

Planning Statement for Change of Use of dwelling to Residential Family Centre
Site: 83 Connaught Road, Reading, Berkshire RG30 2UE
Client: Imani Living Limited.



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Site Information

Consultant	Visionary Planning Uk
Client	Imani Living Limited
Description of Development	Change of use from single dwelling C3(a) to Residential Family Centre Class use C2.
Pathway (PD/Application/Appeal)	Full

Constraints Review

Flood Risk Zone	Flood Zone 1
Contaminated Land	None known
Tree Preservation Order	None known
Heritage Assets	None
Noise Abatement Areas	None known
Explosive Hazard Areas	Unknown
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty	No
Special Protection Area	No
Site of Special Scientific Interest	No



RAMSAR Convention Site	No
Site of Importance to Nature Conservation	No
Article 4(2) Directions	No

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 Introduction

Visionary Planning is an independent and specialist town planning consultancy in the South West region. Visionary Planning has prepared this Planning Statement on behalf of Imani Living Limited.

This Planning Statement forms part of a Full-Application for the Change of Use for property 83 Connaught Road, Reading from a dwelling (Use Class C3) to a Residential Family Centre (C2). The main activity will be to observe and coach/teach mothers parental skills. Depending on the needs some assessment work may be undertaken. The Residential Family centre is defined by the Residential Centres Regulation 2002. The centre will be used solely for "mother and baby" provision subject to Local Authority and Court orders. Mothers range from 16 upwards and babies from age 0-2years.



This submission is supported by the following documents:

- Statement of Purpose
- Business Plan
- Management of Noise Policy
- Noise Control Plan
- Good Neighbour Policy
- Travel Plan
- Designing Out Crime appraisal

Service Model

Imani Living Limited provides residential family assessment placements for up to three families at any one time. Each family consists of one parent and their baby aged from birth up to two years. The centre offers a structured, safe, and nurturing environment where parents can demonstrate and develop their ability to care safely for their child under continuous assessment and professional guidance.

The service supports families who may have experienced complex social, emotional, or environmental difficulties, including trauma, domestic abuse, learning needs, or unstable relationships. Many parents will require targeted guidance, observation, and structured support to help them develop safe and consistent parenting routines.



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Organisational Structure

Imani Living Limited is the registered provider operating the Residential Family Centre at 83 Connaught Road, Reading, Berkshire, RG30 2UE. The company is responsible for ensuring that the centre operates in full compliance with the Residential Family Centres Regulations 2002, the Care Standards Act 2000, and the National Minimum Standards for Residential Family Centres 2022. The governance model provides clear lines of accountability from the provider through to frontline practice. It ensures strong leadership, transparent decision-making, and continuous improvement across all areas of service delivery.

Company Leadership and Governance

Registered Provider: Imani Living Limited

Responsible for the overall governance, compliance, and strategic direction of the service. Ensures that sufficient resources, staffing, and systems are in place to meet all regulatory requirements and maintain quality assurance.

Company Director: Rifat Hussain and Khalad Hussain

Hold corporate responsibility for financial oversight, compliance, and operational continuity. They ensure that the Centre remains viable, compliant, and effectively managed in line with Ofsted's regulatory expectations.



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Responsible Individual (RI): Rifat Hussain

Provides strategic oversight of the Centre's performance and compliance with all regulations and standards. Leads on quality assurance, safeguarding, and governance. Conducts monitoring visits under Regulation 25 and ensures the Centre operates in accordance with its Statement of Purpose. Reports directly to the Directors and holds overall accountability for operational quality and compliance.

Registered Manager (RM): Rifat Hussain

Manages day-to-day operations to ensure families receive safe, high-quality, and structured assessment and support. Oversees staff performance, assessment processes, and safeguarding practice. Ensures that all policies are implemented effectively and that the Centre operates in line with its Statement of Purpose. Reports to the Responsible Individual.

1.1.1 Imani Living Residential Family Centre provides a structured, nurturing, and impartial environment for parents to be fully assessed while being supported to learn and grow. The service exists to give families a genuine opportunity to demonstrate their parenting capacity under fair, safe, and transparent conditions.

Through small capacity, skilled staff, and consistent oversight, Imani Living ensures each family receives a personalised experience that protects the welfare of the child while enabling professional assessment that is balanced, respectful, and rooted in safeguarding.



The Imani Living Environment

1.1.2 Imani Living Residential Family Centre is a two-storey home located at 83 Connaught Road, Reading, Berkshire RG30 2UE. The property is within easy reach of public transport, GP practices, health visitors, and community services.

The home has been designed to feel safe, calm, and homely while maintaining the standards necessary for practical observation and supervision. Each family has their own private bedroom equipped with baby monitoring systems, cots, and storage space. Shared areas are fitted with CCTV in line with Regulation 21 and ICO privacy standards, supporting transparent and proportionate safeguarding.

Facilities include:

- Three fully furnished family bedrooms
- Shared kitchen for supervised meal preparation and life skills practice
- Communal lounge for family interaction and observation sessions
- Dining area used for family routines and feeding observation
- Laundry facilities for practical skill development
- Secure rear garden with CCTV and six-foot privacy fencing
- Staff sleep-in room for 24-hour supervision
- Office and meeting space for record keeping, supervision, and professional liaison



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The environment supports both family living and professional assessment. Each space is used to observe real-life parenting interactions while allowing families privacy, dignity, and opportunity for growth.

Suitability and Placement Criteria, Imani Living Residential Family Centre accepts referrals for parents who:

- Are aged 16 years or over and have primary care of their baby
- Are willing to engage in assessment, supervision, and feedback
- Can manage within a communal living environment with 24-hour staff presence
- Do not require clinical or hospital-level intervention.

The centre is not suitable for:

- Parents who present a significant unmanaged risk of violence, arson, or self-harm that cannot be safely mitigated
- Parents whose mental health needs require inpatient or medical treatment
- Situations involving more than one parent where the dynamics pose a high risk and cannot be safely managed within the property layout

1.1.3 Imani Living is committed to ensuring accessibility for all families, including those with learning disabilities, sensory needs, or English as a second language. Assessment materials are adapted using



visual aids, simplified language, interpreters, or assistive technology to ensure every parent has a fair and equal opportunity to participate and understand the process.

1.2 The Company Mission Statement

Imani Living Residential Family Centre exists to give every parent a fair and equal opportunity to demonstrate their ability to provide safe, nurturing, and loving care for their child. Our mission is to deliver high quality, evidence based family assessments within a supportive and structured residential environment that safeguards babies, promotes parental learning, and enables professionals to make informed decisions based on clear, balanced, and transparent evidence.

Safeguarding remains the foundation of everything we do. While we support parents to learn and improve, our primary duty is to protect each baby from harm and ensure that professional assessments remain objective, independent, and free from influence or bias.

We believe every parent deserves to be treated with dignity, respect, and impartiality. The centre provides a calm, consistent, and trauma-informed environment where parents can live safely with their children, develop essential parenting skills, and be objectively assessed through observation, guidance, and professional evaluation.

The centre operates on the principle of learning rather than punishment. Parents are encouraged to reflect on their actions through supported feedback rather than through punitive measures. Staff



use a trauma-informed approach that recognises how stress, fear, and past experiences influence current behaviour, promoting emotional safety and trust between parents and staff.

Our purpose is to identify both strengths and areas for development, supporting parents to achieve positive and sustainable change while prioritising the child's safety and wellbeing. Each assessment is carried out with accuracy, fairness, and sensitivity, recognising the uniqueness of every family's circumstances.

We aim to:

- Protect the welfare and safety of babies and children at all times.
- Deliver clear, structured, and factual assessments that enable local authorities and courts to make informed decisions about a child's future care.
- Support parents to understand their child's emotional, developmental, and physical needs.
- Provide practical teaching and reflective sessions that help parents build confidence and consistency in their care.
- Encourage self-awareness and responsibility through supportive feedback and goal setting.
- Uphold equality, inclusion, and cultural sensitivity across all aspects of care and assessment.
- Maintain professional integrity, accuracy, and accountability in every assessment report produced.
- Promote transparency, honesty, and open communication between families and professionals.



- Ensure that every action taken within the centre supports the safety, dignity, and best interests of the child.

1.3 The Site

The application site relates to 83 Connaught Road, which is a two-storey dwelling located on the corner junction between Connaught Road and Prince of Wales Avenue. According to information from the applicant the existing dwelling has an HMO license for a 6-bedroom HMO, use ceased earlier this year, the existing use of the property should therefore be considered as a single-family dwelling.

1.4 The property has 6 bedrooms, living room, kitchen, three toilets and a separate bathroom. See plans and Statement of Purpose for further details.

The Residential Family centre will use Bedroom 1 as office, Bedroom 5 as staff overnight sleep in room and Bedroom 4 as mother and baby play area.

The children will range from 0 – 2 years old and will be accompanied by their Mothers.

Upstairs will have two shower rooms with w/c and a separate w/c. Downstairs will have a shower and w/c room.



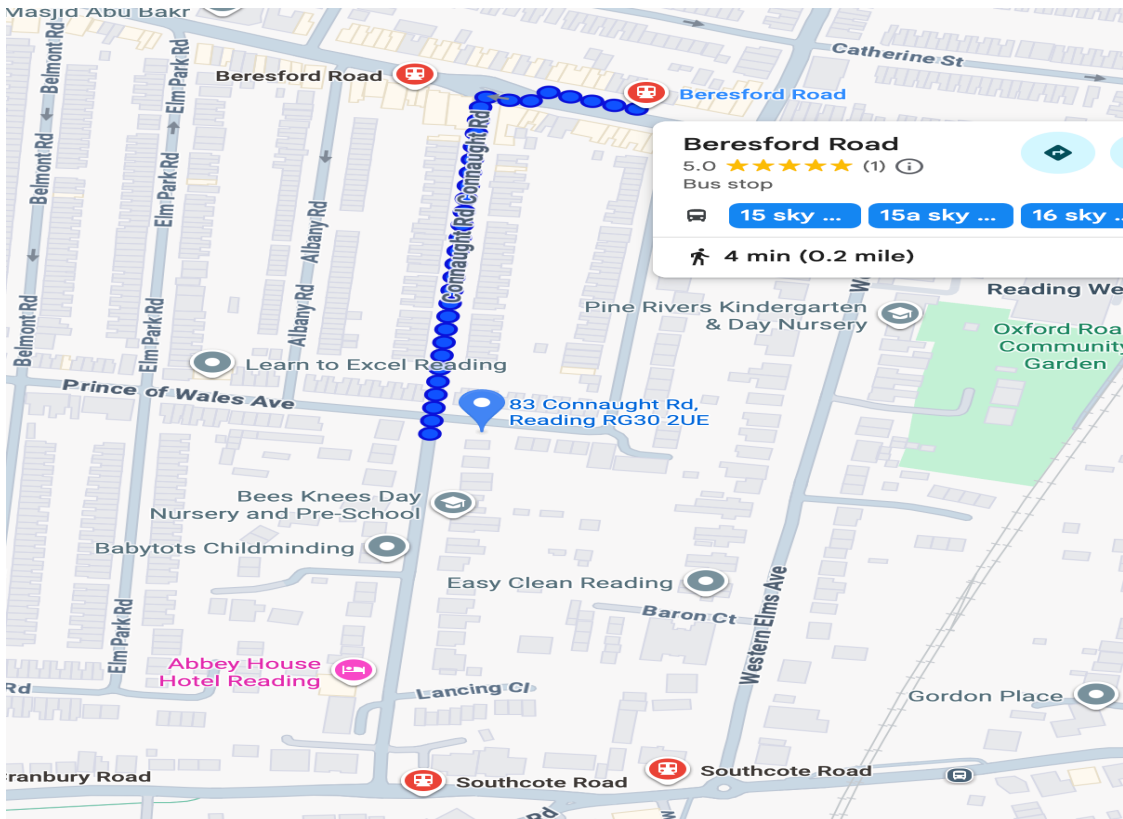
1.5 Staff Rota – on site will be a maximum of three staff. (pro rata to the number of occupants). Therefore, if there are 3 mother and babies in residence (0–2-year-old only). There will be one to one staff ratio = 3 staff members One staff member overnight in all circumstances.

1.6 The area is predominately residential, and it is also considered sustainable with public transport stops within easy walking distance. There are also several parking places within the residential curtilage.

1.7 Staff at 83 Connaught Road will be encouraged to participate in sustainable travel initiatives including local car-sharing schemes and Cycle to Work programs. Public transportation options such as buses and trains will also be promoted, and staff will have access to public transport timetables to facilitate their journeys. Where possible, staff shifts will be scheduled to coincide with local public transport times to encourage its use.

For staff who choose to cycle to work, secure cycle storage will be provided, along with information about local cycle routes. Walking, cycling, and using public transport will also be encouraged when engaging in activities with the young person, promoting health, wellbeing, and independence for both staff and residents.





Public Transport stops within easy walking distance.

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Nearest Doctor's Surgeries/GP Practices

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Listed here are the 10 closest GPs (General Practitioners) to Connaught Road, Reading, RG30 2UE. The nearest is Western Elms & Circuit Lane Surgeries, approximately 310 yards away. Please consult the [NHS Choices website](#) to check if the facility is currently accepting new NHS patients.

Name	Approximate Distance*
Western Elms & Circuit Lane Surgeries	310 yards
Abbey Medical Centre	0.5 miles
Chatham Street Surgery	0.6 miles
Coley Park Surgery	0.7 miles
Grovelands Medical Centre	0.8 miles
Broad Street Health Centre	0.8 miles
Circuit Lane Surgery	0.9 miles

Nearest Dentists

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Listed here are the 10 closest dentists to Connaught Road, Reading, RG30 2UE. The nearest is Reading Dental Sedation Clinic Partnership, approximately 760 yards away. Please consult the [NHS Choices website](#) to check if the facility is currently accepting new NHS patients.

Name	Approximate Distance*
Reading Dental Sedation Clinic Partnership	760 yards
Inspire Dental Reading	830 yards
MR F MOTTACKI	0.7 miles
mydentist, Meadway Shopping Centre, Tilehurst	1 mile
Friar Street Dental Practice	1 mile



Nearest Hospitals

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Listed here are the 8 closest hospitals to Connaught Road, Reading, RG30 2UE. The nearest is Spire Dunedin Hospital, approximately 720 yards away.

Name	Approximate Distance*
Spire Dunedin Hospital	720 yards
The Berkshire Independent Hospital	0.7 miles
Prospect Park Hospital	0.9 miles
Royal Berkshire Hospital	1.5 miles

2.0 National Planning Policy (NPPF 2024) revised. (in precis format where applicable).

Chapter 2 – Achieving Sustainable Development

2.1 The proposal supports the overarching objective of sustainable development by meeting current needs for specialised residential support for young mothers and infants without compromising future generations' abilities to meet theirs. It advances the three interdependent objectives in mutually supportive ways:

- **Economic objective:** By providing a structured environment for assessment and guidance, the centre facilitates mothers' potential reintegration into education, employment, or independent living, indirectly supporting economic productivity and reducing long-term reliance on public services.
- **Social objective:** It directly fosters strong, vibrant, and healthy communities by offering safe, monitored accommodation for a vulnerable group (young families under court orders),



promoting family stability, child welfare, and access to counselling/services that enhance social well-being.

- **Environmental objective:**

2.2.1 The centre makes effective use of existing dwelling. It minimises environmental impact and aligns with efficient use of land.

2.1.2 Overall, the development pursues net gains across these objectives by addressing immediate social needs while promoting long-term sustainability.

2.2 Paragraph 11 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

The proposal benefits from the presumption in favour of sustainable development, as it promotes a sustainable pattern of development under both plan-making and decision-taking criteria:

For plan-making: It meets local development needs by providing targeted housing/support for families under Local Authority/Court oversight, aligning growth with infrastructure (e.g., social services integration), improving the environment through the reuse of an existing property.

2.2.1 It addresses objectively assessed needs for specialised housing as it does not adversely impact protected areas/assets and its benefits (e.g., child protection, family support) outweigh any minor impacts.



2.2.2 For decision-taking: If the proposal accords with an up-to-date development plan (e.g., local policies on community facilities or housing), it should be approved without delay. Even if relevant policies are absent or out-of-date, permission should be granted unless protective policies apply strongly (unlikely for this social-focused use) or adverse impacts significantly outweigh benefits—which they do not, given the proposal's role in supporting vulnerable groups and sustainable communities.

2.2.3 This presumption applies positively, as the centre's specialised "mother and baby" provision enhances sustainable outcomes without demonstrable harm.

2.3 Tailoring Planning Controls to Local Circumstances (Paragraphs 51 and 52)

The proposal complies adhering to the framework that encourages flexible, localised planning tools to promote beneficial development:

2.3.1 Paragraph 52: Local authorities should adopt a proactive approach, collaborating to resolve issues, as this facility enhances residential environments for specific groups without broad adverse effects.

2.3.2 This tailoring ensures the development is responsive to local needs for family-centred support.

2.4 Chapter 5 – Delivering a Sufficient Supply of Homes (Paragraphs 60 and 67)

The proposal supports the goal of boosting home supply by addressing variety and specific needs:



Paragraph 60: It contributes to bringing forward sufficient land/variety where needed, specifically for groups with unique housing requirements (young mothers and infants under Court orders). By providing monitored residential accommodation, it helps develop a vacant property efficiently, aligning with government objectives for diverse housing without unnecessary delays.

2.4.2 Paragraph 61: While strategic policies use standard methods for housing need assessments, this centre reflects demographic trends (e.g., young families in need of support) and market signals for specialised provision, incorporating any unmet needs from neighbouring areas.

2.4.3 Paragraph 62: It directly assesses and reflects the size, type, and tenure needed for community groups, including families with children (here, babies 0-2) and potentially affordable housing elements. As a regulated facility, it caters to vulnerable persons or those under authority placements, ensuring policies address these subgroups.

2.4.4 Although not traditional market housing, the centre enhances overall supply by filling a gap in supported family accommodations.

2.5 Paragraphs 92 and 93 – Achieving Healthy, Inclusive and Safe Places

The proposal aligns with policies promoting health, inclusivity, and safety:



2.5.1 Paragraph 92(c): It enables healthy lifestyles by addressing local well-being needs for vulnerable families—e.g., through safe, monitored spaces that support parenting skills, access to guidance/counselling (akin to healthier environments), and layouts encouraging family bonding/walking in secure settings. These tackles identified needs like child safeguarding and maternal health.

2.5.2 Paragraph 93(a): Plans positively for community facilities by providing shared spaces/services (e.g., residential environments with assessment/counselling), enhancing sustainability and residential quality for young families.

2.5.3 Paragraph 93(b): Supports local strategies for health, social, and cultural well-being by integrating with authority/court-ordered provisions, benefiting all community sections—particularly at-risk mothers (aged 16+) and infants—through inclusive, protective measures.

2.6 In summary, the centre fosters inclusive, safe places by prioritising family health and community support and is compliant with the NPPF.

3. Local Plan Policy

CC1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

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3.1 The proposal benefits from the presumption in favour of sustainable development, as it reflects a positive approach to meeting identified needs for specialist accommodation without conflicting with the Local Plan.

3.1.1 It accords with sustainable development principles by repurposing an existing building in an accessible location (near public transport), supporting social objectives through family welfare and vulnerable group provision, and avoiding adverse environmental impacts (e.g., no new construction, retention of outdoor space). As the development aligns with up-to-date policies (e.g., H6 for vulnerable people), it should be approved without delay unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

3.1.3 No protective NPPF policies (e.g., on heritage or flood risk) provide a clear reason for refusal, and benefits in addressing housing needs for vulnerable families outweigh any minor impacts.

3.2 CC5: Waste Minimisation and Storage

3.2.1 The proposal complies by incorporating measures to minimise waste generation and promote sustainable management. As a change of use rather than new construction, it focuses on operational waste from residents and staff, with layouts providing adequate, well-designed space for storage, reuse, recycling, and composting (e.g., in the rear outdoor area).



3.2.2 This aligns with the policy's emphasis on sustainable approaches, including green waste composting and efficient bin storage to facilitate collection. The facility's design ensures waste areas are integrated without compromising amenity, supporting the waste hierarchy by prioritising minimisation and recycling over disposal.

3.3 CC6: Accessibility and the Intensity of Development

The scale and density of the proposal are appropriate to the site's accessibility, with several public transport stops within 4-6 minutes' walking distance, meeting the policy's threshold for good accessibility (within 400m of frequent services).

3.3.1 This location supports walking, cycling, and public transport to services, facilities, and employment, aligning with health benefits like increased physical activity and reduced stress. As a low-intensity change of use (no increase in building footprint or height), it does not exceed the site's accessibility level and avoids needing significant upgrades. The provision of bike storage further enhances sustainable access, ensuring the development promotes choice in transport modes without material harm to the network.

3.3.2 A comprehensive Travel Plan forms part of this submission.

3.4 CC8: Safeguarding Amenity



3.4.1 The proposal safeguards amenity by avoiding detrimental impacts on existing or new residents. As a change of use in a residential area, it maintains privacy (no new overlooking windows or overbearing structures), access to sunlight/daylight (no alterations to building envelope), and outlook (retention of rear space). Noise/disturbance is minimised through the facility's family-focused nature (no heavy traffic or late-night activity), with staff ratios (1:1) and no resident car ownership reducing vehicle movements. Artificial lighting, vibration, dust, fumes, smells, and wind effects are not applicable or negligible. The back-to-back distance to neighbours exceeds 20m where relevant, and the residential character ensures no harm to crime/safety. Conditions could restrict any future changes to maintain this balance.

A noise Management Plan and Noise Control plan are included in this submission.

3.5 H6: Accommodation for Vulnerable People

3.5.1 The proposal directly supports provision for vulnerable people by providing specialist accommodation for young mothers and infants under court orders, enabling independent living with monitoring, guidance, and counselling.

3.5.2 It addresses identified needs in the Housing Strategy for groups like young people at risk and families requiring support, counting toward the plan's aim for independent-living options (beyond the 253 C2 bedspaces for elderly). The site is near community facilities (e.g., healthcare via public



transport access), accommodates equivalent or more residents than prior use, includes green rear space for well-being, and respects residential surroundings (no external changes).

3.5.3 As it caters to limited-mobility groups (e.g., mothers with babies), it is within 400m of a district/local centre and bus stops, with secure bike/mobility scooter storage.

3.6 H7: Protecting the Existing Housing Stock

3.6.1 The proposal protects the existing housing stock by maintaining residential use, albeit specialised for mothers and babies, without net loss of units or floorspace. As a change of use to C2, it retains the building's housing function for vulnerable families, addressing exceptional circumstances where general housing is repurposed to meet identified needs (e.g., for young

mothers under authority oversight). This avoids exacerbating housing shortages, as demonstrated by the facility's role in supporting family stability and independent living, equivalent to accommodating multiple people (mothers/babies) in a safe environment. No exceptional loss is proposed, aligning with the policy's aim to prevent reductions unless justified.

3.7 H8: Residential Conversions

3.7.1 While the proposal is a change of use to C2 rather than a residential conversion (e.g., to flats or HMOs), it complies with the policy's principles by respecting amenity and character. It avoids



intensification of activity (low resident turnover, staff-managed), loss of privacy/external space (good rear area retained), and ensures adequate on-site parking (3 spaces) and bin/cycle storage at ground level.

3.7.2 Whilst the building does not exceed 120m² gross, it is not a conversion and still in a residential use with no harm to mixed communities no adverse noise/disturbance and sufficient internal space for residents.

3.7.3 The proposal enhances rather than dilutes family housing.

3.8 H10: Private and Communal Outdoor Space

3.8.1 The proposal provides functional communal outdoor space, with the dwelling retaining good rear space suitable for sitting-out, children's play (for babies 0-2), home food production, composting, storage, and drying. This respects the size/character of nearby spaces, is appropriately related to entrances (rear access), enhances safety (secure, overlooked by staff), and avoids overlooking/overbearing/overshadowing (as there are no new structures).

3.8.2 As a C2 facility akin to communal housing, the space supports resident well-being without compromise, aligning with the policy's emphasis on green areas for enjoyment and perception of safety.



3.9 TR3: Access, Traffic and Highway-Related Matters

3.9.1 The proposal maintains safe, uncongested access without environmental harm. No new/alterd access is proposed, but existing on-site arrangements comply with standards (e.g., no detriment to network function). With mothers/babies not owning cars and staff using 3 spaces (plus public transport/bikes), it generates minimal trips, avoiding HGV movements or unsuitable roads.

3.9.2 Safety for pedestrians/cyclists is enhanced via nearby stops and bike storage, with no material impact on the Classified Highway Network. As a low-traffic residential use, it supports free flow and avoids short local trips on main roads.

3.10 TR5: Car and Cycle Parking and Electric Vehicle Charging

3.10.1 The proposal complies with parking requirements per the Revised Parking Standards SPD, classifying as C2 (e.g., Nursing Home equivalent for vulnerable care).

Car parking: 3 on-site spaces meet the maximum standards (0.5-1 per FTE staff + 1 per 4 residents across zones), assuming 3 staff (1:1 ratio) and limited residents (e.g., 3 mothers/babies for a family centre). With good accessibility (PT within 4-6 mins), it fits Zone 2/3 levels, minimising overspill.

3.10.2 The clients will not have access to cars, and EV charging can be provided (e.g., for staff spaces) to meet the policy (points for houses/communal parks).



3.10.3 Cycle parking:

Bike storage complies with minimum standards (1 per 3 staff + 1 per 3 residents long-stay; 1 per 10 visitors short-stay), supporting sustainable transport in an accessible location without need for upgrades.

3.10.4 In summary, the centre enhances sustainable, specialist housing provision while complying with amenity, access, and transport policies.

4.0 Conclusion

4.1 In conclusion, the proposed change of use to a C2 Residential Family Centre for mothers aged 16+ and babies aged 0-2 years, providing monitored accommodation, assessment, and support under Local Authority or Court orders, is fully compliant with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2024 and the adopted Reading Borough Local Plan (November 2019).

4.2 This facility addresses a critical social need for vulnerable families, aligning with the NPPF's presumption in favour of sustainable development (Chapter 2 and Paragraph 11) by meeting present requirements for specialised housing without compromising future generations, while advancing economic (through family reintegration), social (child welfare and community health), and environmental (efficient reuse of existing buildings) objectives.



4.3 It supports delivering a sufficient supply of homes (Chapter 5, Paragraphs 60-62) by catering to specific groups like families with children, and promotes healthy, inclusive places (Paragraphs 92-93) via access to services and safe spaces.

4.4 Locally, it accords with key policies including CC1 (presumption for sustainable development), CC5 (waste management), CC6 (accessibility, with public transport within 4-6 minutes' walk), H6 (vulnerable accommodation), H7 (protecting housing stock through continued residential use for families), H8 (residential conversions, adapted as a change of use), H10 (outdoor space retention), TR3 (highway safety), and TR5 (parking, compliant with the Revised Parking Standards SPD's zonal approach and maxima for C2 uses, providing 3 staff spaces, bike storage, and EV potential in an accessible location).

4.5 Potential noise issues are effectively mitigated, ensuring compliance with CC8 (safeguarding amenity, avoiding detrimental noise/disturbance) and EN16 (pollution, including general noise impacts). The family-oriented nature of the centre generates minimal additional noise beyond typical residential levels (e.g., no equipment or activities likely to cause harm), and a dedicated noise management policy accompanies this submission incorporating operational controls to minimise any effects on neighbours.

4.6 Complementing this, a good neighbour policy and formal complaints procedure will foster positive community relations, with prompt resolution of concerns.



4.6.1 The 24/7 staff rota, ensuring at least one member on site at all times, provides constant oversight to address issues immediately, further reducing risks.

4.6.2 Additionally, the proposal aligns with CC7 (design and public realm) by designing out crime through security features such as window restrictors (risers), secure access, and overlooked spaces, creating a safe environment that minimises fear of crime and enhances community cohesion without altering the building's external appearance.

4.7 It should be remembered that:

'The suitability of the internal layout is governed by Ofsted and the property has been visited by a Regulation 44 inspector who has made suggestions for the property to ensure that it is in-line with The Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 Act'

4.7.1 The proposed Residential Family Centre, as defined under the Residential Family Centres Regulations 2002, falls under the regulatory oversight of Ofsted, the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills, which is responsible for registering, inspecting, and enforcing compliance with national minimum standards for such facilities in England. Operation of the centre requires prior Ofsted approval and registration to ensure the welfare, safety, and quality of care for vulnerable mothers and their babies, including aspects such as staffing, safeguarding, and operational management.



4.7.2 To prevent unnecessary regulatory overlap and promote efficiency, planning conditions should not duplicate matters already governed by Ofsted, such as detailed care standards or inspection regimes, allowing the focus to remain on land use and development compliance while relying on Ofsted's specialised expertise for service delivery.

4.8 Overall, this development represents a sustainable, beneficial reuse that enhances social infrastructure, with benefits significantly outweighing any negligible impacts, warranting approval under the current policy framework.

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