

I am writing to formally object to the above planning application to change the property's use from C3 (dwelling house) to C2 (children's residential home). While I appreciate the need for children's homes, I have significant concerns about this proposal and its wider implications for our estate and community.

1. Breach of Covenant

There is an existing covenant in place which states that no businesses should be run from these properties. Approving this application would directly contravene that restriction, especially as the owners will not be in residence, and the property would be operated as a business entity.

2. Precedent for Further Conversions

Allowing this change may set a precedent, encouraging further purchases and conversions of family homes into C2 businesses. Children's homes can be highly lucrative, and this could lead to more properties on the estate being taken out of residential use.

3. Impact on the Character of the Estate

The nature and character of the estate would be significantly altered if commercial operators, particularly large companies with no vested interest in the community, were permitted to establish multiple C2 properties here. This risks changing what is currently a settled residential environment into one dominated by business interests.

4. Safety Concerns

There are genuine concerns about the safety of children already living on the estate. Introducing a children's home for older residents aged up to 17 may create safeguarding challenges, especially without resident-owners who are invested in the local community.

5. Expansion Risk

The applicant already owns other properties within the estate. It is reasonable to fear that those too may be converted into C2 usage, thereby compounding the issues outlined above and intensifying the impact on our residential community.

6. Housing Market and Affordability

We have seen the impact of short-term letting businesses (e.g., Airbnb) on local housing affordability and availability. If C2 conversions are permitted and seen as a profitable investment model, more family homes may be removed from the market, making it harder for families to access affordable housing in the area.

For the reasons stated above, I strongly object to this change of use application and urge the council to refuse it in order to protect the covenant, the residential character of our estate, the safety of local children, and the availability of affordable family homes.

Thank you for considering my objections.