

UPDATE REPORT



FOR DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE MEETING OF 25th June 2024

B1. 2024/0145 - 76 Burnley Road , Rawtenstall , BB4 8EW

Due to errors in the submitted plans which require correction it will be necessary to issue new consultation letters to neighbouring occupiers.

This will delay the determination of the application to allow the consultation to take place, and as a result the application has been removed from the agenda.

B2. 2024/0094 - 34 Douglas Road, Bacup

Comments from LCC Policy, Commissioning and Children's Health Services have now been received as follows:

"There is limited information within the planning application for me to be able to make an informed decision but based on what I can see I have the following comments:

- *Does the person applying for planning permission own the field that is being proposed to be used for parking? Will this realistically be able to be used all year round to park the number of cars that this children's home is likely to require (which, including the 2 parking spaces on the drive, would likely be at least 6 cars (5 staff cars plus at least one car that is likely to be the company car that would be used to transport children to school etc.) up to possibly 8 cars (7 staff cars plus the company car)?*
- *No Ofsted registered 3 bed children's home that I know would ever agree to care for 3 young people who all require 2:1 staffing. It is very unlikely that the home would be big enough to be able to cope with this number of people and it would not be in a child's best interests to live in a home with this many adults and for all three children to require such high levels of staffing. This does suggest to me a naivety/ lack of experience from this provider to even suggest that this could be a possibility.*
- *I have checked the latest list of Ofsted registered homes and can confirm that there are 4 Ofsted registered children's homes within a mile of this proposed home.*
- *Lancashire County Council has the highest number of Ofsted registered children's homes than any other local authority in England. There are four times as many children's home beds in our area than we require. Despite this, we can still really struggle to find suitable, local, good quality and good value homes for some of our children in care. This is because many of the homes in*

Lancashire (70%) are not caring for Lancashire children and are instead caring for children from other local authorities, sometimes at a great distance from home. Only 16% of children's home beds in our area are being used for Lancashire children. It is estimated that there are about the same number of out of area children living in Lancashire as there are Lancashire's own children in care. This has a significant impact on local resources (e.g. health, schools and policing). Also, having so many children's homes in our area does make it challenging to recruit good quality, suitably trained staff, including children's home managers.

Lancashire County Council's Children's Services is firmly of the view that careful consideration should be given to the agreement of new children's homes in Lancashire. New homes need to meet an identified local gap in provision and need to be delivered by providers who offer good quality, good value provision and who are committed to providing local homes for Lancashire children. The details provided as part of the planning application does not reference the name of the provider, but I can confirm that I have not had any conversations with the applicant, so I am unable to confirm whether the home would meet an identified gap in provision or prioritise caring for Lancashire children. The planning application does not provide sufficient information for me to establish this either.

Taking into account the above points, this is not a planning application that Lancashire Children's Services support."

It is noted that in a ministerial statement from Rachel Maclean (Minister of State, Department for Levelling up, Housing and Communities) in March 2023 she stated: 'The planning system should not be a barrier to providing homes for the most vulnerable children in society. When care is the best choice for a child, it is important that the care system provides stable, loving homes close to children's communities. These need to be the right homes, in the right places with access to good schools and community support. It is not acceptable that some children are living far from where they would call home (without a clear child protection reason for this), separated from the people they know and love'.

Local planning authorities should give due weight to and be supportive of applications, where appropriate, for all types of accommodation for looked after children in their area that reflect local needs and all parties in the development process should work together closely to facilitate the timely delivery of such vital accommodation for children across the country. It is important that prospective applicants talk to local planning authorities about whether their service is needed in that locality, using the location assessment (a regulatory requirement and part of the Ofsted registration process set out in paragraph 15.1 of the Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations) to demonstrate this."

In order to reflect the Ministerial statement it is considered important that the care home is for local children, and if not children from Rossendale then children from Lancashire. It is not considered in line with the Guidance if the children are from significant distances, such as London and the south of England. This results in the need for social workers and families to travel very long distances by private motor vehicle, from the home area and would not represent sustainable development. It also puts pressure on local services such as health, education and police. It is

therefore recommended that a condition is applied to any planning permission to secure occupation by local children.

There is no change to the recommendation.

B3. 2024/0165 - 93 - 95 Bacup Road , Rawtenstall , BB4 7NW

LCC Highways have confirmed they have no objection and state

“There is no associated off-road parking linked to the existing residential use of the site, nor could any be provided. However the highway authority considers that this is a town centre site within acceptable walking distances of local amenities and facilities as recommended by the Institute of Highways & Transportation. “

“This includes access to public transport, meaning that residents would not need to be reliant on the use of private motor vehicles. As the residential use is already existing and a minor increase in the number of bedrooms is proposed the highway authority considers that the development is unlikely to have a significant impact on highway safety, capacity or amenity in the immediate vicinity of the site”

Mike Atherton
Head of Planning