

Statement To Support Planning Application

21 Townsend Leys
Higham Ferrers
Northamptonshire
NN10 8LW

'Use of premises as a children's home for two children with two to three full time carers living together as a single household'.

Heartly Care Ltd propose the use of 21 Townsend Leys, Higham Ferrers, Northamptonshire, NN10 8LW, currently a Use Class C3 (Dwelling Houses) to be changed to Use Class C2 (Residential Institutions) for use as a small children's home. The current property is a 4-bedroom detached dwelling and the proposal is for this to remain as a 4-bedroom detached dwelling.

Heartly Care Ltd - Children's residential care homes

Heartly Care Ltd have a strong Senior leadership team that has excelled for over 30 combined years in delivering a high quality of care and achieving an outstanding reputation for looking after children. This will be our second children's care home with the first already located in the area of Wellingborough. Our senior operators have extensive experience in the opening and operations side of children's homes, which are of the same nature in former residential dwellings in the county of Northamptonshire.

At Heartly Care we believe that every child deserves the best, so it is our mission to provide the best outcomes for children in our family homes.

Creating the right environment in the right location

It is essential for us to create the right environment for a child who has suffered trauma. The small family homes that we acquire will provide the safety and security needed for the specialist care the children require. Each child is supported by his or her own key worker, as well as a specially trained staff team who create a positive environment.

Heartly Care Ltd has identified 21 Townsend Leys in Higham Ferrers to be most suitable for use as a small specialist children's home. We have identified its suitability due to a local play area for young children on the estate, good schools in the area and a good community culture. This home will accommodate 2 young children between the ages of 8-16 with 2-3 carers at any one time providing 24-hour care. Whilst the care being provided will be 24 hours, only two carers would be sleeping in the home at night.

The Purpose of our Home

The purpose of the home would be to support children to build their confidence and help them in developing life skills and re-engaging them into education.

The carers, whose main residence is not at the premises will work on a shift pattern which would normally be a 24-hour shift. While there are parking facilities for 2-3 vehicles on the driveway and a further 2-3 spaces for off road parking directly in front of the property, the home will only have a maximum number of 2 cars present at any one time with potentially the third available for a visitor. Vehicles would have unrestricted access moving in and out of spaces and parking would be no different than for a family of 4 adults who each had their own vehicle and any visitors as a regular family would receive.

The use of the home would be a residential use in a residential area. There will be no material impact on the surrounding area by way of the external appearance as there are no changes to the external façade of the property.

All facilities within the property would be shared between the children and the carers. The child would attend school, food would be prepared and eaten together with staff, homework completed, and recreational activities carried out. Like a family, staff and the young person will prepare food and share meals together. Mealtimes are some of the best times to engage, discuss and have quality time between the young person and carers.

The aim is to look after local young people from distressed emotional backgrounds and provide them with a family home that our local authority has a demand for. Children can be safe and cared for and the age range would be between 8-16yrs. The running of the home will echo a 'regular' family environment where they will wake up, go to school, evening and weekend activities and making sure they settle to bed at night at a suitable time. We would be working alongside Northamptonshire local authority and its social teams to provide the best support and care for local children who need safe and loving family homes.

Proposed Planning

The prevailing character of the proposed use would be that of a young person using the property in a way like that of a family home where they would be supervised and cared for by adult guardians. While there might be identifiable differences, between proposed and existing uses, these would not be 'material' or easily measurable and quantifiable against the rather flexible characteristics and impacts of a lawful dwelling house.

In addition to the above, the comings and goings are not considered to be any different from that associated with a typical residential dwelling. Visits from professionals would consist of: Ofsted - 2 days a year, Regulation 44 visitor - once a month and social worker visits which is every 12 weeks. There are no further agencies that would be visiting the home on a regular basis.

With regards to the impact on the local community/neighbourhood as already highlighted traffic will be no different to a normal family home, infact it would be less with only two, maximum three cars being at the property at any one time. With 24hr care just like a normal family the noise level would be no different to say a family of 4/5 living at the property. On this basis it is maintained that the proposed use as detailed in this supporting statement would not be materially different than a typical household.

Conclusion

As outlined in this statement there is no material change of use to the property, as there is no difference to a family living there and would also be less movement from the property than that of a large family. There are no future plans to further extend the property and the property will always remain as a 4-bedroom detached house.