

Local and National Need Statement

Proposed Use: Residential Dwelling with Care (Class C3(b)) to Residential Care Home (Class C2)

Address: 7 Glennon Close, Reading, RG30 3HT

Prepared on behalf of: Nehal Ahmed

Local Planning Authority: Reading Borough Council

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1.0 Introduction

This statement demonstrates the clear national and local demand for small-scale residential care homes for children such as the one proposed at 7 Glennon Close, Reading.

The proposed home will accommodate up to three young people aged 7–16 with Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties (EBD) within a structured, supportive residential environment.

The proposal directly contributes to the ability of local authorities to meet their statutory duties under the **Children Act 1989**, the **Children and Families Act 2014**, and the **Care Planning, Placement and Case Review Regulations 2010**, which require local authorities to secure sufficient accommodation for looked-after children within or near their home area.

This statement demonstrates that the provision of small, community-based residential homes remains an essential component of meeting both **national safeguarding obligations and local sufficiency strategies**.

2.0 National Context and Growing Demand

Across England, the number of children entering the care system has continued to increase steadily.

According to the Department for Education, there were over **83,000 looked-after children in England**, the highest level ever recorded.

A significant proportion of these children require residential care placements due to complex needs, trauma, or behavioural challenges that cannot be adequately supported in foster care settings.

National data consistently shows that:

- The number of children requiring residential placements continues to increase annually.
- Local authorities frequently struggle to secure suitable placements close to a child's home area.
- Children are often placed significant distances from their communities due to a shortage of appropriate residential homes.

These challenges have been widely recognised by government and regulators, leading to increased emphasis on the development of **small, community-integrated children's homes** that can provide stable, therapeutic environments.

3.0 Regional Pressures in the South East

The South East of England faces particularly acute pressures in relation to the provision of children's residential placements.

The high cost of housing, planning constraints, and limited availability of suitable properties have resulted in a relatively small number of children's homes compared to the growing number of children requiring placements.

As a result, many local authorities within the region are frequently required to place children outside their home area.

Out-of-area placements are widely recognised as problematic because they can disrupt:

- Educational continuity
- Access to family members
- Established support networks
- Relationships with social workers and local services

For children who have already experienced instability, being placed far from familiar surroundings can significantly affect their emotional wellbeing and long-term outcomes.

4.0 Local Need – Reading Borough Council Sufficiency Strategy

Reading Borough Council's **Children Looked After Sufficiency Strategy** highlights the ongoing challenge faced by the authority in securing suitable residential placements for children with complex needs.

The strategy acknowledges that local authorities must ensure there are **sufficient placements available locally** in order to meet the needs of children entering care.

A key objective of Reading's strategy is to reduce the reliance on **out-of-area placements** and instead support the development of local provision where children can remain close to their communities, education providers, and support services.

The strategy recognises that children with complex emotional and behavioural needs often require specialist residential placements that are:

- Small in scale
- Highly supportive
- Integrated within residential communities

Developing additional small residential homes helps local authorities ensure that children are able to remain closer to their home area, which supports improved safeguarding outcomes and greater placement stability.

5.0 Benefits of Small Residential Homes

The proposed home at 7 Glennon Close reflects the type of provision increasingly encouraged by national policy and local sufficiency strategies.

Small residential homes provide several important benefits:

Firstly, they create an environment that closely mirrors a typical family household, allowing young people to develop in a stable and nurturing setting.

Secondly, smaller homes enable staff to provide more personalised care and attention, improving the ability to respond to each child's emotional and behavioural needs.

Thirdly, integrating residential homes within normal communities supports social inclusion and reduces stigma associated with institutional care environments.

For children with EBD needs in particular, smaller therapeutic environments often produce significantly better outcomes than larger institutional settings.

6.0 Alignment with Local Authority Objectives

The proposed residential home aligns closely with the objectives identified within Reading Borough Council's sufficiency planning.

The home contributes to these objectives by:

- Increasing the availability of residential placements within the borough
- Providing a small, stable, family-style care environment
- Supporting children with complex emotional and behavioural needs
- Reducing reliance on distant or emergency placements

The provision of additional small homes such as this one allows local authorities to build a more resilient and responsive placement system.

7.0 Conclusion

There is clear and sustained demand for additional small-scale residential children's homes both nationally and locally.

Reading Borough Council's own sufficiency planning highlights the importance of developing appropriate local provision for children who require residential care placements.

The proposed home at 7 Glennon Close contributes directly to these objectives by providing a small, carefully managed residential setting for young people with emotional and behavioural needs.

By supporting the availability of local placements, the home will help ensure that vulnerable young people can remain closer to their communities while receiving the care and support they require.

The proposal therefore represents a responsible and positive contribution to the wider social care system while maintaining the residential character of the surrounding neighbourhood.