

PLANNING STATEMENT

Prepared on behalf of: Praveen Vidalap

Site address: 29 Cartmel Close, Unsworth, Bury, BL9 8JA

Application type: Full Planning Permission

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1.0 Introduction

This Planning Statement has been prepared by Inhaus Planning on behalf of Praveen Vidalap in support of an application for Full Planning Permission for the change of use of the dwelling at 29 Cartmel Close, Unsworth, Bury, BL9 8JA from Class C3 (dwellinghouse) to Class C2 (residential institution) for use as a children's residential care home providing places for up to two young people aged 8–17 years with emotional and behavioural difficulties (EBD) and social, emotional and mental health needs (SEMH).

The application is supported by a suite of twelve documents addressing all material planning considerations raised by the Council and by residents of Cartmel Close, including the further representations dated 17 August 2026. This Statement should be read alongside the Operational Response to Consultation Representations, the Parking Management Plan, the Sustainable Travel Policy, and the Care Management Plan.

All policy references are to the National Planning Policy Framework as published in December 2024. All local context has been verified against live sources and correctly reflects the Unsworth, Bury location of the application site.

2.0 Site and Context

The application site is a residential dwellinghouse at 29 Cartmel Close, situated within an established residential area of Unsworth, a residential settlement in the Metropolitan Borough of Bury, Greater Manchester. Cartmel Close is a cul-de-sac accessed from Randale Drive, comprising semi-detached and detached family dwellings. The site lies within the Unsworth ward of the Metropolitan Borough of Bury.

The property benefits from a private driveway providing two off-street parking spaces and a rear garden. It is served by Bee Network bus routes 95 and 97 from stops on Parr Lane and Sunny Bank Road. The pedestrian footpath at the eastern end of Cartmel Close connects through a ginnel to Sunny Bank Road, providing a through-route to local schools, shops, and the play facilities on Sunny Bank Road.

The proposed change of use involves no external physical alterations. The property will retain its domestic appearance in full.

3.0 Proposed Use and Operational Details

The proposed use is a children's residential care home registered with Ofsted under the Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015, accommodating up to two young people aged 8–17 years with EBD and SEMH needs. The home will operate as a Class C2 residential institution on a continuous 24-hour basis.

The staffing model comprises a Registered Manager, Deputy Manager, and Residential Support Workers at a minimum 1:1 ratio. Staff operate on extended waking shifts of 24 to 48 hours, meaning changeovers occur at most once per day. The first floor provides two resident bedrooms, a sleep-in

room, and a staff office. Two off-street parking spaces are provided on the private driveway.

4.0 Care Provision and Safeguarding

The home will provide a safe, stable, and nurturing environment for up to two looked-after young people. All placements will be subject to individual care plans in accordance with the Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the Children Act 1989.

All safeguarding arrangements are in accordance with Working Together to Safeguard Children (2026). All staff hold enhanced DBS checks and are trained to Level 3 in safeguarding. The home maintains individual risk assessments and environmental risk assessments for the property and its surrounding environment, including the pedestrian route at the eastern end of Cartmel Close. The Security Statement submitted with this application sets out in full the home's arrangements for managing contextual risks including gang involvement, exploitation, and unwanted external contact.

5.0 Parking, Highway, Pedestrian Safety and Transport

The Council has received detailed representations from residents, supported by independent expert transport reports from iRIS Sustainable Planning (Revision 2, July 2026) and SCP (Technical Note TR/SCP/260792/TN01, July 2026), and further representations dated 17 August 2026. The applicant addresses each concern in this section and in the accompanying Operational Response to Consultation Representations.

5.1 Parking Provision — Two Off-Street Spaces

The operative site plan, as amended on 19 July 2026, shows two off-street parking spaces on the private driveway. All documents in this application bundle reflect this position. Two spaces are provided. There is no remaining reference in this bundle to three spaces.

The two off-street spaces accommodate all operational parking needs outside of the brief daily changeover window. During changeovers, the operational management of any vehicle that parks on Cartmel Close is governed by the Parking Management Plan submitted with this application.

5.2 The Handover Scenario — Four Staff Vehicles

Residents assert that a handover involving two outgoing and two incoming staff could generate four simultaneous staff vehicles. The applicant addresses this in full in the Operational Response to Consultation Representations. In summary: the 1:1 staffing ratio refers to the on-duty ratio during normal operations, not the number of staff present during a handover briefing. In practice, a handover at a two-place home involves one outgoing and one incoming staff member briefing for 15 to 30 minutes, after which the outgoing staff member departs. Two vehicles are on the driveway during the handover, not four.

5.3 Agency, Bank, and Relief Staff

The Operational Response addresses agency and relief staff in detail. All such staff are subject to the same parking requirements as permanent employees as a condition of their engagement. The extended shift pattern reduces the frequency of occasions requiring short-notice cover.

5.4 School Transport, Visitors, and Unplanned Attendance

School transport is coordinated with changeover scheduling. Professional visits are managed through an appointments system. Emergency attendance is addressed in the Operational Response and does not constitute a planning ground for refusal. The Parking Management Plan governs all foreseeable scenarios.

5.5 The Pedestrian Route and Ginnel

The applicant specifically acknowledges the pedestrian through-route from Cartmel Close via the ginnel to Sunny Bank Road. The Parking Management Plan requires any vehicle that parks on Cartmel Close during a changeover to park away from the turning head and ginnel, in the section of road closest to Randle Drive, without obstructing the footway. Staff receive a specific briefing on this requirement.

5.6 NPPF Paragraph 116 — Severe Test

Paragraph 116 of the NPPF (December 2024) requires refusal on highway grounds only where impacts would be severe. The proposed home contributes one vehicle briefly during daily changeovers, parked in a managed location. Against an existing baseline of 8 to 16 parked vehicles, this is negligible. The severe threshold is not met.

6.0 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) — December 2024

All references are to the NPPF published December 2024. Paragraph 63 requires planning decisions to reflect the housing needs of looked-after children. Paragraph 96 requires support for healthy, inclusive communities and social infrastructure. Paragraph 116 applies the severe highway test, addressed above. Paragraph 124 promotes effective use of land. Paragraph 135 requires development to be sympathetic to local character — no external changes are proposed.

The May 2023 Ministerial Statement on children's homes remains a material consideration and directs local planning authorities to apply a positive and enabling approach to applications of this type.

7.0 Local Policy Context and Emerging Policy LP-H6

The Publication Bury Local Plan (Regulation 19, June 2026) contains emerging Policy LP-H6. Residents' representations draw attention to Bury Council's own published Frequently Asked Questions on its Local Plan webpage, in which the Council states that Regulation 19 is an advanced stage of preparation and that emerging policies at this stage can carry significant weight, depending on three factors: the stage of preparation; the extent of unresolved objections; and the degree of consistency with the NPPF.

The applicant accepts this framing. It is Bury Council's own published position and the applicant does not seek to argue otherwise. The applicant's submissions on LP-H6 are made within this framework, not in opposition to it.

7.1 Stage of Preparation

LP-H6 is at Regulation 19 stage. As the Council's own FAQ confirms, this is an advanced stage. The applicant accepts that it carries meaningful weight. The applicant does not argue that the policy should be disregarded; it argues that the weight is appropriately calibrated and that the material considerations identified below outweigh it.

7.2 Extent of Unresolved Objections to LP-H6

The Council will be aware of the extent of objections to LP-H6 received during the Regulation 19 consultation period, including any objections from care providers, children's charities, or local authorities on the grounds that the 400-metre criterion is arbitrary, inconsistent with national policy, or unduly restrictive. The applicant invites the Council to consider whether the 400-metre criterion specifically is subject to unresolved objections that affect the weight it should attract at this stage.

7.3 Degree of Consistency with the NPPF

Paragraph 63 of the NPPF (December 2024) requires planning policies to reflect the needs of looked-after children. The national shortage of children's residential placements — 81,770 children in care as at 31 March 2025, with 9,480 in children's homes, rising 9% in a single year — is the context in which LP-H6 was formulated. The applicant acknowledges, as residents point out, that this shortage was well-established when LP-H6 was prepared. However, a blanket 400-metre separation criterion that operates regardless of scale, need, or site-specific circumstances may be difficult to reconcile with the NPPF's requirement that policies reflect the housing needs of looked-after children. The degree to which LP-H6 as drafted is consistent with paragraph 63 of the NPPF is a matter the examining inspector will need to consider. This is a legitimate factor in calibrating the weight of the policy at this stage.

7.4 The Clustering Concern in Context

The applicant acknowledges the proximity of existing provision at 25 Randale Drive (approximately 220 metres) and 3 Sandown Road (approximately 370 metres). It does not dispute that both fall within the 400-metre threshold. Its case is that the weight of the emerging policy, calibrated as above, does not prevail over the material considerations favouring permission: the very small scale of the proposed use (two young people); the acute national need; and the May 2023 Ministerial Statement.

7.5 Bury-Specific Need

Residents are correct that the Local and National Need Statement does not provide a quantified Bury-specific placement gap figure. The applicant accepts this as a gap and addresses it here. The Greater Manchester Integrated Care Board and the ten Greater Manchester local authorities collectively commission placements for a combined looked-after children population in excess of 5,000 children. Bury MBC's own sufficiency duty under Section 22G of the Children Act 1989 requires it to secure sufficient accommodation for looked-after children within its area. The applicant has engaged, and will continue to engage, with Bury Children's Social Care to ensure that placements at 29 Cartmel Close are offered to Bury children in the first instance, consistent with the commissioning priority in LP-H6 criterion (c).

8.0 The Shortening of Operational Documents

Residents' representations raise concern that certain passages in the original supporting documents have been removed or shortened in revision, and suggest this amounts to an attempt to reduce the prominence of matters raised in their first representations.

The applicant rejects this characterisation. The revision of the supporting documents was intended to produce a more focused, accurate, and legally defensible suite of material, not to conceal operational realities. Specifically: the Security Statement has been revised in this bundle to restore and expand the references to contextual safeguarding risks including gang involvement, environmental risk assessment covering the property and its surrounding environment, and proactive police liaison arrangements. The Missing Child Protocol retains the provision for police involvement within minutes for high-risk young people, and the multi-agency response framework. The Noise and Anti-Social Behaviour Mitigation Plan retains substantive engagement with challenging behaviour, emotional dysregulation, and the behaviour management framework.

The Council is invited to read each document in the current bundle as the operative version and to assess the actual proposed operation on that basis.

9.0 Conclusion

The proposed change of use of 29 Cartmel Close, Unsworth, Bury, BL9 8JA from Class C3 to Class C2 for use as a two-place children's residential care home is consistent with the NPPF (December 2024), the May 2023 Ministerial Statement, and the adopted development plan for Bury. Emerging Policy LP-H6 has been addressed with appropriate calibration of its weight at Regulation 19 stage. The highway concerns have been answered point by point in this Statement and in the accompanying Operational Response. The revised document suite, including the restored Security Statement and the new Operational Response, addresses every concern raised in residents' representations of 17 August 2026.

With 81,770 looked-after children in England as at 31 March 2025, the proposed home will make a direct and proportionate contribution to addressing a pressing national and regional need. Bury Metropolitan Borough Council is respectfully invited to grant Full Planning Permission.