NEEDS AND DEMAND STATEMENT

90 Turks Road, Radcliffe, M26 4QB

1.0 Purpose of this Statement

1.1 Introduction

This Need and Demand Statement has been prepared in support of an application for a **Certificate of Lawfulness of Proposed Use** relating to the proposed operation of a small family-style children's home at **90 Turks Road, Radcliffe, M26 4QB**.

The proposed home would provide residential care accommodation for **one child or young person only**. The home would operate within a domestic residential environment and would not accept emergency placements. The property would remain residential in appearance and character, with no external alterations proposed.

The applicant is the owner of the property. The applicant's intention is that the property would be operated by an appropriate external children's home provider, who would be responsible for Ofsted registration, staffing, care delivery and day-to-day management. The proposed planning envelope is therefore deliberately limited to a single-child, family-style model.

The purpose of this statement is to provide context regarding the continuing need for high-quality children's residential care provision nationally and locally, including within Bury and the wider Greater Manchester area. It also explains how the proposed home would contribute to the availability of small-scale, local, regulated accommodation for children and young people who require residential care.

Whilst need and demand are not determinative in the assessment of a Certificate of Lawfulness application, they remain relevant contextual considerations and assist in understanding the wider public benefit associated with the proposal. The central legal question for the LDC remains whether the proposed use would amount to a material change of use requiring planning permission.

This statement should be read alongside the Planning Statement, Operational Management Statement, Good Neighbour Policy, Travel and Parking Plan and the submitted floor plan

2.0 National Context

2.1 Continuing Demand for Children's Residential Care

Local authorities across England continue to face significant pressure in securing suitable placements for children and young people who are unable to live safely within their family homes.

Department for Education statistics record **81,770 children looked after by local authorities in England as at 31 March 2025**. Of those children, **9,480 were placed in children's homes, including secure children's homes**, representing 12% of children looked after. The same national data records that **44% of looked-after children were placed outside their local authority boundary**, underlining the continued national challenge in securing suitable local placements.

The need for residential care is driven by a range of factors, including complex childhood trauma, safeguarding needs, family breakdown, exploitation risk, difficulties in securing suitable foster placements and the need for stable, specialist, relationship-based care.

For some children, foster care or supported accommodation will not be suitable. A small, regulated children's home can provide the stability, supervision and therapeutic support required to meet the child's assessed needs.

2.2 Importance of Local Placements

National policy recognises the importance of children being placed close to their home communities where it is safe and appropriate to do so. The Written Ministerial Statement on planning for accommodation for looked after children states that the planning system should not be a barrier to providing homes for vulnerable children and that, where care is the best choice for a child, the system should provide stable, loving homes close to children's communities.

Local placements can help children to:

- maintain family contact where appropriate;
- remain connected to familiar schools and services;
- access local health and therapeutic support;
- maintain positive relationships and community links;
- reduce disruption during an already difficult period;
- avoid unnecessary long-distance moves;
- support better care planning and professional oversight.

The proposed single-child home at 90 Turks Road would contribute to this wider policy objective by providing a small, local, family-style residential environment.

2.3 Sufficiency Duty

The sufficiency duty requires local authorities to secure, so far as reasonably practicable, enough suitable accommodation in their area to meet the needs of children who are looked after. Ofsted's national research on sufficiency identifies several barriers faced by local authorities, including rising numbers of children in care, more complex needs, recruitment and retention challenges, lack of the right quantity and mix of provision, and difficulty operating in a private market where providers may have significant choice over placements.

The proposed home would not replace the role of the local authority in assessing or commissioning placements. However, it would provide one additional regulated local option capable of being considered by local authorities where a single-child residential placement is suitable.

3.0 Local Need within Bury and Greater Manchester

3.1 Bury's Identified Sufficiency Pressures

Bury Council's own decision records show a clear local objective to increase local children's home placements. In November 2024, Bury Council approved the acquisition of properties for children's homes in Bury, with stated aims including increasing placements in the locality, reducing the need to place children outside Bury, improving social, educational and economic outcomes, and aligning with the Greater Manchester Children's Sufficiency Strategy.

This is important local evidence. It demonstrates that Bury has recognised the need for additional local residential provision and the importance of reducing out-of-area placements for children in its care.

The proposed home at 90 Turks Road would be consistent with the principle of providing small-scale, local accommodation within Bury. It would provide a single-child family-style setting and would not operate as a large or institutional children's home.

3.2 Local Residential Placement Pressures

Bury's March 2026 report on the Step Forward Foster Carer Scheme records that the Council's projected spend on residential placements for children and young people was **£18.5 million for the 2025/26 financial year**. The same report refers to an average residential placement cost of approximately **£7,418 per child per week**, and identifies high costs and limited availability of independent fostering agency placements and residential placements as part of the challenge in finding homes for children and young people.

This evidence does not mean that every child should be placed in residential care. Rather, it demonstrates the scale of local pressure and the importance of having the right mix of placement options available.

A single-child children's home can assist in meeting specialist placement need where a child requires a highly structured, consistent and supervised setting that cannot be met through foster care at that time.

3.3 Ofsted Commentary on Bury Children's Services

Ofsted's June 2025 inspection of Bury local authority children's services found that services had improved since the 2021 inspection, with more children receiving services that make a positive difference to their lives. Ofsted also recorded that significant investment had strengthened workforce capacity and that appropriately focused services were available to support children and families.

However, Ofsted also identified continuing sufficiency challenges. The report states that sufficiency challenges were being addressed by senior leaders to ensure that all children live in homes that meet their needs, and that financial investment had been approved to increase the number of local authority-owned residential homes.
This confirms that sufficiency remains a live issue within Bury. The proposed home would contribute to the overall availability of local regulated provision, subject to Ofsted registration and local authority placement matching.

4.0 The Proposed Home at 90 Turks Road

4.1 Single-Child Family-Style Model

The proposed home would accommodate **one child or young person only**. This is a deliberately low-intensity model and is materially different from a larger children's home or multi-child residential institution.

The property is a 3-bedroom, 2-bathroom semi-detached dwelling of approximately 91 sq m. It would retain its domestic layout and would continue to function as a single home.

The proposed internal arrangement would be:

Bedroom 1
Bedroom 1 would be used as the sole bedroom for the child or young person. The applicant confirms that Bedroom 1 benefits from an ensuite bathroom, although this is not currently shown on the submitted plan.

Bedroom 2
Bedroom 2 would be used as staff quarters / office and storage space ancillary to the operation of the home.

Bedroom 3
Bedroom 3 would be retained as a flexible room within the domestic layout of the property.

The ground floor would remain in ordinary domestic use, including living room, kitchen/dining room and WC. The property would not be subdivided, externally altered or adapted into an institutional layout.

4.2 No Emergency Placements

The home would not accept emergency placements.

This is an important operational safeguard. It ensures that occupation remains planned, stable and carefully matched. It also reduces the risk of high turnover, short-notice admissions or crisis-led activity that could otherwise alter the character of the use.

All placements would be subject to assessment, matching and planning by the future operator and relevant local authority.

4.3 A Stable and Therapeutic Environment

The proposed home would provide a stable, structured and child-centred environment. The child would live at the property as their home and would be supported through ordinary domestic routines, including meals, education, appointments, leisure, family contact where appropriate and rest.

A single-child home can be particularly suitable where a child requires consistency, privacy, close support and a carefully managed environment. This model can help avoid the potential pressures that may arise in larger group settings.

5.0 Working with Local Authorities

5.1 Future Operator Role

The applicant is the owner of the property. A future external operator would be responsible for:

- Ofsted registration;
- preparing and maintaining the Statement of Purpose;
- staffing and rota arrangements;
- care planning and safeguarding;
- liaison with placing authorities;
- day-to-day management;
- compliance with children's homes regulations;
- implementation of the Good Neighbour Policy and Operational Management Statement.

The absence of a named operator at this stage does not alter the purpose of this statement. The application seeks to establish the lawful planning position for a clearly defined single-child use. Any future operator would be required to remain within that defined operational envelope.

5.2 Planned Placement Matching

The future operator would work with local authorities to ensure that any placement is appropriate, planned and carefully matched.

The placement process would consider:

- the child's assessed needs;
- safeguarding requirements;
- suitability of the home environment;
- staffing requirements;
- education and health needs;
- family contact arrangements;
- risk management;
- compatibility with the single-child model;
- long-term placement stability.

The home would not operate as a drop-in, crisis or emergency placement facility.

5.3 Supporting Local Authority Sufficiency Duties

The proposed home would support local authority sufficiency objectives by providing:

- one additional regulated local residential placement;
- a small-scale family-style environment;
- a single-child model for children who require individualised support;
- local accommodation that may reduce the need for distant placements;
- a stable setting capable of supporting planned care arrangements;
- an additional option for local authorities when assessing placement availability.

The home would therefore contribute to the wider range and mix of provision available to local authorities in Bury, Greater Manchester and neighbouring areas.

6.0 Benefits of the Proposed Home

6.1 Supporting Local Children and Young People

The proposed home would provide an opportunity for a child or young person to live in a safe, stable and family-style environment within the local area.

Where it is appropriate and safe, local provision can allow a child to remain closer to family, friends, education, healthcare, professional support and community networks.

6.2 Reducing Reliance on Distant Placements

National statistics show that a significant proportion of children looked after are placed outside their local authority boundary, with 44% placed outside the boundary in 2025.

The proposed home would provide one additional local option that could help reduce the need for distant placements where a child's assessed needs can be met safely in the local area.

6.3 Supporting Stability

Placement stability is central to positive outcomes for children in care. The proposed single-child model would provide a calm, planned and consistent environment.

By excluding emergency placements, the home would promote stability and reduce the risk of disruption associated with sudden admissions or rapid turnover.

6.4 Maintaining a Domestic Environment

The property would remain a domestic home. There would be no signage, no public-facing use, no external alterations and no institutional appearance.

This supports the objective of providing care in a normalised, family-style setting rather than in an environment that appears clinical or institutional.

6.5 Supporting Safeguarding and Professional Oversight

The future operator would be required to comply with Ofsted registration requirements and children's home regulations before operating the home.

Ofsted's national sufficiency research emphasises that all children's homes must be registered with Ofsted and that registration provides oversight, helping local authorities to be assured that accommodation is safe and suitable.

7.0 Planning Context

This statement does not seek to convert the LDC application into a planning merits application.

The legal question for the Council is whether the proposed use of 90 Turks Road as a single-child C2 children's home would amount to a material change of use from the existing C3 dwellinghouse use.

However, national policy and local evidence provide important context. The Written Ministerial Statement expressly recognises that planning permission will not be required in all cases involving children's homes, including changes from dwellinghouses where the use remains within C3 or where there is no material change of use to C2. It also confirms that an application may be made for a Lawful Development Certificate to confirm whether, on the facts of the case, the specific use would be lawful.

The proposed use at 90 Turks Road is tightly limited. It would provide accommodation for one child only, with no emergency placements, no external alterations and no institutional use. The need and demand evidence supports the social value of the proposal, but the certificate should be determined on the legal test of materiality.

8.0 Conclusion

There is clear national and local evidence of continuing pressure on children's residential care provision. Nationally, over 81,000 children were looked after in England in 2025, with 9,480 placed in children's homes or secure children's homes and 44% of looked-after children placed outside their local authority boundary.

Locally, Bury Council has recognised the need to increase placements within the locality and reduce the need to place children outside Bury. Its own decision records refer to improving outcomes by increasing local placements and aligning with the Greater Manchester Children's Sufficiency Strategy.

The proposed home at 90 Turks Road would make a small but meaningful contribution to this wider need. It would provide a single-child, family-style home within an existing residential property, with no emergency placements and no external alterations.

The home would be capable of supporting a child in a stable, domestic environment close to local services and community support, subject to appropriate Ofsted registration, local authority matching and operator management.

The proposal therefore represents a positive and proportionate response to the identified need for small-scale, regulated children's residential accommodation within Bury and the wider Greater Manchester area.