

Occupant(s)

Dear Local Residents,

Children and Young People's Services as part of Rotherham Council have submitted a planning application to change the use of the property at Sitwell Caretakers Cottage, Grange, Roth, S60 3LA.

The property has been purchased as part of the Council's children's residential homes development programme, that was agreed by Cabinet in February this year.

The Council plans to change the use of the building from a class C3 dwelling house to class C2 residential home.

The building will be used as a children's home for 1-2 children and young people in care from 8-18 years who require residential care. The plan will be for the children and young people to stay in the children's home, to settled and be a positive part of the community. The young people may stay in the home on a short medium to long term basis dependent on their needs, while they are supported either to another home, returning to a family based setting or on to independence.

The children's home will be staffed 24/7 with trained, qualified, and experienced residential practitioners. There will be a Registered Manager and Deputy Manager on site, who will ensure that good communication and relationships are developed and maintained with the local community.

The children's home plans to open in the spring / summer 2023.

Attached are a set of Frequently asked questions. There will be an opportunity to further share views and make representation as part of the planning process.

Yours faithfully

William Shaw

Head of Commissioning and Transformation Programmes

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Why do children and young people come into care?

Most children and young people come into care because their families are experiencing difficulties and can no longer meet the child's needs. These difficulties could include parental illness, domestic violence, abuse, or neglect.

How will the children and young people in the children's home be supported?

There will be qualified, trained, and experienced staff at the home at all times, supervising and supporting the children and young people. All children and young people will have a social worker and additional therapeutic support from the Council's Therapeutic Service.

Will there be an increase in anti-social behaviour in the area from the new children's home?

All children and young people will be supervised by staff in the home. There will be clear expectations for children and young people and their behaviour inside and outside the home, this will include coming in and bedtimes. Any increase in anti-social behaviour may be linked to the children's home but could be caused by a variety of other factors in the local community.

How are and will the police be involved in the setting up of the home?

The Council's Children and Young People's Services is working closely with the police to set up the children's home. There will be a dedicated police link to the home, who will develop on-going relationships with the children and young people, staff from the home and local community neighbours.

Why does the children's home require a planning application?

The Council Planning team has advised that the new children's home requires a planning application because of the number of children and staff that will be staying in the home and because the staff will be on a rota system.

Why were the planning letters only sent out to certain houses and with limited time to respond?

The planning department is a separate independent statutory body within the Council. As such they make their own decisions about notification and publicity. This question has been raised with the Planning Department who have fed back that they have complied with the publicity requirement as set out in the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) Order 2015.

Will local residents receive formal communication regarding the change of use of the property?

Local residents adjacent to the property will receive notification of the change of use from the planning department. It has always been the intention of the Council's Children and Young People Service to engage with the local community about the development of the children's home. Local resident engagement will be a key part of the role for the new management team.

Is there additional planning permission required for the works and extension to the property?

There are some condition works being completed on the property and a small extension to the rear. The planning permission for the extension will be part of the change of use application.

Has consideration been given to the location of the new children's home?

Location risks have been thoroughly considered and due diligence has been completed, with input from both Children's Services and South Yorkshire Police, which supports the decision to locate the children's home in this area.

Will children in the children's home be able to overlook my child at school who may be much younger than the children in care?

There are two windows in the property that overlook the school. The downstairs window will be removed, and the upstairs room will only be used as a staff office and therefore the window not accessed by the children in the home.

How many cars will be at the home at any one time?

There are likely to be between 2 and 3 staff on duty at any one time. There is parking available for 2/3 cars within the property and a further two spaces could be created with the removal of the current fishpond located to the front of the house. If on occasion any additional space is required for guests visiting the home (e.g., Social Workers) they will be encouraged to park in places that do not impact on neighbours or access to the neighbouring streets. A car parking plan will be created to identify the proposed parking spaces located on the grounds of the property.

Will cars entering and leaving impact the already large volume of cars in the area at school drop off and pick up times?

The staff handover, which will involve multiple staff entering and leaving the building will be planned outside of school drop off and pick up times. This is likely to be around 1-2pm. Entering and leaving the building at peak school times will be kept to a minimum.

Can parents be reassured that their child will be safe to enter and leave school as they usually do?

All children and young people living in the children's home will be supported to attend full time education. They are unlikely to be attending local schools so should be leaving and returning outside of Sitwell school peak times. All children and young people will be supervised by staff when required.

Who do I speak to when I have a problem or question when the home opens?

Before the home is open, neighbours will be invited to the home, to look around and meet the Manager and staff and ask any questions. When the home is open questions and issues should be picked up with Manager and Deputy Manager and we have an enquiry and engagement email.

If I have further questions, who do I contact?

If you have further questions, please send them to childrensresidentialenquiries@rotherham.gov.uk . We will attempt to answer all questions and arrange individual conversations when required.