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Dear sirs

**Application for a Certificate of Lawful Development for the proposed change in use from a dwelling house to a children’s home, at** **22 Station Road, Liscard CH44 3AQ**

The application for a Certificate of Lawful Development in respect of a proposed change in use from a small dwellinghouse (Use Class C3) to a children’s home (Use Class C2), at 22 Station road, Liscard CH44 3AQ

The proposed change is not a material change in use and as such will not constitute development. Accordingly, the change will be lawful. It will not require planning permission.

**The current use**

1) The application property is a double fronted 5-bed semi-detached dwellinghouse. The planning history available to view on-line on the Council website does not return any record of any planning applications having been made affecting this property.

2) The existing accommodation is spread across three floors. On the ground floor is the street entrance to the property and a living room and dining room both street facing. To the rear of the ground floor is a kitchen which gives access to the rear garden and small WC and combined shower room. On the first floor there are three bedrooms, two of which are street facing with the third to the rear adjacent to the bathroom. On the second floor are two street facing bedrooms.

**Description of the proposed use**

3) The use of a dwellinghouse as a children’s care home, providing care for children, in which no more than three children (persons below the age of 18) are resident at any one time

**Additional background information on the proposed use**

4) The following information is provided to ensure the Council has a rounded understanding of the nature and character of the proposed use, to assist in its assessment and to affirm the description as given above is sufficiently clear and precise.

5) No staff working in the home will regard the home as their main permanent residence, they will care for the children living in the home by following a twenty-four-hour shift pattern. So, they will start work at 10:00 AM work until 23:00 when they will retire for the night. They will wake at 7:30 and work until 10:00 AM. Once a staff member has completed their shift they will return to their own residence.

6) The number of staff in the home at any given time would not normally exceed three, one of which would be the manager who works between the hours of 09:00 and 17:00 Monday to Friday. When staff handover and new staff arrive to replace them, there would be five staff present in the home but only for the half hour of time allocated handover. The maximum present at one time on Saturday or Sunday would be four as there is no manager present. Again, this maximum figure would only be for half an hour. In addition, staff handovers could be staggered if required.

7) There will be two staff sleeping over every night. One will sleep in the office/bedroom which is street facing and located on the first floor. The use of the office and sleeping accommodation will require no specific adaptation. It will be furnished and will have the appearance of a bedroom equipped for home study or home working. It will appear and be used no differently to the arrangement which can be found today in many modern family homes. The staff/office room will deal solely with the administrative responsibilities of this home and no other children’s home.

8) The second member of staff will sleep in a bedroom on the second floor which is again street facing. This room will look no different to a bedroom you would find in modern family homes, again this room will require no adaptions. As none of the children living in the home will have special care requirements therefore no adaptations are required. The children living in the home will not have unsupervised access to rooms allocated for staff use.

9) We are especially keen for our homes to appear no differently to any regular home. We ensure they are smart, tidy, well maintained and well equipped to operate in the same way as any normal household. We have a large family kitchen where staff together with children can prepare meals and snacks. We have a large dining room where the table can be set for eating meals.

10) The children will have their own private and personalised bedrooms. They will share, with other children and staff, an upstairs bathroom and downstairs shower room. The children will have unrestricted access to all rooms in the house and to the outdoor space, except for the staff office/bedroom and staff bedroom as noted above.

11) We anticipate that the routines for the children living in the home will be varied. They are required by law to attend education. Outside of education, our children will be encouraged and supported at every opportunity to take part in home based or external community-based activities and journeys tailored to the child’s individual needs, wishes and aspirations.

12) During the week there will be professional visitors to the home that are associated with the children’s care plans. This could be social workers or health care workers and external compliance auditors. From our experience we would expect between three to five visitors in any given week. Visitors to the home will be there solely to speak with the children so most of these visits would take place between 15:00 and 18:00, when the children are home from school, so we expect no professional visitors to the home after 18:00.

13) There may be occasional pre arranged parental visits in the home. These would be in line with the Local Authority care plan and the session would be fully supervised including entrance and egress of the property. This would be no different to other residences in the road having family members visiting occasionally.

14) There would no comings and goings normally between 2200 and 0700 hours. Because we want our homes to appear like any normal home, we do not permit operational or care planning meetings to take place in the home, such meetings are usually held in our locally based head office or local authority provisions.

15) The children we support require personal care because children cannot form a household on their own; adult supervision is required. Sometimes a child may have additional needs, to address health or emotional issues. These needs would not be such as to require permanent additional staffing or to require a greater than normal level of visitors to the premises. The need for care is therefore no different or only slightly different to that which may be required by any family household or by any group of adults living together in a small HMO.

16) We recognise the importance of the children in our care being and feeling part of their local community, this includes neighbours in close proximity. It’s important we fit in and work alongside our neighbours for the greater good of our children and harmony in the street. This train of thought extends to parking, which can often be a source of contention, given people like parking outside their own home. We ensure our staff are conscious of this and they know not to park outside anyone’s home, even if it means they park hundreds of yards away from the home, it’s about being courteous and considerate, which we wholeheartedly encourage and endorse.

17) Overall, we feel these arrangements and comings and goings are not dissimilar from single family households or small HMOs.