

Design, Access and Planning Statement

Change of Use from Class C3 Dwellinghouse to Class C2 Children's Residential Care Home



Site Location:	32 Brunswick Hill, Reading RG1 7YU
Date:	23/02/2026
Planning Authority:	Reading Borough Council

1. Introduction

Homz has been told to submit a planning application to Reading Borough Council for a Change of Use from Class C3 Dwellinghouse to Class C2 Children's Residential Care Home at 32 Brunswick Hill, Reading RG1 7YU.

This Planning Statement accompanies a full planning application seeking permission for the change of use of 32 Brunswick Hill, Reading from a Class C3 dwellinghouse to a small Class C2 residential children's care home accommodating up to three children.

The proposal responds directly to an identified national and local need for specialist residential accommodation for vulnerable children requiring structured care environments. The application involves no external alterations and focuses on the appropriate reuse of an existing residential building for a socially beneficial purpose.

2. Site Description and Context

The application property comprises a substantial detached multi-storey residential dwelling situated within an established residential area of Reading. The property benefits from:

- A generous internal floor area capable of supporting multiple bedrooms and communal facilities
- Existing residential layout with several bedrooms, shared living areas and bathrooms
- Private garden amenity space
- On-site parking provision
- A scale, massing and design consistent with surrounding residential development

The building currently reads as a conventional dwelling and will continue to do so following the proposed change of use, as no external alterations are proposed.

The surrounding area is predominantly residential in character, with typical suburban housing patterns and established infrastructure.

3. Proposal

The proposal seeks planning permission for the change of use from Class C3 (dwellinghouse) to Class C2 (residential institution) to operate a small children's residential care home for up to three young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties (EBD), learning disabilities (LD), and/or mental health needs.

National Need for Children's Residential Care

There is a well-documented and growing national demand for children's residential care placements. Local authorities across England face persistent shortages of suitable placements, resulting in:

- Increased out-of-area placements for vulnerable children
- Pressure on social care systems
- Limited availability of appropriately scaled domestic care environments

National policy guidance, including objectives within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), recognises the importance of delivering housing and accommodation to meet the needs of different groups in the community, including vulnerable individuals requiring specialist support.

The proposal contributes positively toward meeting this national shortfall by providing a small, domestic-scale care environment rather than an institutional facility.

Relevance to Local Planning Policy

The proposal aligns with the Reading Borough planning framework through:

- Provision of community infrastructure supporting social wellbeing
- Retention of residential character and building form
- Sustainable reuse of an existing residential property
- Avoidance of overdevelopment or intensification
- Maintenance of residential amenity standards

Local plan policies generally support appropriate specialist housing where impacts on amenity, character and infrastructure are acceptable. This proposal satisfies those criteria.

Operational Characteristics

The proposed care home will include:

- Single-occupancy bedrooms for up to three children
- Communal living and dining areas promoting a domestic environment
- Appropriate bathroom and WC provision
- Staff facilities and supervision space where required
- Logical internal circulation supporting safeguarding and wellbeing
- Retention of garden amenity space
- No external building alterations

The scale of occupation remains comparable to a large family household and avoids any institutional character.

4. Planning Policy Context

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The proposal aligns with key national policy objectives, including:

- Supporting strong, inclusive communities
- Delivering housing for people with specific needs
- Making effective use of existing buildings
- Promoting sustainable development within established settlements
- Protecting residential amenity and local character

Provision of children's care accommodation directly supports these strategic objectives.

Reading Borough Local Plan Considerations

Relevant policy themes typically include:

- Safeguarding residential amenity
- Supporting community infrastructure
- Ensuring development respects character and design context
- Sustainable location of specialist residential uses

Given the modest scale of the proposal, absence of external change, and social care function, the development sits comfortably within these policy expectations.

5. Planning Assessment

Principle of Development

The use of an existing dwelling as a small children's residential care home is generally acceptable where:

- The scale remains domestic
- Amenity impacts are controlled
- Character of the area is preserved
- There is demonstrable community need

All of these criteria are met in this case.

Impact on Character and Appearance

No external alterations are proposed.

Therefore:

- The building will retain its residential appearance
- Streetscape character remains unaffected
- No design or visual harm arises

This significantly reduces planning risk.

Residential Amenity

Potential amenity considerations typically include noise, activity levels, traffic, and perception of change.

However:

- Occupancy is limited to three residents
- Professional staffing ensures behavioural management

- Activity levels remain broadly comparable to a family household
- Garden amenity space supports internal living quality

With appropriate operational management, material amenity harm is unlikely.

Transport and Parking

Existing parking provision is retained.

Traffic generation associated with a small children's home is typically modest and comparable to residential use, particularly given the low number of residents.

The site benefits from a sustainable residential location with access to local services.

Social and Community Benefit

The proposal provides:

- Essential accommodation for vulnerable children
- Contribution toward local authority placement capacity
- A domestic care environment rather than institutional provision
- Efficient reuse of an existing building

This constitutes a clear public benefit in planning terms.

6. Technical Considerations

Separate regulatory frameworks will govern operational matters, including:

- Ofsted registration requirements
- Fire safety compliance
- Building regulations standards
- Safeguarding operational protocols

These regimes complement planning considerations and ensure appropriate operational control.

A management and operational statement will accompany the planning submission to provide assurance regarding supervision, safeguarding and neighbour amenity.

7. Planning Balance

The proposal delivers clear planning benefits:

- Addresses national and local need for children's care accommodation
- Reuses an existing residential building sustainably
- Maintains residential character and appearance
- Avoids physical overdevelopment
- Generates minimal additional environmental impact
- Provides social infrastructure supporting vulnerable groups

Potential concerns relating to perception or amenity can be mitigated through management arrangements and the modest scale of the operation.

On balance, the proposal represents sustainable development consistent with both national and local planning policy objectives.

8. Conclusion

The proposed change of use of 32 Brunswick Hill from a Class C3 dwellinghouse to a small Class C2 children's residential care home is acceptable in planning terms.

The development:

- Responds directly to national and local demand for specialist residential care accommodation
- Maintains the residential character of the property and surrounding area
- Generates minimal environmental or amenity impacts
- Aligns with national planning objectives and local policy principles
- Provides a clear social and community benefit

Planning permission is therefore respectfully sought.

For the above reasons, the development is sustainable development and is also in accordance with national policy and guidance. Therefore, in the absence of any other material considerations to justify otherwise, it is respectfully requested that development be considered as acceptable in principle.

Should the Planning Authority request any further information to process this request for **Change of Use from Class C3 Dwellinghouse to Class C2 Children's Residential Care Home**, please contact Shivam at **Homz UK** Shivam@homz.uk directly as the acting agent and we will be more than happy to deliver any additional information as and when required.