

About the application

Application number: 2026/90484	
What is the application for?:	Change of use from dwelling to C2 for 4 children, erection of first floor extens
Address of the site or building:	143, Church Lane, Gomersal, Cleckheaton, BD19 4QN
Postcode:	LS27 7HB

User comments

Type of comment: An objection	
Do you wish your comments to be published on the website anonymously?	Yes
I am writing as the owner and occupier of agricultural land immediately adjoining 143 Church Lane to formally object to this application. My land is in active daily use, with tractors, telehandlers and other farm machinery operated on it throughout the year. My objection rests on several grounds: the serious and unmitigated safety risk posed to vulnerable children by the proximity of an active farm; the applicant's failure to address this in their supporting documents; the formal objection raised by Kirklees Children's Commissioning; and clear conflict with the adopted Local Plan. The applicant proposes to accommodate up to four children aged 7–18, all of whom — by their own Management Plan — will have experienced trauma and placement breakdowns. This group is recognised as being at heightened risk of absconding and impulsive unsupervised movement. My farm directly adjoins the site. The Management Plan itself contemplates children going missing, referencing a "missing person protocol" and "proactive search." The proposed security – a gate, door alarm and external CCTV – provides no meaningful physical barrier to a distressed or determined child, particularly during daylight hours when machinery is in operation. The consequences of a child entering a working farm unannounced could be fatal. Critically, the Management Plan makes no mention of the neighbouring farm whatsoever. There is no risk assessment of this hazard and no proposed mitigation. This is a fundamental omission that cannot simply be resolved by condition. Policy LP24 of the Kirklees Local Plan requires development to provide a high standard of amenity and safety for future occupiers. The application provides no information on the nature or height of the boundary between the site and my land, whether it is adequate to prevent a child crossing it, or what improvements are proposed. Without this, the LPA cannot properly assess whether the development is safe, and the application should not be approved on the basis of what is currently before the Council.	

before the Council.

The Council's own Children's Commissioning Officer formally objected on 18 March 2026, confirming that Kirklees Children's Service does not support this application. Their reasons are material and carry significant weight:

1. The four-bed model is not aligned with Kirklees sufficiency priorities, which favour smaller homes with demonstrated therapeutic and trauma-informed practice
2. There is already significant over-provision of children's homes in Kirklees, far exceeding local placement needs
3. Over-provision results in children from other local authorities being placed in Kirklees, contrary to government policy
4. Insufficient information has been provided about the provider's experience and Ofsted registration status

The applicant made no pre-application enquiry with Children's Services, contrary to clear Council guidance

There is no identified local need for this provision. Approving a use that the responsible commissioning authority actively opposes would be contrary to Policies LP1 and LP48 of the Local Plan.

Policy LP1 — The proposal does not represent sustainable development. It fails on the social dimension: the use is not needed, and it poses safety risks to the very people it would accommodate.

Policy LP24 — Development must provide safe, high-quality design and amenity for future and neighbouring occupiers. Relying on a gate alarm and CCTV to prevent children accessing a working farm with heavy machinery does not meet this test.

Policy LP21 — Safe access and movement must be demonstrated for all users. The movement of potentially distressed children in proximity to an active agricultural operation has not been considered at all.

Policy LP48 — Community facilities must meet an identified need. The Children's Commissioning Officer has confirmed no such need exists here.

Beyond the risk to the children themselves, the introduction of a residential use for vulnerable young people immediately adjacent to my farm creates foreseeable difficulties for my own operations. Children accessing my land — whether by accident or intention — creates potential liability and safety obligations that I should not be required to bear as an innocent neighbouring landowner. The applicant has not addressed this, and no condition proposed could realistically resolve it.

I ask that this application be refused for the following reasons:

Unmitigated safety risk to vulnerable children from the adjacent active farm with heavy machinery, with no risk assessment or adequate boundary treatment proposed

Conflict with Policies LP1, LP21, LP24 and LP48 of the Kirklees Local Plan

Formal objection from Kirklees Children's Commissioning confirming no local need for this provision

The adverse impacts significantly and demonstrably outweigh any benefits, contrary to NPPF principles