 m²) Number of jobs created – Up to 12, comprising of 1 registered manager assigned specifically to the Stanton Close home, with sufficient cover for 2 members of staff at all times (including 1 ‘waking night’ and 1 ‘sleeping staff’ overnight) and further support as required. Existing parking spaces – 2 spaces Proposed parking spaces – 2 spaces.

CONSULTATION RESPONSES
WBC Environmental Health – No comments WBC Highways – No objection WBC Community Safety – No comments received. WBC Education – No comments received. WBC Cleaner and Greener – No comments received.

REPRESENTATIONS

Town/Parish Council: No objection, subject to a parking condition to amend the parking configuration.

Local Members: No response received.

Neighbours: 2 comments. 1 comment stating there is no application form published (which has since been rectified) and 1 objection due to insufficient parking and a quiet residential street is not suitable for a children’s home.

APPLICANT POINTS OF NOTE
• The need and requirement for this children’s home would be dependent on the need from WBC Children’s Services. • The maximum number of residents would be 3, though there is immediate need for just 1 resident. The number of residents would vary dependent on need. • There is no set period of residency, but the aim is for as short a term placement in the home as possible. • The care staff would work on shift patterns with different staff in attendance during day and night.

PLANNING POLICY

National Planning Policy Framework
National Design Guide
National Planning Practice Guidance

Core Strategy (CS)

CP1 – Sustainable Development
CP2 – Inclusive Communities
CP3 – General Principles for Development
CP9 – Scale and Location of Development Proposals

MDD Local Plan (MDD)

CC01 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
CC02 – Development Limits
CC06 – Noise
CC07 – Parking

Other

Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document

PLANNING ISSUES

Site Description:

1. The application site consists of a moderately sized three-bedroom, two-storey, semi-detached property with a private residential garden to the rear, with outbuildings and off-street driveway parking. The site is 150 metres from Earley Train Station and the railway line runs to the rear of the site.
2. The existing layout is a simple square orientation which comprises of three bedrooms, two bathrooms, a kitchen/diner, living room and hallway. The site has ample amenity space to the rear with a 21-metre garden to the north of the site. The site has vegetation on the frontage as well as along the boundary with no. 31 Stanton Close and along the rear boundary.
3. The previous use was lawful use of a single residential unit. The Council has since purchased the property. There is currently one child occupying the property as there was an immediate need for a placement. The applicant is aiming to get the home registered September 2023.
4. To the north of the site there is a railway line, to the east, west and south there are residential dwellings situated on Stanton Close.

Proposal Description:

5. This application seeks to consent to the change of use of 29 Stanton Close from a residential dwelling (Class C3) to a residential institution (Class C2) in order to care for vulnerable children.
6. There would be no physical modification to the site, both internally and externally and the existing internal layout will remain as such. There would be no change to the access or the parking on site.

Principle of Development:

7. 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 (MDD 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.
8. Policy CC02 of the MDD Local Plan sets out the development limits for each settlement as defined on the policies map and therefore replaces the proposals map adopted through the Core Strategy, as per the requirement of policy CP9. Policy CP9 sets out that development proposals located within development limits will be acceptable in principle, having regard to the service provisions associated with the major, modest and limited categories. As the site is within a major development location, the proposal is acceptable in principle.
9. 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.

10. Section (i) of CP3 also highlights that planning permission will be granted for proposals that do not lead to a net loss of dwellings and other residential accommodation or land.
11. With regard to the proposed C2 use, paragraph 91 of the NPPF states that *decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which promote social interaction, including opportunities for meetings between people who might not otherwise come into contact with each other (...), are safe and accessible (...) and enable and support healthy lifestyles.*
12. Policy CP2 of the Core Strategy states that planning permission will be granted for proposals that address the requirements of:
 - *An ageing population, particularly in terms of housing, health and wellbeing;*
 - *Children, young people and families, including the co-ordination of services to meet their needs;*
 - *People with special needs, including those with a physical, sensory, or learning disability or problems accessing services.*
13. Policy TB09 of the Managing Development Delivery Local Plan (MDDLDP) (Residential accommodation for vulnerable groups) also states that the Council will in principle support proposals which provide for the following types of accommodation to provide for peoples' needs over a lifetime.

Loss of C3 Residential:

14. The proposed change of use to Class C2 would result in the loss of a residential dwelling, thus conflicting with part i) of the CP3 of the Core Strategy which states that planning permission will be granted on schemes that *'do not lead to a net loss in dwellings and other residential accommodation or land'*. On the other hand, the proposal would still comply with parts (a) and (h) of Policy CP3.
15. The scheme provides great social benefit and an essential community facility for supporting vulnerable children with specialist needs within the Borough instead of children being placed in care far from home, thus helping ensure essential care is delivered. The proposal therefore complies with Core Strategy Policy CP2 and policy TB09 of the MDD Local Plan. This far outweighs the loss of a residential dwelling, regardless of minor policy confliction that the principle of the proposed change of use is acceptable in planning policy terms.

Character of the Area:

16. The area is largely comprised of two-storey, semi-detached dwellings.
17. 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.
18. 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.

Neighbouring Amenity.

19. There would be no overbearing, overlooking or overshadowing concerns due to no external works proposed.
20. Noise and Disturbance - The site is a semi-detached, so it adjoins another dwelling. The site is within 5 metres of no. 27 Stanton Close. It is acknowledged that the proposal could result in a minor increase in the level of user within the site. However, the increase would be minimal and nuisance from vehicles particularly during the later hours of the day would see only a minor change from the vehicle usage of the sites original use as a residential dwelling. This is due today/night staff that would be present on site, of which there would be a minimum of 2 on site at a time. Also, the WBC Environmental Health officer had no objection and no noise concerns.
21. The external amenity area would be used in the same way as they would be used in a family dwelling.

Access and Movement.

22. Policy CP6 of the Core Strategy seeks to manage travel demand with sustainable travel modes, appropriate vehicle parking and minimisation of traffic impacts. Policy CC07 and Appendix 2 of the MDD Local Plan set out the minimum parking requirements for development proposals. Policy CP9 states that the scale of development must reflect the existing and proposed levels of facilities, services and accessibility at or in the location.
23. The site benefits from an existing vehicular access from Stanton Close, which would be utilised with the current scheme, and it is considered acceptable for access by all modes of transport.
24. Earley Town Council have recommended a condition that would require the submission of an amended parking plan to show two parking spaces side by side instead of as tandem spaces. This condition would not be recommended as the WBC Highways Officer has raised no objections to this application on parking or highways grounds.
25. During the Planning Committee, there were discussions regarding the parking situation and that it would not be sufficient for the number of staff expected on site. Therefore, a condition has been recommended to ensure that this an additional space is provided.
26. On this basis, the proposal would be considered acceptable in terms of being sustainably located and would not result in unacceptable parking pressures on site or surrounding streets, nor prejudice highway safety.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

27. As the proposal is for change of use and no additional floor space is proposed, the development would not be CIL Liable in accordance with the adopted CIL charging schedule.

The Public Sector Equality Duty (Equality Act 2010)
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<i>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 the protected groups 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 upon protected groups as a result of the development.</i>
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Conclusion.

28. The proposed change of use from a residential dwelling (Class C3) to a Residential institution/children's home (C2) is considered acceptable in principle, as the proposal would make a positive contribution to providing an essential community facility for supporting vulnerable children within the Borough and would help ensure that this essential infrastructure is delivered. As such, the proposed would accord with national and local planning policies and is therefore recommended for approval.

APPENDIX 1 - Conditions / informatives

APPROVAL subject to the following conditions and informatives:

1. Timescale – The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.
Reason: In pursuance of s.91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by s.51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).
2. Approved details – This permission is in respect of the submitted application plans and drawings labelled 'Location Plan', 'Site Plan' and 'Existing Floor Plans' received by the local planning authority on 23 June 2023. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details unless other minor variations are agreed in writing after the date of this permission and before implementation with the Local Planning Authority.
Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and to ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the application form and associate details hereby approved.
3. Restriction of change of use - The premises shall be used only for accommodating and caring for vulnerable children and for no other purpose, including any other purpose in Class C2 of the Schedule to the Town and Country Planning [Use Classes] Order 1987 (as amended) or in any provision equivalent to that Class in any statutory instrument revoking and re-enacting that Order [with or without modification].
Reason: In granting this permission the local planning authority has had regard to the special circumstances of this case, being the care of vulnerable children, and wishes to have the opportunity of exercising control over any subsequent alternative use in the interests of the amenities of the area. Relevant policy: Core Strategy policies CP1 & CP3.
4. Within 3 months of the date of permission, the applicant shall submit evidence to the Local Planning Authority to demonstrate that parking for two vehicles parallel to one another can be accommodated on the site. Should further works be required to accommodate the parking, a scheme will be submitted and approved by the Local Planning Authority and shall be implemented within six months from the date of this permission.
Reason: In the interest of highway safety and amenity. Relevant policy CP6 of the Core Strategy and CC07 of the MDD Local Plan.

Informatives.

1. The Local Planning Authority has acted positively and proactively in determining this application by assessing the proposal against all material considerations, including planning policies and any representations that may have been received and subsequently determining to grant planning permission in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development as set out in the NPPF.
2. The applicant is asked to monitor noise levels from the use and should issues continually arise, review mitigation methods to limit the impact upon neighbours.
3. It is recommended that the applicant ensures ongoing community engagement is carried out to ensure the success of the home.

APPENDIX 2 - Town Council Comments

Earley Town Council Comments:

'ETC raises no objection to this application subject to WBC imposing the following condition:

1: Whilst there are two tandem parking spaces on curtilage, there is concern that they are not individually accessible, and, as a result, staff may park in the street during shift changes, because of this, details of two, side-by-side parking spaces should be submitted to, and approved by WBC, with the spaces provided within 12 months of the approval. As supported by Policy CC07, and further detailed in sections P1, P2 and P3 of the Borough Design Guide, to ensure that parking can be accommodated satisfactorily on curtilage, is compatible with the local character and is safe and, importantly, convenient to use.'

CONSULTATION RESPONSE TO PLANNING APPLICATION 231453 29 STANTON CLOSE

To whom it may concern,

These comments are made on behalf of Wokingham's Children's Services Department, in its role as both applicant and consultee to the planning application 251453 at 29 Stanton Close.

Like all local authorities, at times Wokingham Borough Council struggles to find children and young people the right placement, at the right time, in the right place. This is due to a lack of access to local high needs provision like residential children's homes and specialist fostering.

The recently completed full children's home and sufficiency review and delivery model analysis evidenced that Wokingham Borough Council should open its own provision alongside increased market engagement and regional partnership. This is the only sure way to ensure that Children's Services has access to the necessary provision for now and the future. Evidence shows that there are enough children within the current residential care cohort to open 2 or 3 homes. This would enable children with more complex care needs to remain in, or return back to, Wokingham.

Currently, Wokingham children in residential care can be placed many miles from home. This distance has a real impact for the child, the 'team around the child' and the child's family. Additionally, the social worker and teams' ability to respond quickly and regularly to the needs of the child is inhibited and impacts on their ability to build a trusting relationship: the child can feel isolated and abandoned, and family will feel a greater sense of separation. Being out of the local authority area often also leads to difficulty in adequately supporting the child's health needs, as well as further disrupting the child's education plan.

As well as the emotional and practical impact, placing children at distance from Wokingham presents a huge budgetary challenge, with high costs of independent provision, the increased cost of social worker and support services' time, fuel, and travel, and post 18 placements. Creating a residential children's home service in Wokingham will enable the local authority to meet its Sufficiency Strategy to create more local children's provision, reducing costs and improving access to services.

In light of the above, the proposal at Stanford Close forms part of the Local Sufficiency for Children in Care Plan (approved by Executive in June 2023). It is also explicitly supported by policy CP2 of Wokingham's adopted Core Strategy by way of contributing to the provision of sustainable and inclusive communities by the coordination of services to address the needs of vulnerable children, young people and families within the borough.

Due to the size of the property and the needs of the children being considered, our intention is to register the home for only 1 child or young person. This will limit the visitors to the home and any

potential disruption caused. The staffing numbers at Stanton Close will comprise a registered manager that will oversee all of WBC's homes, an assistant manager assigned specifically to the Stanton Close home, sufficient cover for 2 members of staff at the home at all times (including a 'waking night' and a 'sleeping staff' overnight) and further therapeutic support as required.

If you require any supplementary information, please feel free to contact me and my colleagues cc'd.

Kind regards

Nathan Whitley

Children's Residential Project Lead

Children's Services

Wokingham Borough Council

Shute End

Wokingham

RG40 1BN