

Address: 19 Whitebeam Park Huddersfield HD2 2GZ

About the application

Application number: 2024/93438	
What is the application for?:	Change of use from dwelling (use class C3) to residential care home (use class C
Address of the site or building:	340, Birkby Road, Birkby, Huddersfield, HD2 2DB
Postcode:	HD2 2DB

User comments

Type of comment: An objection	
Do you wish your comments to be published on the website anonymously?	No
<p>We are extremely concerned about the proposed change of use of 340 Birkby Road from residential use into a care facility for children. While attempts have been made within the application to address the concerns of residents who will be directly impacted should the application be granted, we would request that the points below are reviewed as part of this consultation.</p> <p>Character of the Area: The current building, neighbouring properties and the surrounding area are all residential dwellings so we feel strongly that by allowing the property to become a for-profit care facility it will be inconsistent with the surrounding residential character. The Kirklees local plan policy (LP24) states that it is a “requirement for developments to respect local character and provide a high standard of amenity” should be sufficient for this application to be refused on this requirement alone.</p> <p>Visual Impact and Privacy: We are also deeply concerned around the visual impact that the changes would have on not only our property, but all other homes which surround the property. The property and substantial land it occupies is openly visible from my property, meaning that the current privacy we enjoy would cease to exist. All residents and staff would have unrestricted views to the rear of all rooms at the rear of my property and particularly our private garden area. As residents we purchased our home for the peace, quiet and privacy that the current surroundings offer. To lose this would have a huge impact (emotional and mental) on our ability to enjoy our privacy and outside space.</p> <p>Security Concerns: While the application attempts to reassure residents that proposal will not cause anti-social or criminal behaviour, the simple fact is that this assertion cannot be guaranteed. Written reassurance was provided in the application, but as we started to research this, the evidence is very much to the contrary. I reference the Children’s Commission article https://www.childrenscommission.gov.uk/blog/new-findings-on-how-children</p>	

article - <https://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/blog/new-findings-on-how-children-in-care-interact-with-the-criminal-justice-system/> This states than half (52%) of children in care had a criminal conviction by the age of 24. Another article in the Guardian indicates that analysis of Ofsted data by the Guardian and BBC signals that children's homes operated by profit-making firms had a disproportionately higher number of police callouts compared with those of not-for-profit providers -

<https://amp.theguardian.com/society/2022/jun/28/serious-incidents-more-common-in-for-profit-childrens-homes-in-england> The risk of this being the case, is not something that we feel is acceptable in our peaceful residential community.

The type of facility being proposed will also come with increased security risk for the residents directly affected, particularly given that the property has never had (or had the need to) install secure fencing to separate boundaries. The current boundary between our property and the proposed home is an original dry stone wall and a line of trees that are protected by a Kirklees TPO. To secure with fencing would definitely not be in-keeping with the character of the local area.

Lack of Planning Notification:

Although we have been mailed directly by Kirklees due to the close proximity of the proposed home to our property, we have found that a large proportion of our local neighbourhood hasn't been included in this notification. There are zero visible notification of the planning application outside, or in the locality, of the proposed home. This is incredibly concerning, as we will have residents in our neighbourhood who are completely unaware of such a fundamental change to the character of our local community and won't have the opportunity to raise their concerns directly with Kirklees.

Mental Health & Wellbeing of Residents:

As parents ourselves, you want to see any child grow up in a safe and positive environment which given the condition of the property we fail to see how this could be even considered. It's an imposing, old and crumbling mansion and I fail to see how the property could be used to offer a warm and welcoming environment for children at a very vulnerable time of their lives. The application states "the proposed use is to provide a stable family home environment for children as their main and sole residence" but we feel given the points addressed above this simply cannot be achieved.