

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

Change of Use from Class C3 (Dwelling) to Class C2 (Young People's Supported Accommodation)

975 Leeds Road, Huddersfield, HD2 1UP

Submitted to: Kirklees Council

Date: 1 July 2026

1. Introduction

This Design and Access Statement (DAS) has been prepared in support of a planning application for the change of use of the existing semi-detached dwelling at 975 Leeds Road, Huddersfield, HD2 1UP from Use Class C3 (Dwellinghouse) to Use Class C2 (Residential Institution), specifically for use as a small supported accommodation facility for up to 7 young people aged 16 and over, referred by Local Authorities and approved commissioning bodies, including care leavers preparing for independent living.

This statement is submitted to Kirklees Council in accordance with the requirements of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 and the guidance set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2023. It explains the design principles and concepts applied to the proposed development, and describes how issues of access have been considered.

The document addresses the following key matters:

- The context and character of the site and surrounding area
- The design rationale for the proposed change of use
- The layout, scale, appearance and landscaping of the proposal
- Access arrangements for residents, staff, visitors, and emergency services
- Safeguarding, support model, and property management arrangements
- Compliance with national and local planning policy

2. Site Description and Context

2.1 The Site

The application site comprises an existing semi-detached residential dwelling located at 975 Leeds Road, Huddersfield, HD2 1UP. The property sits within an established residential street and is of a character and scale typical of the surrounding built environment. The building is

not listed and does not fall within a designated Conservation Area, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, or any other statutory heritage or landscape designation.

The site benefits from a private and secure amenity space to the rear, which is well-screened from neighbouring properties and the public highway. To the front, the property is served by a hardstanding area providing four off-street car parking spaces, representing a provision comfortably in excess of the requirements of most residential uses.

2.2 Surrounding Area

The wider area is characterised by a mix of residential properties along Leeds Road, which forms a key arterial route into Huddersfield town centre. The locality contains a range of dwelling types including semi-detached and terraced houses. Public transport links are readily available along Leeds Road, with bus services connecting the site to Huddersfield town centre and surrounding districts.

The site is sustainably located in terms of access to local amenities, education and training providers, employment opportunities, and community services, all of which are directly relevant to the proposed supported accommodation use and to the resettlement and independence goals of young care leavers.

3. Proposed Development

3.1 Description

The proposal is for a change of use of the existing C3 dwelling to a C2 Residential Institution for use as supported accommodation for up to 7 young people aged 16 and over, referred by Local Authorities or approved commissioning bodies, including care leavers preparing for independent living. The facility will provide a structured, homely residential environment with on-site support staff available at all times, helping young people to develop the practical, social, and emotional skills needed to live independently.

The proposed use falls clearly within Use Class C2 (Residential Institutions) by virtue of the level of care, supervision, and structured support provided. Residents will not be living as a single household; they will each have individual placements arranged by referring Local Authorities, individual support plans, and dedicated keyworker relationships. Support workers will be present on site at all times, providing structured supervision and guidance. This level of organised, continuous, professionally managed support is characteristic of a C2 use and is materially different in character from a C3 dwellinghouse, including any variant of C3(b).

No external alterations or extensions are proposed as part of this application. The external appearance, massing, scale, and form of the building will remain unchanged, thereby preserving the established character and appearance of the streetscene. All works required to facilitate the change of use will be confined to internal reconfiguration, including the installation of internal partition walls to create appropriate bedroom and communal spaces in accordance with relevant regulatory standards and building regulations requirements.

3.2 Internal Layout

The internal alterations are limited to partition changes to reconfigure the existing floorplan to suit the supported accommodation use. As shown on the submitted plans, the proposed layout will provide:

- 7 individual en-suite bedrooms, each with its own private bathroom and WC facilities
- A dedicated kitchen on the ground floor serving residents at ground floor level
- A dedicated kitchen on the first floor serving residents at first floor level

- Communal living and dining areas for shared use by all residents
- A care coordination room as shown on the submitted plans, used by on-site care staff

The provision of individual en-suite facilities for each young person is a key quality standard in supported accommodation, ensuring privacy, dignity, and a sense of personal space — all of which are particularly important for young people who may have experienced instability or trauma in their earlier lives. The dual-kitchen arrangement ensures that meals and refreshments can be prepared conveniently on both levels, and also provides an opportunity for young people to develop independent living skills such as cooking and household management.

The care coordination room is not a standalone office occupied by commuting management staff. It is a functional space used by support workers who are present on shift to assist young people with their daily routines and development goals. The facility will operate at all times as a domestic, homely residential environment. There will be no external signage, no separate business entrance, and nothing in the external appearance or operation of the property to distinguish it from a typical residential dwelling on Leeds Road.

The internal works will be carried out in compliance with Approved Document B (Fire Safety) of the Building Regulations 2010 (as amended).

4. Need for the Change of Use

4.1 Demand for Young People's Supported Accommodation

The proposed change of use is driven by a clearly evidenced and growing need for small-scale, community-based supported accommodation for young people in the Huddersfield area and across the wider Kirklees district. Young people leaving local authority care — commonly referred to as care leavers — face a significantly elevated risk of homelessness, unemployment, and social exclusion compared with their peers. Local authorities have statutory duties under the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 and the Children and Social Work Act 2017 to support care leavers up to the age of 25, and the provision of appropriate accommodation is central to meeting those duties.

All placements at the proposed facility will be made through Local Authorities or approved commissioning bodies. The property will not operate as emergency accommodation or direct-access housing. This referral model ensures that residents are appropriately assessed prior to placement, that their individual needs and risks are understood, and that the facility remains focused on planned, supported transitions to independence rather than crisis intervention.

Supported accommodation of the type proposed — providing a structured, homely environment with on-site support for up to 7 young people — is widely recognised by central government, Ofsted, and local commissioners as one of the most effective interventions available for young people transitioning out of care. It bridges the gap between residential care and fully independent living, equipping young people with the skills and confidence they need to sustain tenancies and participate in education, training, and employment.

4.2 Why This Building and This Use

The existing semi-detached dwelling at 975 Leeds Road is well suited to conversion into small supported accommodation rather than continued use as a private family residence. Its scale, layout, and location make it an appropriate setting for a facility of this nature. The proposed change of use represents a positive and community-minded use of this building, directly addressing an identified gap in provision for some of the most vulnerable young people in the Kirklees area.

The conversion of existing residential stock into small supported accommodation units is consistent with national and local planning policy as a sustainable approach to meeting housing and welfare needs without the cost and environmental impact of new build development. No new buildings are required; no greenfield land is consumed; and the character and appearance of the property and the streetscene are wholly preserved.

4.3 The Supported Accommodation Model

The proposed facility will operate as registered supported accommodation under the Supported Housing (Regulatory Oversight) Act 2023 and relevant Ofsted regulatory frameworks. It will provide semi-independent living for young people aged 16 and over who are referred by Local Authorities, offering a consistent, safe, and supportive base from which they can progress toward fully independent living.

Support workers will be present on site to assist young people with daily living skills, education and training engagement, emotional wellbeing, and practical tasks such as budgeting, cooking, and household management. The model is explicitly designed to foster independence rather than dependency, with the intensity of support reducing as each young person develops their capabilities. This approach is consistent with the Staying Put and Staying Close policy frameworks promoted by central government.

The scale of the proposal — 7 young people — is deliberately chosen to maintain a high support worker to resident ratio and to preserve the domestic, homelike character of the setting. Research consistently shows that small, community-embedded supported accommodation achieves significantly better outcomes for young care leavers than large institutional settings.

4.4 Local Need

Kirklees Council, as both the Local Planning Authority and the relevant local children's services commissioner, has statutory responsibilities toward care leavers in its area. The provision of a small, high-quality supported accommodation facility in an accessible location on Leeds Road — a key arterial route well served by public transport — directly responds to this identified local need. The site is well located in relation to Huddersfield town centre, local colleges, employment opportunities, and support services, all of which are essential to the resettlement and progression of young care leavers.

5. Residential Character and Staffing

5.1 Retention of Residential Character

A key consideration for Kirklees Council in assessing this application will be whether the proposed use materially changes the character of the building from that of a residential dwelling. The applicant is fully aware of this test, and the proposal has been designed from the outset to ensure that the home operates as a genuine residential environment rather than as an institutional or business premises.

The established test of materiality requires the Local Planning Authority to consider whether there has been a change in the character of the use, having regard to the activities proposed to be undertaken and whether those activities would exceed what might reasonably be undertaken at a dwellinghouse. This proposal has been carefully structured to ensure that the activities and operations of the supported accommodation remain consistent with and proportionate to a residential use.

5.2 Staffing Model

The proposed facility will accommodate up to 7 young people aged 16 and over in supported semi-independent living. Staffing levels will be proportionate to the number of residents and will meet the requirements of the Supported Housing (Regulatory Oversight) Act 2023 and applicable Ofsted standards. Crucially, the staffing model is structured around the support and development needs of the young people rather than the running of a business office:

- Support workers will be rostered on shift to provide day-to-day guidance and assistance to the 7 young residents
- Staff are present to support young people — their role is residential and pastoral in nature, not administrative or managerial in a business sense
- The care coordination room identified on the plans is a functional space used by on-shift support workers, not a dedicated management office occupied by commuting non-support staff on business hours
- There will be no daily 9am–5pm commuting manager attending the property as a separate business function distinct from the support of residents
- The staffing ratio of support workers to 7 young residents is entirely consistent with and proportionate to regulatory requirements for supported accommodation of this scale

The distinction between support workers on shift and a commuting business manager is fundamental. Support workers rostered to assist young residents are an entirely normal and expected feature of supported accommodation. The facility will not introduce a separate business management function that operates independently of the support of residents, and there will be no non-support staff attending the property on fixed business hours in a manner that would give the property an institutional or commercial character.

5.3 External Appearance and Domestic Character

The property will present at all times as a residential dwelling from the public highway. There will be no external signage, no business fascia, no separate entrance for staff, and no physical alteration to the exterior of the building. The garden, boundary treatments, and hardstanding will remain unchanged. The use will be indistinguishable from any other residential use on Leeds Road when viewed from the street.

The facility will operate in a manner consistent with a large residential household — meals prepared in the kitchen, young people living in their own rooms, communal areas used for shared activities and skills development. This is entirely consistent with the established residential character of the surrounding area and does not represent the kind of institutional or business use that planning authorities are concerned to prevent from establishing in residential streets.

5.4 Parking and Shift Changes

The site provides four dedicated off-street parking spaces. This provision is sufficient to accommodate the realistic parking demand generated by the proposed use, including during staff shift changeovers. Shift handovers will be managed to ensure that the number of vehicles present at the property at any one time does not exceed the available off-street provision, so that no overspill onto the public highway arises. Four spaces are considered more than adequate for a supported accommodation facility of this scale, providing capacity for on-shift support workers and occasional visitor parking. Young residents are referred by Local Authorities and are unlikely to own private motor vehicles, further reducing parking demand. The parking impact of the proposed use is no greater than that generated by a typical large family household and represents no material change to conditions on Leeds Road.

6. Design Principles

6.1 Design Approach

The overarching design principle underpinning this proposal is one of minimal intervention. Given that no external works are proposed, the existing architectural character, massing, and material palette of the building are wholly retained. The dwelling already presents an appropriate scale and form for a small supported accommodation facility of this nature, being of sufficient floor area to accommodate up to 7 young people comfortably within a home-like environment.

The design approach reflects the well-established model of smaller, community-integrated supported accommodation, which is widely recognised by Ofsted, central government, and local commissioners as being far preferable to large institutional settings for young people transitioning out of care. A property of this size and type is well suited to deliver a high-quality, person-centred environment that genuinely supports young people's development toward independence.

6.2 Scale and Massing

The scale and massing of the building remain unchanged by this proposal. The semi-detached property is of a scale entirely consistent with the surrounding residential context. The proposed use will not result in any increase in the footprint, height, or bulk of the building, and therefore there will be no adverse impact on the streetscene, neighbouring amenity, or the character of the area.

6.3 Appearance and Materials

As no external works are proposed, there will be no change to the external appearance or material finish of the building. The existing external elevations, fenestration, and boundary treatments are all retained in their present form. The building will continue to present as a residential property consistent with its neighbours, in keeping with the guidance in NPPF paragraph 130 that development should be visually attractive and sympathetic to local character.

6.4 Landscaping and Amenity Space

The site benefits from a private and secure amenity space to the rear of the property. This outdoor space will be retained and maintained for the benefit of young residents, providing an important recreational and therapeutic resource. Access to private outdoor space supports the physical and mental wellbeing of young people in supported accommodation and this proposal ensures that all residents will have access to a safe, enclosed garden area.

No works are proposed to the rear garden or soft landscaping. The existing boundary treatments, which provide security and privacy for residents and neighbours, will be maintained.

7. Access

7.1 Approach to Access

This statement addresses matters of access in accordance with the requirements of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015. The access section considers how all users — including residents, staff, visitors, and emergency services — will approach and move through the site.

The building is an existing semi-detached dwelling and the proposed change of use does not involve any external alterations. Access arrangements are therefore considered in the context of the existing physical characteristics of the building and site.

7.2 Vehicular Access and Parking

Vehicular access to the site is taken from Leeds Road via the existing access point to the front of the property. The site provides four off-street parking spaces, which will serve staff and visitor parking associated with the supported accommodation. This level of parking provision is considered appropriate and proportionate to the scale of the proposed use, given that:

- Young residents are referred by Local Authorities and are unlikely to own private motor vehicles, with public transport the primary mode of travel
- The site is well served by public transport along Leeds Road
- Four spaces provide adequate provision for staff working in shifts and for visitors

The parking area layout is unchanged from the existing arrangement, and there will be no impact on the public highway or on-street parking provision in the locality.

7.3 Pedestrian Access

Pedestrian access to the site will continue to be taken from Leeds Road via the existing entrance to the property. No alterations to the external pedestrian approach are proposed as part of this application. The existing entrance arrangement is considered suitable for the proposed use at this scale.

7.4 Access for Emergency Services

The site's frontage on Leeds Road ensures that emergency vehicle access is maintained at all times. A Fire Risk Assessment has been completed for the property and internal layout arrangements comply with Approved Document B (Fire Safety) of the Building Regulations 2010, ensuring that evacuation routes are clear and appropriate fire safety measures are in place prior to occupation.

8. Safeguarding, Support Model and Property Management

8.1 Safeguarding

The safety and welfare of young residents is the primary operational priority of the proposed facility. Robust safeguarding arrangements will be in place in accordance with the requirements of the Supported Housing (Regulatory Oversight) Act 2023, Ofsted regulatory standards, and the statutory safeguarding frameworks applicable to looked-after children and care leavers. In particular:

- All staff working at the property, including support workers, keyworkers, and management, will hold current enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks appropriate to their role
- The facility will operate under a comprehensive Safeguarding Policy reviewed regularly and available to the relevant Local Authority placing teams and Ofsted inspectors
- All placements will be arranged through Local Authorities or approved commissioning bodies following individual needs and risk assessments — the property will not accept emergency or direct-access referrals
- Each resident will have an allocated keyworker responsible for their individual support plan and ongoing welfare
- The registered manager will maintain oversight of all safeguarding matters and will act as the designated safeguarding lead for the property

8.2 Support Model and Independent Living Skills

The facility operates a structured semi-independent living model designed to equip young people with the skills and confidence required to sustain independent tenancies in the future. Each resident will benefit from:

- An individual support plan developed in collaboration with the referring Local Authority, the resident, and relevant professionals, reviewed regularly to reflect changing needs and progress
- A dedicated keyworker who provides consistent, trusted support and advocates for the resident's interests
- Structured support with independent living skills including budgeting and financial management, cooking and nutrition, household management, and maintaining a tenancy
- Assistance with accessing education, training, employment, and volunteering opportunities
- Support with emotional wellbeing, building positive relationships, and engaging with community activities

The intensity of support will reduce progressively as each young person demonstrates increased capability and confidence, in line with the move-on goals agreed with their placing Local Authority. The model is explicitly designed to foster independence rather than long-term dependency on supported accommodation.

8.3 Property Management and Neighbour Relations

The property will be managed to a high standard at all times, both to ensure the welfare of residents and to be a considerate neighbour within the community. The following management arrangements will apply:

- The property will be subject to regular internal inspections by the registered manager and periodic unannounced inspections by Ofsted
- A clear complaints and concerns procedure will be in place, and a named contact will be available to neighbouring residents who wish to raise any concerns about the operation of the facility
- Proactive neighbour liaison will be maintained — the operator is committed to being a responsible member of the local community and to addressing any issues promptly and respectfully
- House rules and expectations of conduct will be made clear to all residents upon admission and will be reinforced as part of the ongoing support programme
- The property will at all times be maintained in good condition and will present externally as a well-kept residential dwelling consistent with the character of the surrounding street

9. Planning Policy Considerations

9.1 National Planning Policy Framework

The proposal is consistent with the objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2023). In particular:

- NPPF Chapter 4 (Decision-Making) directs that planning should be a creative, planned process supporting sustainable development. The proposed use supports the provision of community facilities and services in an accessible location.

- NPPF Chapter 8 (Promoting Healthy and Safe Communities) recognises the importance of accessible community facilities, including accommodation and support for vulnerable young people. This proposal directly contributes to this objective.
- NPPF Chapter 12 (Achieving Well-Designed Places) supports development that maintains and enhances the character of the local area. As no external works are proposed, the character of the streetscene is wholly preserved.

9.2 Kirklees Local Plan

The application site is located within the urban area of Huddersfield within the Kirklees administrative boundary. The proposal should be assessed against the relevant policies of the Kirklees Local Plan. The change of use to supported accommodation for young care leavers is considered to be consistent with the aims of the Local Plan in:

- Supporting the provision of specialist housing and supported accommodation for vulnerable young people in sustainable, accessible locations
- Making effective use of existing building stock without the need for new build development
- Avoiding harm to the character and appearance of the existing residential environment

The proposal does not conflict with any known site-specific designations or policies applicable to this location.

10. Summary and Conclusions

This Design and Access Statement has been prepared in support of a planning application for the change of use of 975 Leeds Road, Huddersfield, HD2 1UP from a C3 dwellinghouse to a C2 Residential Institution for use as supported accommodation for up to 7 young people aged 16 and over, referred by Local Authorities and approved commissioning bodies, including care leavers preparing for independent living.

The proposal involves no external alterations to the building. The existing scale, massing, appearance, and material character of the semi-detached property are entirely retained, and there will be no adverse impact on the streetscene or the character of the surrounding residential area.

The proposal is driven by a clearly evidenced need for small-scale, community-based supported accommodation for young care leavers in the Kirklees area. All placements will be made through Local Authorities or approved commissioning bodies; the property will not operate as emergency or direct-access accommodation. The internal layout — comprising 7 en-suite bedrooms, two kitchens (one per floor), communal living spaces, and a care coordination room — has been carefully designed to deliver a high-quality, home-like environment that supports young people's progression toward independence.

The proposal has been carefully designed to ensure that the facility operates at all times as a genuine residential environment. There is no commuting business management function operating independently of the support of residents; staffing is structured around the direct support of 7 young residents in accordance with regulatory requirements under the Supported Housing (Regulatory Oversight) Act 2023; the 4 off-street parking spaces are sufficient to accommodate shift changes without impact on the public highway; and the property will present as a residential dwelling at all times with no external signage or business use visible from the street.

The site is well suited to the proposed use, benefiting from:

- 7 en-suite bedrooms providing privacy and dignity for all young residents

- Dedicated kitchens on both ground and first floors supporting independent living skills development
- A care coordination room supporting compliant and effective support delivery
- A staffing model with DBS-checked support workers, individual support plans, and keyworker relationships
- All placements via Local Authorities or approved commissioning bodies — no emergency or direct-access referrals
- Robust safeguarding, Ofsted inspection regime, and proactive neighbour liaison arrangements
- A private and secure rear amenity space for residents
- Four off-street parking spaces with managed shift changeovers
- A sustainable location with excellent public transport access on Leeds Road, close to colleges, employment, and support services
- An unlisted building with no heritage constraints and no external alterations proposed

The proposal supports national and local planning policy objectives relating to the provision of supported housing for vulnerable young people, the effective use of existing building stock, and the promotion of healthy and safe communities.

It is respectfully submitted that the proposed change of use is acceptable in planning terms and that planning permission should be granted.

Document prepared: 1 July 2026

Local Planning Authority: Kirklees Council

Application Site: 975 Leeds Road, Huddersfield, HD2 1UP