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CQC Archived Location: Closed Business or Re-registered?

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Executive Summary

An archived location in the Care Quality Commission (CQC) data for England is a statement about a registration, not a verdict on a business. CQC's own data page says a location "can be archived for a number of reasons, and not necessarily because the service has closed", and gives re-registration after a change of legal structure or address as an example (www.cqc.org.uk). For a private equity (PE) origination team mapping English adult social care operators, the consequence is that an archived row should not be deleted from a market map until operating or closure evidence is attached, and should not be merged with a similar-looking successor until the link is documented.

The data caveats are current. The CQC page reviewed for this report states it was last updated on **3 November 2026** (www.cqc.org.uk). It says some updates, "for example, the cancellation of provider registrations", are taking longer than usual to reach the published files because of a move to a new digital directory system (www.cqc.org.uk). The application programming interface (API) is refreshed daily but needs authentication (www.cqc.org.uk), while the main directory file is usually refreshed **weekly** and two other files **monthly** (www.cqc.org.uk). This run opened no CSV, ODS or API rows, so it reports no completeness result and no archive rate.

Three documented routes explain most continuing services. In a share purchase the registered company "stays the same" (www.cqc.org.uk), and an advisory firm confirms that no change to the registration is required where the corporate vehicle continues (www.grantthornton.co.uk). In an asset sale the buyer registers as a new provider or adds the location (www.cqc.org.uk) (www.stephens-scown.co.uk), and the seller must separately end its own registration (www.cqc.org.uk). A change of legal entity at a continuing location is the third route (www.cqc.org.uk). For applications completed from 1 April 2019, CQC links archived and current profiles and shows the predecessor's latest report and ratings on the new profile (www.cqc.org.uk), with links expected within roughly **30 days** (www.cqc.org.uk).

The report proposes five outcomes for each archived record: supported continuation, supported cessation, registration-ended-only, conflicting, and unresolved. It also proposes a 16-field continuity table that retains both registration identifiers and both legal entities, and a decision tree that requires operating or closure corroboration before any deletion. Scale shows why units matter: Skills for Care estimated **19,000**

organisations and **41,000** establishments in England for 2025/26, so organisations and locations must never be counted as one unit (www.skillsforcare.org.uk). The method is a public-evidence screen only. It does not declare any transaction eligible, and specialist legal review governs registration obligations.

Introduction and Background

PE firms that originate deals in English adult social care usually begin from a list: a regulator extract, a vendor database, or a spreadsheet inherited from an earlier project. Rows in such lists are not static. A care home changes hands, a company is re-papered, an address moves, or a service closes. Each event can leave an archived row in the regulator's data, and the archived row can look the same in every case. This report addresses one narrow question: when a CQC location is archived, should it leave the active market map, link to a successor registration, or stay unresolved?

It is a continuity check, not a quality league table and not a registration application guide. It also does not substitute for transaction due diligence. The nearest comparator found, a law-firm article on mergers and takeovers, lists registration as one checklist line ("Registration with the CQC, ICO and any other regulator is in order") inside a broader preparation list, and it is written for general practice (GP) mergers rather than adult social care (www.hempsons.co.uk). That is a reasonable scope for transaction readiness. It leaves open the earlier origination problem of whether two registration identifiers describe one continuing service.

The unit of analysis is a care service at a registered location operated by a legal provider. CQC's guidance states that "It is the legal entity carrying on the regulated activity that must register" (www.cqc.org.uk), and statute describes registration "as a service provider" in respect of an activity (www.legislation.gov.uk). Neither a brand nor a registered manager is therefore automatically the acquisition entity. A registered manager is a role: the Health and Social Care Act 2008 requires a registered provider's activity to be "managed by an individual who is registered under this Chapter as a manager" (www.legislation.gov.uk).

Scope is England only. The sources are CQC, the Companies House register for England and Wales, and English guidance. Nothing here should be read across to the regulators of Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland.

Docket, which publishes this report, supplies sourced target research to PE teams. This document describes a public-evidence method and uses fictional records only. No prospect was contacted and no target list is reproduced. Nothing here relies on a claim of rising buyer interest.

How the evidence was gathered

This report is based on public pages as they stood on 21 November 2026. It did not analyse live data: the CQC API was not queried and the directory files were not downloaded or parsed. Field names for the API come from archived partner documentation that states it was last updated on 25 May 2023 (anypoint.mulesoft.com), so they are hypotheses to confirm against the live schema.

Key Changes: What an Archived CQC Location Can Mean

CQC's explanations of archiving point in two directions. The directory page says archiving is usually "because a care service has stopped operating or been taken over by another organisation" (www.cqc.org.uk). The data page says archiving is "not necessarily because the service has closed". Both are true, which is why a status field alone cannot decide a market-map outcome. The sections below separate the registration events that can produce an archive.

Change 1: A legal-entity change at a continuing location

CQC describes this event as a change of business type, also known as a "change in legal entity", intended for "continued delivery of regulated activities at a location when a business transfers between two different legal entities". The owner on the ground may not change in substance, yet the registered provider has. For a market map the legal-entity key must change while the service key stays the same.

The older CQC guidance on continuing regulatory history, last updated on 12 May 2022, says history continues for this kind of change "regardless of whether a location was operating when the legal entity or address changed". It is older than CQC's continuation of regulatory history page, updated in February 2026, and should be rechecked before use; the two agree on the 1 April 2019 start date for the current display model.

Change 2: A sale and transfer of a service (asset route)

In an asset purchase the buyer registers as a new provider or, if already registered, adds the location to its existing registration (www.stephens-scown.co.uk). Practitioners add that an existing operator wanting to ring-fence the acquisition can set up a new company, which is then "treated as a new entrant" (www.stephens-scown.co.uk). The seller must apply to cancel its own registration, or the particular location if only one home is sold (www.rwkgoodman.com), because "Selling your service does not automatically remove your registration with CQC". An old provider record can therefore stay live after the service has moved on.

Timing creates apparent gaps. A law firm advises that "Both the Buyer and the Seller must apply to the CQC around the same time" (www.stephens-scown.co.uk), and reports that even the quicker route "can still take approximately 16-20 weeks" (www.stephens-scown.co.uk). Another says an asset-purchase agreement is typically "conditional on you receiving CQC approval" (www.rwkgoodman.com), and a third says the parties "must obtain CQC consent to transfer the registered business to the buyer" (www.myerson.co.uk). Some deals use a split exchange and completion to manage the wait (www.stephens-scown.co.uk). These are practitioner views at the time of writing, not regulator timetables. They do explain why a predecessor's end date and a successor's start date may not coincide, and why a seller is advised to inform the regulator once completion has taken place (www.rwkgoodman.com).

Change 3: A share purchase (no registration event at all)

A share purchase can change who owns a care business without changing the registered provider. CQC's guidance reads: "A share buy-out is when the ownership of a company changes, but the company registered with CQC stays the same". A law firm explains the commercial effect: in a share purchase "you buy the

company with all of its liabilities" (www.clarkewillmott.com), and the seller, or sometimes the buyer, notifies the regulator of the change of ownership (www.stephens-scown.co.uk).

For continuity research this has a direct implication. A change of ultimate owner after a share deal will not appear as an archived location, because nothing is re-registered. An archived row cannot detect share-deal ownership changes, and the absence of archives is not evidence of stable ownership. Corporate filings are better evidence. Companies House defines a person with significant control by tests such as holding more than 25% of shares, more than 25% of voting rights, or the right to appoint or remove the majority of the board (www.gov.uk).

Change 4: A move of premises or an address change

CQC says a service sometimes "must re-register as a 'new' location" even though it keeps delivering the same service, usually after a change of ownership or address (www.cqc.org.uk). A moved service therefore produces an archived old location and a new location, possibly under the same provider. Whether the history carries over depends on conditions that CQC sets out, including that at least one regulated activity continues, so the map should record the move and not assume inherited history.

Change 5: Cessation and cancellation

A provider can cancel its registration only when closing down or having closed all services at all locations, and may apply "30 days before you stop providing services" or after stopping (www.cqc.org.uk). A cancelled registration with no linked incoming application most resembles closure. Yet a cancellation can also lag in the published data, as CQC itself warns, so a single file is weak closure evidence.

Table 1 below summarises how each competing explanation tends to appear in public records and what further evidence separates it from the others.

Competing explanation	Typical public registration signal	Evidence that would separate it
Service ceased	Provider cancellation, or location archived with no linked successor	Dated closure notice, no continuing activity at the address, no new registration with matching service and address
Continuing service, legal entity changed	Archived location linked to a new location, with history shown on the new profile	Matching address and regulated activity, new legal entity in Companies House (www.gov.uk), link visible within about 30 days
Share deal, same registered company	No archive; only notifications about owners or officers (www.stephens-scown.co.uk)	Companies House changes in shareholders or control persons (www.gov.uk)
Moved service	Old location archived, new location at a different address	Same provider, same service type, new address and premises dates
Delayed public cancellation or link	Directory row lags behind the register	A newer snapshot or live API record; do not decide on one release
Unresolved archive	Archived with no link and no operating evidence	Keep both identities and ask the next question in Table 2

No single field resolves an archived record. Each explanation can produce a similar status, so discriminating evidence comes from a second source such as a company filing or a dated operating source. The last row is a legitimate outcome: some archives cannot be resolved from public data.

Identifiers, Linkage Fields and Legal-Entity Matching

A continuity table needs separate keys because the sources use different identifiers for different things.

Provider ID, location ID and what they mean

CQC separates providers from locations. The provider is the legal person or organisation registered to carry on regulated activity; the location is a place "at which, or from which" the activity is provided. Statute makes a matching split: a person seeking registration "as a service provider" applies to CQC (www.legislation.gov.uk). A registered manager can change without any change of provider, and the reverse.

Provider counts are slippery. CQC's market-oversight glossary says that, depending on context, "provider" refers to either a registered provider or a corporate group or brand. Department of Health and Social Care statistics use "location" for the term CQC applies to a care home or home care agency (www.gov.uk). Counting rows in a directory extract is not counting operators.

Homecare adds a footprint problem. CQC defines a homecare location as a place that "organises or manages care that is delivered to people in their homes", and a registration application must include the main office even though care is delivered elsewhere. The domiciliary licensing page asks applicants for each location from which they provide the service (www.gov.uk). An office row is therefore not the complete serviced-home footprint, and an archived office row says little about how many people still receive care. Homecare is also large: CQC reported just over **13,500** homecare services in April 2026 (www.cqc.org.uk).

API linkage fields, and the schema check still owed

CQC's data page says the API lists "all active and inactive providers and locations", with registration start and end dates "(if applicable)" and "linked organisations" such as a location previously run by a different provider. Those are documented capabilities, not evidence that this run had access.

The legacy partner documentation is more specific. It states that a re-registered organisation "will show as a new organisation record in the API with a new organisation ID" (anypoint.mulesoft.com), and that for applications completed from 1 April 2019 the new location "will inherit the ratings and reports from the previous (predecessor) location" (anypoint.mulesoft.com). Its location example shows fields such as `locationId`, `providerId` and `registrationStatus` (anypoint.mulesoft.com), plus a `relationships` array with `relatedLocationId`, `type` and `reason` (anypoint.mulesoft.com). Its provider example shows `providerId`, `locationIds` and `registrationDate` (anypoint.mulesoft.com), with provider-level `relatedProviderId` entries (anypoint.mulesoft.com). No deregistration-date field and no Companies House number field appeared in the fetched examples, so a worksheet should not assume either column until the live schema or a downloaded file header confirms it.

Identifiers also come in more than one format, long numeric codes with a "1-" prefix and short NHS-style codes. A guide hosted by an NHS commissioning support unit says the location ID is in Column A of the directory files (www.ardengemcsu.nhs.uk) and warns that an identifier can change, "particularly for Domiciliary Care for things like change of ownership, provider" (www.ardengemcsu.nhs.uk). It dates from December 2020 and is background, not current schema documentation.

Matching to an official legal entity

Matching a CQC provider name to a company is a corroboration exercise. Companies House profile data include previous company names (developer-specs.company-information.service.gov.uk) with the date from which each name was effective (developer-specs.company-information.service.gov.uk), so a name change does not create a new entity. Companies Act 2006 section 81 provides that a change "does not affect any rights or obligations of the company" (www.legislation.gov.uk) and that it takes effect when the new certificate of incorporation is issued (www.legislation.gov.uk). GOV.UK confirms that the company name changes only on registration (www.gov.uk), and that a registered office change is likewise not official until registered (www.gov.uk). The provider registration rules separately require notice of a change in the name or address of a body corporate (www.legislation.gov.uk), so the two registers can show one change on different dates.

Company status needs care. Dissolution means removal from the register (www.gov.uk), and a dissolved company is one "struck off" (www.gov.uk), yet a restored company "is deemed to have continued in existence as if it had not been struck off and dissolved" (www.gov.uk). Records of dissolved companies are kept for 20 years (www.gov.uk), and filing history remains readable (www.gov.uk).

A defensible match needs at least two independent corroborating fields, for example the registered office matching the CQC provider address plus an officer overlap. Name similarity alone produces a candidate link only. Programmatic use of Companies House requires an API key sent with each request (developer-specs.company-information.service.gov.uk), within a limit of 600 requests per five minutes (developer-specs.company-information.service.gov.uk), and the service describes its data as live and real-time (developer.company-information.service.gov.uk).

Implementation Considerations and Process Changes

Step 1: Acquire a dated snapshot and record the dataset type

Every archived row should carry a release date, a retrieval date and a dataset type. CQC publishes several products on different schedules: the directory of locations is usually updated once a week, the care directory with filters and the ratings file once a month, and the API daily (www.cqc.org.uk). Archived locations are published separately as "Deactivated locations" (www.cqc.org.uk). A status that differs between a weekly file and a daily record may simply reflect different release dates. An earlier NHS-hosted guide described monthly directory releases (www.ardengemcsu.nhs.uk), which shows that schedules change over time and should be read from the current page.

Under the migration warning, a cancellation may be missing from a file for longer than usual. "Still active in the file" is therefore weaker evidence of operation than usual until CQC announces completion of the change. The main file is described as covering every hospital, care home, GP, dentist and home care agency in England,

but this run did not test completeness.

Step 2: Record the licence and personal-data conditions

CQC's data are made available under the Open Government Licence (OGL), and CQC asks that users "acknowledge on your site or service that you are using CQC information" (www.cqc.org.uk). The OGL grants a "worldwide, royalty-free, perpetual, non-exclusive licence" (www.nationalarchives.gov.uk), permits users to "adapt the Information" (www.nationalarchives.gov.uk), and requires users to "acknowledge the source of the Information in your product or application" (www.nationalarchives.gov.uk). If the publisher states no attribution wording, the default is "Contains public sector information licensed under the Open Government Licence v3.0." (www.nationalarchives.gov.uk). Three more conditions affect a PE research product:

- **Personal data are excluded.** The licence does not cover "personal data in the Information", which matters because the filtered directory lists registered managers (www.nationalarchives.gov.uk).
- **No implied endorsement.** The licence does not grant the right to use the information in a way that suggests official status (www.nationalarchives.gov.uk).
- **No warranty.** The information is licensed "as is" and the provider is "not liable for any errors or omissions" (www.nationalarchives.gov.uk).

The Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) shows the same pattern for another public register: the licence "does not apply to personal data in the dataset" (ico.org.uk), and reusers are asked to be aware of their data protection obligations (ico.org.uk). UK GDPR principles continue to apply to published names: data must be "collected for specified, explicit and legitimate purposes" and "accurate and, where necessary, kept up to date" (ico.org.uk). A continuity table needs provider and location data, not manager names, so the practical rule is to leave personal names out.

Step 3: Trace documented links before inferring any

CQC says predecessor and successor links are made retrospectively, and expects most within 30 days. The regulatory-history page repeats that previous history "may take up to 30 days" to display. The working rule is a hold period: an archive in roughly the last 30 days with no link is not evidence of cessation. A longer-running archive without a link is not proof either; a missing successor link does not prove cessation.

When links exist, compare address, regulated activities and service types, then read company history and event dates. A similar name and address generates a candidate only. CQC's 2022 guidance shows why a clean merge is not always right: history will not be continued where "a history cannot be split between multiple locations", so a partial transfer from a multi-service location leaves the old location active while the new one starts without inherited history (cqc.org.uk).

Step 4: Keep inspection and rating evidence with the entity and date it describes

CQC's rules for inheriting ratings are conditional. A new provider taking over "will 'inherit' the previous location history (rating and report)" (www.cqc.org.uk), yet old and new ratings "cannot be aggregated with any new ratings awarded to the new provider" (www.cqc.org.uk). Where the previous location was not inspected, "no history will be displayed", and a successor showing an inherited rating must make clear it was awarded to the predecessor.

For a worksheet, this means separate columns for the assessment or report date, the legal entity that was assessed, and the date of the registration event. An inherited rating must never be recorded as a fresh inspection of the incoming operator. Whether the carry-over conditions are met in a given case should be rechecked on the current CQC page, and a deal-relevant reading belongs with a specialist adviser.

Step 5: Return one of five outcomes, with the next question

Table 2 below defines the five outcomes and the evidence each requires. None declares that a transaction is possible or impossible.

Outcome	Minimum evidence required	Map action	Next question
Supported continuation	Documented predecessor or successor link, or matching address plus activity plus a dated operating source for the successor	Retain service key; add successor registration and legal-entity key with effective dates	Is the successor entity the intended acquisition entity?
Supported cessation	Dated closure or cancellation source, no operating evidence after the end date, and no matching new registration	Move to closed status with evidence date	Was there a documented sale of the business or assets?
Registration ended only	Registration end documented, but no evidence either way on operation (for example a provider cancellation under a data-lag warning)	Keep on map as "registration ended"; exclude from active counts	Does a later snapshot show a link or new registration?
Conflicting	Two sources disagree, such as a link plus a closure statement	Keep both records; flag for a reviewer	Which source is later and closer to the event?
Unresolved	Archived with no link and no corroborating source	Keep, but exclude from both active and closed totals	What evidence would an authorised diligence step request?

"Registration ended only" is a separate outcome by design. It preserves the distinction between a registration ending and care ceasing, which is the premise of this report. The outcomes are ordered by evidence, not likelihood; no baseline frequency of any outcome is asserted.

Data Analysis and Evidence

Published statistics describe the setting in which archive decisions are made. No public source found for this report quantifies how many archived locations are continuations versus closures. That ratio would need to be measured on an authorised sample, and no figure for it is offered.

Market scale and the provider-versus-location problem

Skills for Care estimated that about **19,000** organisations provided or organised adult social care in England in 2025/26, delivering services from about **41,000** establishments (www.skillsforcare.org.uk). It notes that "a chain of multiple care homes will be counted for each separate care home in the chain", so the totals are not interchangeable (www.skillsforcare.org.uk). Nearly three-quarters (**73%**) of establishments were CQC-regulated (www.skillsforcare.org.uk), and non-residential regulated establishments outnumbered residential

ones for the first time in 2024/25 (www.skillsforcare.org.uk). The previous edition reported **30,000** CQC-regulated establishments, up 1,100 on 2023/24 (www.skillsforcare.org.uk). Organisations with 250 or more employees were only **3%** of organisations (www.skillsforcare.org.uk), and **84%** of filled posts were with independent sector employers (www.skillsforcare.org.uk).

Register movement is visible in CQC's State of Care 2025/26. The number of care homes fell by **8%** between April 2019 and April 2026 (assets.publishing.service.gov.uk), while homecare services grew by 42% over the same period (www.cqc.org.uk). These are register-based aggregates. They show a register in motion; they are not archive rates and should not be converted into one.

The Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) provides an older reference point. It estimated around **380,000** care home beds in England (assets.publishing.service.gov.uk) and, for the UK, around **5,500** providers operating **11,300** care homes for the elderly (www.gov.uk). It also found that the largest 30 providers supplied a minority share of capacity (assets.publishing.service.gov.uk), and that around **95%** of beds were in the independent sector (www.gov.uk). These 2017 figures predate recent consolidation and are cited only to show that the ratio of locations to providers has long been well above one.

The blank continuity table

Table 3 is the reference asset: a blank continuity table listing the 16 recommended fields for each archived record and the reason for each.

Field	What to record	Why it is separate
Internal service key	Your own stable key for the care service	Survives registration changes; neither a brand nor a manager
Provider ID and location ID	Both identifiers, old and new, as published	A re-registered service can appear as a new record (anypoint.mulesoft.com)
Legal-entity key	Companies House number or other register key	A name change does not create a new entity (www.legislation.gov.uk)
Address	Registered location address, with source date	A moved service re-registers
Regulated activity and service type	Activity, service type, and for homecare the office versus served area	Carry-over needs a continuing activity
Raw status	Status text exactly as published	Preserves what the source said
Registration start and end	Dates for each registration	Start and end dates are documented
Predecessor or successor link	ID of the linked record and the link type	Candidate links are not merges (anypoint.mulesoft.com)
Business-event date	Date of sale, transfer or legal-entity change	Differs from registration dates (www.stephens-scown.co.uk)
Operating-evidence date	Latest dated source showing the service operating	Registration status is not operating evidence

Field	What to record	Why it is separate
Assessment or report date	Date of the inspection or rating, and the entity assessed	Inherited ratings describe the predecessor
Dataset release and retrieval date	Both dates, plus dataset type	Files differ in schedule
URL and excerpt	Exact page and a verbatim excerpt	Lets a second reviewer recheck
Competing explanation	Which explanation in Table 1 applies	Forces alternatives to be considered
Reviewer outcome	One of the five outcomes in Table 2	Gives a consistent end state
Reviewer notes and next question	The one question that would resolve the record	Hands gaps to authorised diligence

The table's purpose is to stop two shortcuts: deleting a record because a registration ended, and merging two records because they look alike.

Counting rules

The unit for market size is the in-scope operator, not the registration. Count unique legal-entity keys among in-scope service keys, and count registrations separately. For a sample later reviewed with authorisation, report four numbers: archived records checked, linked continuations, confirmed cessations and unresolved cases. Each proportion uses archived records checked as its denominator, never the number of companies in England, and no baseline rate should be borrowed from this report.

Case Studies and Real-World Examples

No named real-world case is used. The examples below are fictional and labelled.

Fictional before and after record (Hypothetical Example)

Harbour View Lodge is a fictional 40-bed care home. Alder Care Ltd, a fictional company, held the registration until a fictional date, when a fictional asset sale moved the business to Birch Care Group Ltd. The records might look like this:

- **Before:** location ID L-A (fictional), provider ID P-A (fictional), legal entity Alder Care Ltd, status "Registered".
- **After:** L-A is archived. Location L-B (fictional) is registered to provider P-B (fictional), legal entity Birch Care Group Ltd, with the same address and regulated activity.
- **Link:** a predecessor link from L-B to L-A becomes visible 25 days after the new registration begins.

The map outcome is supported continuation. The service key stays the same, two registration identifiers are retained with their own effective periods, and two legal-entity keys are retained. The legal-entity change is not erased, because the acquisition entity for any future transaction is whichever entity holds the registration at the relevant date. The rating on L-B's profile describes an assessment of the predecessor and is dated to its report.

Fictional lag case (Hypothetical Example)

A fictional provider's registration appears to end in a monthly file, but a daily API record, if available, still shows the location as registered. Because the publisher has warned of delays, the reviewer records "registration ended only" and sets a recheck for the next release. No decision is made on the first file alone.

Fictional sample report (Hypothetical Example)

Suppose an authorised review checked 10 archived records and found 4 linked continuations, 3 confirmed cessations and 3 unresolved cases. The report would say "4 of 10 archived records checked were linked continuations". The figure applies only to that sample. It is not an estimate for England and not a baseline for any other list.

Implications and Future Directions

For origination teams the main implication is a change of default. Deleting archived rows saves effort but removes services that may continue under another registration, leaving the operator count short. Treating every archived row as live inflates counts and double-counts services that moved. The continuity table makes the middle state explicit and lets a team state what is known: a closure, a continuation, or an open question with a named next step.

Three open issues limit any public-evidence method. First, the migration warning means file timings may change, and a reviewer should recheck CQC's data page for the promised completion notice before relying on file freshness. Second, public links and operating evidence may never distinguish a real closure from registration lag for some records, and the right outcome for those is unresolved. Third, whether a rating applies after an ownership change is a conditional rule, so a score should not move along an ownership chain without checking the conditions.

A further task is schema confirmation. When authorised API access or downloaded file headers are available, the relationship fields in the legacy documentation should be checked against the live schema before any column is named in a production table. A completeness test of the archived-locations file against the weekly directory also needs the files themselves.

Practitioners treat CQC approval as a gating step in asset deals; one firm notes that "lenders will not release funds until CQC approval is confirmed" (www.myerson.co.uk), and another observes that registration issues arise where an asset sale brings a new owner (www.grantthornton.co.uk). A continuity table does not replace that diligence. It is an early screen for which services deserve it, and the list of unresolved cases is the part that goes to authorised advisers. Registration obligations, transfer mechanics and any interpretation affecting a deal should be reviewed by a qualified legal or regulatory adviser.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

What does an archived CQC location mean?

It means CQC no longer treats the location as actively registered. Archiving can follow closure or a takeover, and does not by itself show the service has closed.

What does it mean when a CQC location is deregistered?

Deregistration or cancellation ends a registration. It does not prove care stopped, because a sale can end the outgoing provider's registration while the incoming provider continues the service (www.rwkgoodman.com). Look for a linked incoming registration and operating evidence.

How can a reviewer tell whether a care home has closed or changed provider?

Check whether CQC shows a link between archived and current profiles; whether a new registration exists at the same address with the same activity; the provider's company history (www.gov.uk); and any dated operating evidence. A missing link is not proof of closure, and the newest link can lag by about 30 days.

What is the difference between a provider being deregistered and a location being archived?

A provider registration is the legal entity's registration, and a location is a place listed within it. A provider can end its registration only when it has stopped regulated activity at all locations. A location can be archived while the provider continues elsewhere.

Does a location ID change after a takeover?

It depends on the route. In a share purchase the registered company stays the same and nothing is re-registered. In an asset sale or legal-entity change, the service may re-register as a new location with a new record, and CQC links old and new (anypoint.mulesoft.com). An NHS-hosted guide also warns that identifiers can change, particularly for domiciliary care (www.ardengemcsu.nhs.uk).

Does the rating move to the new provider?

Under current CQC guidance a new provider "will 'inherit' the previous location history (rating and report)" where conditions are met, but old and new ratings cannot be aggregated. Do not treat an inherited rating as a fresh inspection of the incoming operator.

What changes in a care home acquisition for CQC purposes?

A share purchase leaves the registered company unchanged. An asset purchase needs the buyer to register as a new provider or add the location, and the seller to apply to cancel (www.rwkgoodman.com). Law-firm due diligence checklists also ask whether all necessary notifications to CQC have been made (www.clarkewillmott.com).

Can public CQC data be used for UK care home market mapping?

Yes, under the Open Government Licence with attribution and with the personal-data exclusion in mind (www.nationalarchives.gov.uk). Public data are best for building a candidate list and a continuity table. They are not a substitute for authorised diligence, and this report covers England only.

Conclusion

An archived CQC location is a registration event whose meaning has to be established, not assumed. CQC states that archiving is not necessarily closure, that continuing services can re-register after a change of legal structure or address, and that predecessor links appear retrospectively. The current data page adds a live caution about delayed file updates, including cancellations.

The practical rules are short. Count operators by legal entity and registrations separately. Keep both registration identifiers and both legal entities, with effective periods. Treat a similar name or address as a candidate link only. Require operating or closure corroboration before deleting a business from a market map. Keep ratings attached to the entity and date they describe. Return one of five outcomes and name the next question. This report examined no live API or file rows, found no public source that quantifies archive outcomes, and makes no claim about any transaction; those gaps belong to authorised diligence and specialist advice.

Source links

Links cited in this article, in order of first appearance. Full addresses are provided for readers using extracted text.

1. https://www.cqc.org.uk/about-us/transparency/using-cqc-data
2. https://www.cqc.org.uk/guidance-regulation/registration/sale-and-transfer/buy-registered-provider-through-share-buy-out
3. https://www.grantthornton.co.uk/insights/care-homes-deals-stalling-due-to-it-issues-at-the-cqc
4. https://www.cqc.org.uk/guidance-regulation/registration/sale-and-transfer/buy-or-take-over-regulated-service
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7. https://www.cqc.org.uk/guidance-regulation/providers/registration/change-your-registered-business-type
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Our research library covers market mapping, screening criteria, private-company data, succession and ownership, source evaluation and evidence standards. These resources explain the methods and limitations behind origination research. Findings support a team's judgment; they do not establish that a company is for sale or guarantee a transaction or investment outcome.

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