

# Beacon Residential Homes LTD

Planning Department, Hillingdon Council

**Supporting statement in regards to: 179 Ryefield Avenue, Hillingdon, Middlesex, UB10 9DB**

**Planning application for change of use from a 5 bedroom residential dwelling changing to C2- 5 bedroom Children's Residential home for up to 4 children aged 8-17 years at:**

This property is a 5 bedroom house which will be used as a 4 bed children's home. Upon entry there is a shower room with WC to the right off the entrance hallway, a large lounge area, which leads out onto a large separate kitchen/diner. The kitchen leads out onto a large laid to lawn private enclosed garden.

Upstairs on the first floor there are 3 double bedrooms, 2 will be utilised as children's bedrooms and 1 will be the staff office/sleep in room. There is also a large shared bathroom on the first floor.

On the top floor of the home there is a further 2 double bedrooms, with another large shared bathroom. Both of these bedrooms will be utilised as children's bedrooms. The home provides ample space for children to share facilities and enjoy their own space appropriately.

The property will house a maximum of 4 children with 2 staff on shift during the day plus a manager. At night there will be 2 staff on shift throughout the night, one sleeping in and one waking night. Children will be supervised 24 hours a day. Visitors will be allowed and will usually have pre booked appointments. The proposed change of use does not change the occupancy of the property's current use as a 5 bed home. There will only ever be a maximum of 5 people sleeping in this property.

## **Our background**

My team have been working with vulnerable children in care for the past 20 years. They fully understand children's needs and understand the level of care and attention they need when living in residential care. My team have extensive experience working at senior level for Independent Children's Homes across the UK as well as working in management for an independent private fostering agency. The team fully understand that Hillingdon Children's Services strive where possible to accommodate their looked after children within the borough, keeping them in touch with their families and their local communities. In reality, we know that this is not always possible, which places further strains on resources for the Local Authority as well as added pressure for children and their families. We have now acquired this 5 bedroom home that we plan to use as children's home to broaden the local councils children's residential resources.

We believe this will support Hillingdon Council in meeting the specialist housing needs of the borough and due to the location of the property, would not have an adverse impact on the character and appearance of the area, neighbour amenity, parking and highway safety. We have been in

consultation with the children's social care residential placements department to ensure that the demand is met in placing vulnerable looked after children in well run, safe residential settings.

### **The types of children**

We will look after a maximum of 4 children aged 8-17 years at one time. These children will not require "specialist residential care" but require a family run home, with extremely experienced staff to support them on their journeys in life. The home also has therapists available to the children, which is included in the service we offer, to ensure the ongoing emotional regulation and stability of the children. The children we look after will not require 1:1 care but will need support to help them on their journey by a team of professionals. We have excellent links with all local amenities due to our existing connections in the area and plan to utilise them to support our children.

In the services which some of my team have managed, they have achieved an "outstanding" judgement with Ofsted due to ensuring the children feel safe and settled, have achieved outstanding progress and outcomes for children in care, and their permanent and long term planning for these children have exceeded expectations. My team plan to use their expertise to replicate the same exemplary level of care given to children in foster carer, into the residential sector. This will result in children being settled in our home, with minimal disruption, and this in turn will result in no disruption to the local neighbourhood.

### **Similar use:**

We are aware that one of the conditions for a C2 approval is over concentration of similar use. There are 3 other children's homes within the borough of Hillingdon, however one is a 13 bedroom home for unaccompanied asylum seeking children, one is a local authority 8 bed home, and another 6 bed unit resource centre for children. None of these provisions are able to offer the same service as Beacon Residential Homes Ltd. Hillingdon Council currently utilise residential provisions across London and would welcome the opportunity to place their looked after children within the borough. Our service is a wraparound therapeutic support package for up to 4 children. The children's residential placements team in Hillingdon also confirm, this provision is desperately needed in this area. My team have first hand experience of the increasing demand for our service, having worked closely with Hillingdon Children's Services for many years where Social Workers are unable to identify good enough, available residential provisions for children in need.

### **Parking**

We have ensured there is ample parking and this meets the council's requirements. On the driveway there is private parking for up to 2 cars. The road is a built up residential area and Beacon Residential Homes require the use of 2 vehicles for the 4 children accommodated. The change of use will therefore not impact upon the current parking availability as both of the home's vehicles will be parked off road. In terms of parking and traffic, we do not anticipate there being any disruption at all to local residents or services.

The road is a long road with traffic coming in and out due to the amenities and properties on the road and the nearby town. Amenities close by are a local newsagents, Hillingdon London Underground Station, a pharmacy, dentist, Fish and Chip shop and places of worship. There are also local schools and a hairdressers. Opening our children's home will not have a detrimental impact on them at all. We will not need to use any of the parking which is currently used for the shops and centres as public transport is also used by staff due to the excellent transport links local to site.

There are local bus routes which operate throughout the day which are within easy walking distance to the home. Children and staff will be able to conveniently commute on foot or public transport if they wish to use the local amenities or to attend school and appointments. Any visitors will be able to park on the road outside the property and will also be visiting the property at times which are quieter business hours for the amenities in the area. In addition to keep disruption to a minimum, the manager of the home will monitor and schedule all visitors to the home, ensuring they have pre-booked unless in urgent circumstances. This will ensure adequate flow for parking arrangements. Visitors also frequently use public transport and the property is easily accessible with these excellent local links.

Children will be supervised by staff at all times. The children we care for will be benefitting from a family run home with huge expertise of staff. We plan to have 2 staff on shift at any one time plus a manager, and children will be in bed by 10.30pm. There will always be 2 staff on shift at night time between 10.30pm and 7.30am and therefore staff will not be coming in and out of the home or the road throughout the night time. Our full-time staff will be able to use the very accessible local transport links and will therefore not add to parking needs locally. In conclusion our parking requirements can be well accommodated within the site. As the property is a 5 bedroom home, the change of use does not increase traffic flow to the area due to this application or disrupt the existing parking arrangements.

### **Building and the home**

We have ensured plans comply with building regulations and we have consulted with a specialist fire safety inspector ensuring the fire system complies with the regulations and standards. We plan to operate this home to create stability for children, with minimal disruption to ensure they can remain in their local community and move forward in their lives.

The plans reflect a 5 bedroom property to accommodate 4 children and 2 staff.

There are 3 toilets which can be used within the property, a downstairs WC, 1 bathroom on the first floor and 1 bathroom on the top floor. Both the upstairs bathrooms benefit from showers/baths to comfortably accommodate the 4 children. There is an open plan kitchen/dining space with a separate communal space, all of which contribute to the family living aspect of our plans.

The garden is ample with an appropriate seating area for all the children to relax when in the garden which has a secure boundary with fencing.

### **Plan to accommodate the children**

We will accommodate 2 children at first, allow them to settle and then transition up to 4 children depending on how the others settle in. We have a high level of expertise in this field and would never put the children or the community at risk by placing 4 children at once. This will be assessed by my team in accordance with the needs of Slough's social care commissioning team.

The bedrooms are of excellent size which can be seen on the plans, and are decorated to a very high specification taking all health and safety requirements into consideration such as restrictors for windows, appropriate lighting etc. Activities for the children will take part outside of the home by using the local parks and leisure facilities. We also aim for all of the children to be in full time school.

My team have an excellent rapport with your children's social care commissioning team and we have notified them of our intentions to set up this provision.

We have had sight of various other planning applications through Hillingdon Council and believe from our own research of the area, this proposal conforms with the national planning policy framework.

If you need to contact me to discuss further, please do so on the telephone number below.

Yours sincerely

Harjeet Gill

Director

Beacon Residential Homes

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