

SUPPORTING PLANNING STATEMENT

The Gables

Proposed Change of Use to a Children's Residential Care Home (Use Class C2)

Applicant / Provider	Spring Valley Children's Care
Proposed Use	Children's Residential Care Home - Use Class C2
Maximum Occupancy	2 children
Age Range	5-18 years
Primary Needs	Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties (EBD) and Learning Disabilities (LD)
Operation	24 hours per day, 365 days per year

Planning application site address: as stated on the application form and accompanying plans.

Executive Summary

The proposal is for the use of The Gables as a small, family-style children's residential care home within Use Class C2. The home will accommodate no more than two children aged 5-18 at any one time and will be operated by Spring Valley Children's Care.

The proposal has been intentionally designed as a low-occupancy residential model. Two residential care staff will ordinarily be on site at all times, with a Registered Manager additionally present during normal daytime management hours. Children will ordinarily attend education off site, and family and professional visits will be planned and pre-arranged.

The Gables is a detached four-bedroom dwelling within secure private grounds, with front and rear gardens, gated access and substantial on-site parking. A legally covered converted garage provides a separate management office, staff breakout/welfare area and WC, allowing administrative activity to be kept away from the children's principal living areas.

The proposal is therefore materially different in scale and operation from a large institutional facility. It is a home for two children, with a consistent care team, and has been structured to retain the domestic character of the property while safeguarding neighbouring residential amenity.

Key Planning Considerations

- Very low occupancy: maximum of two children.
- Detached property with secure boundaries, gated access and private outdoor space.
- Two care staff ordinarily on site at all times; Registered Manager additionally present in daytime management hours.
- Long shift pattern limits routine staff changeovers and associated vehicle movements.
- Children ordinarily attend school or other education off site.
- Family and professional visits are planned and pre-arranged rather than unrestricted.
- Approximately four off-road driveway spaces, with further on-site capacity for approximately four vehicles.
- Separate office and staff welfare facilities reduce administrative activity within the main dwelling.
- External CCTV will be used proportionately for security and safeguarding, subject to privacy and data-protection requirements.
- Established provider experience supports effective operational management.

1. Introduction

This statement supports the proposed use of The Gables as a Children's Residential Care Home falling within Use Class C2. The proposal is for a maximum of two children or young people aged between 5 and 18 years.

The purpose of the home is to provide a safe, stable and nurturing residential environment for children who are unable to live within their family home and require residential care. The emphasis will be on ordinary home life, consistent relationships, education, community participation and individualised support.

The application should be considered on the basis of the actual scale and operational characteristics proposed: two resident children, a small consistent staff team, controlled visitor arrangements, substantial on-site parking and a detached domestic property.

2. Applicant and Provider Experience

The home will be operated by Spring Valley Children's Care, an established provider of children's residential care with existing operational experience in the Hanley/Stoke-on-Trent area.

The provider has established arrangements for safeguarding, safer recruitment, staff training and supervision, health and safety, risk management, behaviour support, quality assurance, record keeping and partnership working with local authorities, education providers, families and other professionals.

This existing operational infrastructure provides assurance that The Gables will be subject to structured management oversight from commencement. Evidence of the provider's current regulatory status can be supplied separately where required.

3. Site and Property Description

The Gables is an existing detached four-bedroom residential property within its own private grounds. It benefits from front and rear garden areas, a private driveway, gated access and secure boundaries.

The property provides generous domestic living accommodation and private outdoor space suitable for a small family-style residential setting. Its detached form and private curtilage provide separation between day-to-day activity at the home and neighbouring dwellings.

The property also benefits from a converted garage that is legally covered for its current conversion and which will be used as a dedicated management/staff office and welfare area, including a separate WC.

4. Proposed Use and Domestic Model of Care

The proposed use is a children's residential care home within Use Class C2. The home will not operate as a hostel, drop-in centre, day service, medical establishment or facility open to members of the public.

The two children will live at The Gables as their home. Ordinary activities will include preparing and eating meals, completing schoolwork, relaxing in communal areas, using the gardens, attending education, participating in hobbies and community activities, and receiving support from familiar care staff.

The internal operation will therefore remain domestic in character. Administrative functions will principally be undertaken within the separate office area so that the main house remains focused on the children's home life.

5. Occupancy, Age Range and Placement Matching

The home will accommodate a maximum of two children or young people aged 5-18 years at any one time. This maximum occupancy will not be exceeded.

The home is intended to support children with Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties (EBD) and/or Learning Disabilities (LD). Admissions will be subject to individual assessment and careful placement matching, including consideration of the needs and compatibility of any child already living at the home.

Care planning, placement plans and risk assessments will inform the support provided. Staffing can be adjusted where an individual child's assessed needs require additional support, but this will not increase the permitted number of resident children.

6. Staffing and Shift Arrangements

The home will operate 24 hours per day, 365 days per year. Two residential care staff will ordinarily be on site at all times.

The principal day/evening shift will operate from 08:00 to 23:00. Overnight arrangements will operate from 23:00 to 08:00 and will comprise sleep-in and/or waking-night provision according to the assessed needs of the children.

Staff will work a two-on/four-off rotational pattern. The use of longer residential-care shifts limits the number of routine staff arrivals and departures when compared with a workplace operating multiple short shifts throughout the day.

A Registered Manager will additionally be present during normal daytime management hours. The manager's functions will include safeguarding oversight, staff supervision, quality assurance, regulatory compliance, meetings and administration.

Occasional additional attendance may occur for training, supervision, meetings or to meet an assessed care need. Such attendance will be managed and is not representative of normal daily staffing.

7. Education and Daily Routine

Children will ordinarily attend school or other education provision away from The Gables. Weekday routines will therefore broadly reflect those of other school-aged children living in family homes.

Outside education hours, children may attend appointments, family contact, hobbies, recreational activities and community-based activities in accordance with their individual plans. The aim is to support ordinary routines, independence and positive community participation.

8. Visitors and Professional Attendance

The home will not be open to the general public. Family contact and visits by social workers, reviewing officers, education professionals, health professionals and other persons involved in a child's care will ordinarily be planned and pre-arranged.

Where practicable, visits and meetings will be coordinated to avoid unnecessary simultaneous attendance. The very small number of resident children inherently limits the scale and frequency of professional and family visits.

9. Office and Staff Welfare Facilities

The converted garage will provide a dedicated staff and management office, a breakout/welfare area and separate WC facilities.

This allows confidential record keeping, staff supervision, administrative work and staff welfare functions to take place away from the children's principal living areas. It therefore supports the domestic character of the main house and reduces the need for office activity within communal family spaces.

10. Parking, Access and Vehicle Movements

The site has substantial private parking provision. Approximately four vehicles can be accommodated off road on the driveway, with further on-site capacity for approximately four vehicles, giving capacity for approximately eight vehicles in total.

Normal operational demand will be materially below this capacity. The ordinary daytime presence will comprise two care staff plus the Registered Manager. Overnight staffing will ordinarily comprise the two-person care arrangement. Planned visitors can therefore be accommodated on site without routine reliance on surrounding residential streets.

The staffing model also limits vehicle movements because staff undertake long shifts and a two-on/four-off rotation. Family and professional visits are pre-arranged, and the property is not a public-facing service generating continual customer traffic.

The adopted Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan parking guidance for C2 residential care establishments provides for resident/non-resident staff and visitor parking. The substantial on-site provision at The Gables gives a strong basis for accommodating the modest operational parking demand within the curtilage.

11. Safeguarding, Security and CCTV

The Gables benefits from gated access and secure boundaries. These features provide privacy and an appropriate level of security for children living at the home.

External CCTV will be used proportionately for safeguarding, security and protection of the premises. Its siting and operation will respect neighbouring privacy and will be managed in accordance with applicable data-protection and safeguarding requirements.

Security measures will be discreet and proportionate. They are intended to support the safe operation of an ordinary residential home rather than create an institutional appearance.

12. Residential Amenity and Character

The proposal has been designed to preserve the residential character of the property and avoid unacceptable effects on neighbouring amenity.

Key mitigating characteristics include the maximum occupancy of only two children; the detached nature of the dwelling; substantial private grounds; secure boundaries; off-site education; controlled visits; substantial on-site parking; and a separate management office.

Care staff perform many functions comparable to those undertaken by responsible adults within a family household, including preparing meals, supporting education, transporting children to activities and appointments, maintaining routines and providing supervision.

Any behavioural support needs will be managed through individual assessment, placement matching, care planning, risk assessment and appropriate staffing. The presence of EBD or LD needs does not mean that disturbance should be assumed; the operational model is specifically structured to provide the supervision and consistency required to manage individual needs appropriately.

13. Refuse, Deliveries and Servicing

Ordinary domestic refuse and recycling arrangements will be used. With only two resident children, the home is not expected to generate materially different household waste from a conventional family dwelling.

Deliveries will principally comprise normal domestic deliveries and supplies. There will be no commercial servicing pattern involving frequent heavy goods vehicles or substantial deliveries.

14. Management and Community Relations

The Registered Manager will have day-to-day responsibility for the effective operation of the home, supported by Spring Valley Children's Care's wider management systems. A Responsible Individual will also have oversight over the Registered Manager.

Operational policies will address safeguarding, risk management, complaints, behaviour support, health and safety, staff supervision and community relations. Any concerns arising from the operation of the home can therefore be addressed through a clear management structure.

The provider's objective is for The Gables to integrate unobtrusively within its residential setting and for children to participate positively in education and community life.

15. Planning Policy and Local Need

The National Planning Policy Framework states that planning decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places and should support the delivery of local strategies to improve health, social and cultural well-being. A small, well-managed children's home providing a stable residential environment is consistent with those objectives.

Staffordshire County Council's Sufficiency Strategy for Homes for Children in Our Care 2023-2026 identifies a statutory need to secure sufficient accommodation, increase local placements, reduce reliance on unregulated placements and improve placement stability. It records a particular challenge arising from complex needs and the need for suitable local residential provision.

The proposed home would make a modest but meaningful contribution to local residential capacity: two carefully matched placements within a small domestic setting, operated by an experienced provider.

The social benefit of the proposal should be considered alongside its limited physical and operational impacts. The application involves a very small number of residents and an operational model specifically designed to protect residential amenity.

16. Planning Balance

The principal planning considerations are the acceptability of the C2 use in this residential setting, the effect on neighbouring amenity and character, and parking/highway implications.

On each of these matters the proposal is deliberately limited and well controlled. There are only two resident children; the property is detached and securely enclosed; children ordinarily attend education off site; visits are planned; staff work long shifts; and substantial parking is available within the site.

The separate management office further limits administrative activity within the main dwelling. No aspect of the proposed operational model indicates a level of activity comparable with a large institutional care establishment.

Against those limited impacts, the proposal provides an important social benefit by creating two local residential placements for children who require a safe, stable and nurturing home.

17. Conclusion

This application seeks permission for the use of The Gables as a small Children's Residential Care Home within Use Class C2.

The home will accommodate no more than two children aged 5-18 years and will be supported by two care staff ordinarily on site at all times, with a Registered Manager additionally present during normal daytime management hours. The home will operate a structured 24-hour care model with sleep-in and/or waking-night arrangements according to assessed need.

The Gables is particularly suited to this small-scale use because it is a detached four-bedroom dwelling with private front and rear gardens, secure gated boundaries, substantial on-site parking and separate management/staff welfare accommodation.

Children will ordinarily attend education off site; family and professional visits will be pre-arranged; vehicle movements will be moderated by long staff shifts; and the home will not operate as a public-facing or institutional facility.

Taken as a whole, the proposal provides a carefully managed, low-occupancy residential use that retains the domestic character of the property, safeguards neighbouring amenity and contributes to the identified need for appropriate local accommodation for children in care.

For these reasons, it is respectfully requested that the Local Planning Authority grants planning permission for the proposed Children's Residential Care Home (Use Class C2).

Appendix A - Operational Summary

Use	Children's Residential Care Home - C2
Residents	Maximum 2 children
Age range	5-18 years
Needs	EBD and/or LD
Care staffing	2 staff ordinarily on site at all times
Manager	Registered Manager additionally present during normal daytime management hours
Day/evening shift	08:00-23:00
Overnight	23:00-08:00; sleep-in and/or waking night according to assessed need
Rotation	2-on / 4-off
Education	Ordinarily off site
Visitors	Family and professional visits planned and pre-arranged
Parking	Approx. 4 driveway/off-road spaces plus approx. 4 further on-site spaces
Security	Gated/secure boundaries and proportionate external CCTV
Office	Separate converted-garage management office, staff welfare/breakout area and WC

Appendix B - Policy and Evidence References

- National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024), Chapter 8 - Promoting healthy and safe communities, including paragraphs 96 and 98.
- Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan 2014-2033 (adopted September 2020), including the Council's parking guidance for Use Class C2 residential care establishments.
- Staffordshire County Council, Sufficiency Strategy: Homes for Children in Our Care 2023-2026.
- Staffordshire County Council, Corporate Parenting Strategy 2023-2028.