

Response to Derbyshire Constabulary Objection: HPK/2026/0071

To: High Peak Borough Council Planning Department

Re: Planning Application HPK/2026/0071 – Change of Use to C2 Children's Care Home, 8 Queens Road, Fairfield.

1. Management and Operational Mitigation

While the police note that the immediate locality has a significant presence of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) with complex needs, they acknowledge that these problems can be "mitigated by good management", which will underpin the day-to-day running of the home.

- **Highly Regulated Environment:** Unlike the HMOs mentioned, a C2 Children's Home is a strictly regulated environment inspected by Ofsted. The site is already a 6 bed HMO and has also been a C3(b) use in recent times. The C2 use would essentially remove a problematic use, reducing the numbers of C4 properties in the area.
- **Staffing Levels:** The home will be adequately staffed 24/7 by trained professionals specifically equipped to manage safeguarding risks. This provides a level of supervision and security that is entirely absent in the "vulnerable tenant" scenarios described by the police.

2. Addressing the "Clear-Hold-Build" Project

The police cite the central government "Clear-Hold-Build" regeneration project as a reason for refusal. We argue that this project supports, rather than hinders, the application:

- **Positive Regeneration:** The "Hold" and "Build" phases of such projects are designed to create safer, more stable communities. Placing a managed, professional care facility in this area contributes to the stabilisation and "building" of the community by replacing a standard residential use with a high-supervision professional use.
- **Direct Conflict with Social Policy:** To suggest that a specific area is "off-limits" for vulnerable children effectively creates no-go zones for social care, which is contrary to the inclusive aims of local and national planning policies.

3. Safeguarding vs. Land Use Planning

The police objection focuses heavily on "safeguarding risks rather than design or specification".

- **Planning Remit:** Planning is concerned with the use of land. The specific profile of individual residents (the children) and their potential vulnerability is a matter for social services and Ofsted, not a material planning ground for refusal of a C2 use class.
- **Proactive Security:** The use will be bound by the Operational Management Plan and by Ofsted, if it is not the use will likely cease.

4. Conclusion

The objection relies on the premise that the risks are "unacceptable". However, this assessment does not account for the specific, highly-regulated nature of a modern children's home. Denying the application on these grounds would unfairly penalise children in care by restricting them from residing in areas undergoing active regeneration and improvement.