

Planning Application Objection

Planning Application: 2026/62/90484/E

Address: 143 Church Lane, Gomersal

Proposal: Change of use from C3 dwelling to C2 children's home

I wish to object to the above application on the following material planning grounds:

1. Highway Safety & Parking – Local Plan Policy LP21

The site provides **only two on-site parking spaces**, which is wholly inadequate for a C2 children's home. This type of use typically requires:

Multiple staff on shift

Overlapping staff during handovers

Regular visits from social workers, health professionals, and other professionals

Educational tutors

With insufficient on-site parking, vehicles will inevitably park on **Church Lane**, a busy main road with existing parking pressures.

Impacting sightlines for residents entering and exiting their driveways. Also

impacting sightlines for residents exiting The Coppice.

2. Opposite a Bus Stop – Additional Safety Risk

The property sits **directly opposite a bus stop**, which significantly increases the highway safety concerns. Additional on-street parking would:

Obstruct visibility for buses pulling out

Reduce sightlines for drivers approaching the stop

Force pedestrians (including children) to cross between parked cars

Increase the risk of collisions involving buses, cars, and pedestrians

This is a **high-risk location**, and the proposal conflicts with **Policy LP21**, which requires development to ensure safe and efficient highway use.

3. Impact on Residential Amenity – Local Plan Policy LP24

A C2 children's home introduces a significantly more intensive pattern of activity than a C3 dwelling, including:

- Frequent staff movements
- Visitor traffic
- 24-hour operation
- Noise from comings and goings at unsocial hours

This level of activity is not compatible with the established residential character of Church Lane and conflicts with **Policy LP24**, which requires development to protect the amenity of existing residents.

4. Local Housing Character & Unsuitability for Care-Leaver Accommodation

The immediate area is characterised predominantly by **large, detached family homes owned by established professionals and retired individuals**, creating a stable, low-turnover residential environment with very limited smaller or affordable units. This housing profile means there is **no natural pathway** for

18-year-olds leaving children's homes to access appropriate, semi-independent accommodation locally, as the area simply does not contain the type of housing stock that care leavers typically rely on. Kirklees already faces a shortage of supported and one-bed accommodation for young adults transitioning out of care, and the surrounding neighbourhood offers **no realistic opportunities** to meet that need. Introducing a specialist placement within a community dominated by high-value, owner-occupied dwellings represents a clear **policy mismatch**, intensifying pressure on an area that cannot provide the necessary support network, housing mix, or progression routes for vulnerable young people. This further reinforces that the proposed development is **incompatible with the established character of the area and does not contribute to a balanced or sustainable housing offer as required by the Housing Mix SPD**.

5. Limited Outdoor Space – Unsuitable for C2 Use

The property has **very limited outdoor amenity space**, which raises concerns about:

The suitability of the site for children's needs

Noise and activity occurring close to neighbouring boundaries

Increased disturbance due to the confined layout

A C2 use requires adequate, safe, and private outdoor space, which this site does not provide.

6. Design of the Proposed Two-Storey Glass-Fronted Porch

The proposed two-storey, glass-fronted porch is not in keeping with the established character of the area. The street is defined by modest, traditional façades with simple entrance features. Introducing a large, contemporary, fully glazed structure would appear visually intrusive, overly dominant, and architecturally incongruous. Its height, massing, and modern materials would disrupt the uniformity and domestic scale of neighbouring homes.

The design represents a significant departure from the established architectural rhythm of the street and would materially harm the visual amenity of the area.

Relevant Policies

LP24 (Design) – the proposal fails to respect the scale, massing, materials, and architectural detailing of surrounding properties.

LP30 (Landscape & Character) – the modern, visually dominant glazed structure

7. Impact on Local Character and Street Scene

The plans do not provide details of the proposed boundary walls and/or fencing. Local properties typically feature low, open boundary treatments that contribute to a consistent, domestic street scene. In contrast, should the Children's Care Home require the introduction of high, security-style walls or fencing that would create an overly dominant, institutional appearance that is wholly out of character with neighbouring homes.

Kirklees Local Plan – Policy LP24 (Design)

LP24 requires development to promote good design by respecting the form, scale, layout and character of the built environment. The introduction of high walls or fencing would fail to reflect the prevailing boundary style in the area and would therefore conflict with LP24's requirement for development to "promote a

high quality, inclusive and cohesive design”.

Kirklees Local Plan – Policy LP30 (Biodiversity & Landscape)

LP30 emphasises the need to protect and enhance the character of the landscape and townscape. The introduction of visually harsh, defensive boundary structures would erode the established residential character and harm the appearance of the street scene, contrary to the aims of LP30.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) – Section 12 (Achieving Well-Designed Places)

The NPPF states that development should be visually attractive, sympathetic to local character, and maintain a strong sense of place. Security-style boundary treatments are not sympathetic to the domestic character of the area and would undermine the coherent appearance of the street.

8. Overlooking and Loss of Privacy from the Extension

The proposed extension will directly **overlook neighbouring gardens**, resulting in:

Loss of privacy

A sense of being overlooked

Reduced enjoyment of outdoor space for neighbours

This is contrary to **Policy LP24**, which requires development to avoid unacceptable impacts on privacy and outlook.

9. Inadequate Bathroom Provision – Unsuitable Internal Layout

The submitted plans show **only one bathroom** and a small cloakroom for the entire property. This is inadequate for a C2 children's home, which may include:

Multiple resident children

Staff members on shift

Visiting professionals

A single bathroom raises concerns about hygiene, welfare, and the practical functioning of the home. This further demonstrates that the property is **not suitable for the proposed intensity of use**, contrary to **Policy LP24**, which requires appropriate internal arrangements for the intended use.

10. Over-Intensification of Use

The property is designed as a single family dwelling. The proposed use introduces:

A higher number of occupants

A rotating workforce

Institutional-level activity in a domestic setting

This represents a **material intensification** that would alter the character of the area.

11. Air Quality & Health Risks to Children – LP24 & LP52

The property fronts directly onto **Church Lane**, a busy through-route with continuous traffic flow. The presence of a **bus stop directly opposite** increases emissions from idling buses and stop-start traffic.

Children are particularly vulnerable to traffic-related air pollution, which is associated with:

Respiratory problems

Worsening asthma

Reduced lung development

Increased susceptibility to illness

Placing a children's home in a location with **elevated vehicle emissions** raises serious concerns about the suitability of the site for vulnerable young residents.

This conflicts with **Policies LP24 and LP52**, which require development to provide a safe, healthy environment and protect environmental quality.

Environmental Quality – Policy LP52

The increased noise and disturbance from:

- Staff movements
- Visitors
- Outdoor activity
- Vehicle engines and door slamming

poses a risk to the environmental quality of the area, contrary to **Policy LP52**.

12. Observation:

It is of concern that a significant amount of structural work appears to have been undertaken at the property prior to planning consent being granted. These works go beyond routine maintenance and indicate preparatory steps for the proposed change of use. Carrying out such alterations in advance of permission creates the impression that the applicant considers approval to be a foregone conclusion, undermining the transparency and integrity of the planning process. It also raises the question of whether the work has been completed in accordance with Building Regulations and inspected by suitably qualified professionals.

This behaviour further reinforces local concerns about the suitability of the proposal and the applicant's regard for proper procedure.

Conclusion

For the reasons above, the proposal fails to comply with key policies of the Kirklees Local Plan, including:

LP21 – Highways and Access

LP24 – Design and Residential Amenity

LP52 – Environmental Protection

The development would result in unacceptable harm to highway safety, residential amenity, children health, and the character of the area. I therefore respectfully request that the application be **refused**.