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**Date:** 25 May 2023

Dear Ms Azunma,

**Application reference:** 6/2023/0989/FULL

**Proposed Development at:** 48 The Runway, Hatfield, AL10 9GL

**Proposal:** change of use of a dwelling (C3a) to a children's home (C2) for a maximum of four children

Thank you for your notice to Veronica Bennett in relation to Savannah Lodge Ltd's application for a change of use in relation to a property in Hatfield. This has been passed to me for comment.

I understand you are considering an application for a Change of Use for 48 The Runway, Hatfield, AL10 9GL, with the intention for this to operate as a residential children's home for up to four children. I appreciate that your primary role is to consider the planning issues in relation to this application, but I thought it may be helpful to provide some background information in relation to the need for children's homes.

Hertfordshire County Council publishes an annual sufficiency statement in relation to the accommodation of young people in care and the most recent version is available on our website at: [Sufficiency Summary 2022 \(hertfordshire.gov.uk\)](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk). From this, you can see that it is the county's preference to accommodate all the young people for whom it is responsible in, or near, Hertfordshire. Currently we are not able to do this, with around 90 children placed at a considerable distance from Hertfordshire. We are therefore supportive of providers who seek to address this shortfall by establishing new facilities within our borders. This would be with the proviso that such new facilities meet legislative requirements and provide high quality care to our most

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vulnerable young people. In addition, that such homes have sufficient space for both the intended number of children to be cared for, and for the necessary adults to support them.

Any provision wishing to operate as a Children's Home **must** be registered with Ofsted and there are strict regulations in place governing children's residential provisions. A service would not be a lawful provision without such registration being in place.

Modern children's homes are intended to be very much like a family home where young people live in a setting as close to family life as possible. The staff look after them 24 hours a day and ensure that they have access to education and a range of activities for their wider wellbeing.

If you would like to discuss further, or there is any additional information which I can give to assist you in your decision making, I will be very happy to do so.

Yours sincerely



Martha Moroney  
Senior Commissioning Manager | CLA and Safeguarding | Children's Service