

Design, Access and Planning Statement

Change of Use from Residential (C3) to Care Home (C2)



Site Location:	13 Morley Street, Whitefield, M45 6GF
Date:	05/11/2025 Rev 2
Planning Authority:	Bury Council

Introduction

Homz (**The agent**) has been instructed by Hemanth Rameshwaram (**The applicant**) to prepare and submit an outline planning application to Bury Council (**the Planning Authority**) for a the change of use from residential (C3) care home (C2) (**The proposal**) 13 Morley Street, Whitefield, M45 6GF (**the Site Location**). In support of this application, the following Design and Access Statement is submitted to demonstrate the need for the proposal and evaluate its accordance with national and local policies.

Site Description

The site relates to a two storey, four bedroom, detached dwelling. The property is on a part of Morley Street which slopes downwards in levels to the east. The site does not lie in an area specifically designated under the current local development plan, including a Conservation Area or high risk flood zone.

The extract of the policy map below demonstrates the site itself circled in red. The site lies within close proximity to a district shopping centre (highlighted in blue) All Saints Conservation Area (highlighted in red green) and a strategic route network (highlighted in red).



Planning History

First floor extension at side

13 Morley Street, Whitefield, Manchester, M45 6GF

Ref. No: 60208 | Received: Mon 06 Jun 2016 | Validated: Tue 07 Jun 2016 | Status: Decided

Proposed Development

The proposal is for the change of use from a bungalow used as a single dwelling (use class C3) to a children's home (Use Class C2) for a children's residential care home to provide specialised care and support for children ages 6 – 18 years, with carers living on site.

This initiative aims to create a safe, supportive, and fully accessible environment to address a critical community need.

The property is four bedroom, which will remain for the children.

There are public transport links, both trains and buses, and the property has been acquired in view of this as access to facilities and services often presents difficulties for disabled people.

Relevant Planning Policy Considerations

The following local and national planning policy and guidance is relevant to this application:

National Planning Policy Framework (December 2023)

- Section 2 – Achieving sustainable development
- Section 4 – Decision making
- Section 6 – Building a strong, competitive economy
- Section 8 – Promoting healthy communities
- Section 11 – Making effective use of land
- Section 16 – Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

Unitary Development Plan and Policies

- CF1/1 Location of New Community Facilities
- CF3 Social Services
- CF3/1 Residential Care Homes and Nursing Homes
- CF5 Childcare Facilities
- EN1/2 Townscape and Built Design

- EN7/2 Noise Pollution
- H4/2 Special Needs Housing
- HT2/4 Car Parking and New Development
- HT6/2 Pedestrian/Vehicular Conflict

Material Considerations

The subject premises, is a dwellinghouse currently falling within Class C3(a) ie persons living together to form a single household. On the face of it the proposal could be seen as a change of use to that of Class C3(b) ie not more than six residents living together as a single household where care is provided for residents. This sub-category makes provision for supported housing schemes such as those for people with identified problems, as is the case here. Moreover, due to the provisions of s55(2)(f) which allows a change between sub-categories within a particular use class, no planning permission would be required for such.

It is clear from the wording of the Use Classes Order that there is intended to be no overlap between Class C2 'Use for the provision of residential accommodation and care to people in need of care (other than a use falling within Class C3 dwellinghouses)'. As indicated, the extent of the care provided in the current proposal would not involve staff being resident at the premises. Instead, supervision would be provided on a shift basis. This is consistent with the High Court judgement of *R v Bromley LBC ex parte Sinclair* [1991] 3 PLR 60 where it was accepted that staff providing care for residents need not themselves be resident. However, this did not involve children.

More recently, the judgement of *North Devon DC v FSS* [2003] EWHC 157 (Admin) specifically concerned children living in the same house. Here, the court went on to consider the meaning of 'household' in the context of Class C3(b). Children cannot be regarded as constituting a household by themselves; they could not run a house as they could not be expected to deal with all the matters that go to running a home. The question then arose as to whether carers who do not live on the premises but who provide, between them, continuous 24 hour care can be regarded as living together as part of the household. In the court's view they could not.

It was here held that the concept of living together as a household means that a proper functioning household must exist and, in such a context, it must mean that the children and a carer(s) must reside at the premises. If not, then the use must fall within Class C2.

Accordingly, this application seeks a change from Use Class C3(a) to Class C2.

The planning assessment therefore will cover the following matters of this material change of use:

- Principle of the Development
- Quality of Accommodation
- Impacts to Neighbouring Amenity
- Sustainable Transport

Principle of the Development

The property is in established residential estate with the proposal to provide living accommodation for a child in care which would function as a 'typical' family home to provide a safe and secure environment.

The expressed ethos of the facility intends that the occupation and the use of the property by children and support carers for daily living purposes would be comparable to that of a family home and family environment. The property would not be extended or altered and the number of occupiers at any one time (4/5) would be akin to that of a family.

The property is located within an established residential estate which is close to shops, local amenities and schools and it is therefore considered the location of the proposed use would be suitable for the proposed use.

The site is located in an existing residential area. The occupation of the home would be for up to four children ages 6-18 with special education needs, with carers working on a rota basis during the day and carers working at night. The set-up would be akin to a family dwelling and therefore would be appropriate for the area. The purpose of the home would be to support the children to build their confidence, help them in developing life skills and prepare them for adulthood, as would be expected in a single family dwelling.

Under the requirements of OFSTED, such care homes must be run as closely as possible to a typical family household, while accepting staff are employed on a rota basis to provide the parental support to the children so many have missed in their early years. The only physical requirements specified by OFSTED are emergency lighting (no external visual distinction from normal lighting) and locks on bedroom doors for the privacy of each child.

Staffing levels will meet the individual needs of the children to ensure that their welfare is safeguarded and promoted. It is not expected that staff will be resident but, instead, there would be constant supervision by means of a roster system.

During the day it is expected that the children would engage in various activities, plus attend a special needs school in the local area.

The proposed use is to provide a stable home environment for the occupants as their main and sole residence and that the length of stay is generally more than temporary or passing.

Under Section 22G of the Children Act 1989, local authorities have a statutory responsibility to take steps, as reasonably practicable, that ensure children in care are provided with accommodation that '(a) is within the authority's area; and (b) meets the needs of those children.' Three reports were published in 2020 by the Children's Commissioner: 'The Children who no-one knows what to do with'; 'Private provision in children's social care' and 'Stability index 2020', which point out the failings of local government to meet this responsibility.

The papers summarise the findings of three years of work by the Children's Commissioner's Office and explain the failure of both national and local government to adequately meet the needs of these children. The report (page 15) states: 'Local authorities are highly reliant on the independent sector, particularly for children's residential care. Costs are increasing but it's unclear why. Given this reliance, it is imperative the market works well and that commissioning and procurement are improved to ensure no child is placed in unsuitable care settings. Recommendations: The Government should consider the barriers to creating more residential care placements to increase supply'.

The proposed children's home seeks to replicate as closely as possible a normal family environment. Government policy promotes this type of service. The children's home model is to create a warm and nurturing family style environment for the medium to long-term care of a small number of children. This type of provision is operated in the same manner as a regular family home.

It is therefore considered that the proposed use would make a positive contribution to the care and protection of children/young adults residing at the premises and as such considered to be acceptable in principle and comply with UDP Policies EN1/2, CF3 and CF3/1 and the principles of the NPPF.

Quality of Accommodation

The National Planning Policy Framework pays specific regard to design being of high quality. Chapter 12 discusses how good quality design is instrumental amongst development proposals. Paragraph 131 states that the creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development.

The layout includes the creation of a semi-open plan shared area to be used as a kitchen/ dining room and lounge/ diner. The dwelling would have aspects on every elevation and a total of 121.19sqm, which would meet the Nationally Described Space Standards (NDSS 2015) for a two storey, four bedroom dwelling (97sqm). The bedrooms all meet the

minimum space standard of 7.5sqm, although Bedroom 1 would be slightly undersize, there is appropriate storage to increase its space and as the rooms would be for a small, young child, it would be appropriately sized.

Bedroom 1	6.5sqm
Bedroom 2	11.4sqm
Bedroom 3	8.1sqm
Bedroom 4	13.3sqm

The future occupants would also have access to the large rear garden for external amenity, which would be suitable for a family type living.

The internal layout of the proposal and amenities provided is considered to constitute high quality accommodation in accordance with the internal space standards. As such, the proposal would provide an acceptable quality of accommodation for the future occupiers.

Impacts on neighbouring amenity

The proposal is assessed on material impacts to neighbouring uses including in terms of, but not limited to, intensity of use, traffic, access and parking, and noise disturbance.

The existing lawful use of the property is C3 residential and this has a number of similarities to a class C2 use, this being said the element of providing care is a factor which could result in increased impacts to neighbours which should be carefully considered.

The existing property has 4 bedrooms and would accommodate 4 children and 4 carers (one carer per child) living on the property with staff operation on a night time/ day time shift pattern so there would always be a carer on site. In terms of the number of people at the property, this would be comparable to the number of occupants as a family home and possibly even less.

Therefore, any noise/ disturbance is not considered to be materially different from that which would be possible from a family occupying the dwellinghouse.

The attendance and visits by social workers/support workers would introduce additional but fairly irregular trips, and no more frequent than visits made by a family's relatives or friends for example.

It is important to note that the suitability of the property would be fully assessed in order to match the types of residents that could reside there, and this is heavily monitored by Ofsted. Factors would include nature of the surrounding community, skills and experience of the manager and staff team, proximity to other residential care homes etc.

Due to all of the above, it is considered that the scale and intensification of the proposed change of use would be limited and would not have an adverse or detrimental impact on the character or the amenity of the surrounding area or adjacent properties and would comply with UDP Policies EN1/2, CF3 and CF3/1.

Sustainable Transport

The NPPF states that development should only be prevented or refused on highway grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.

Pedestrian access, vehicular access, parking and waste provision would be as existing. This is a small care facility, as such, the car parking provision should give regard to the adopted parking standards, as well as take a common sense approach.

Each staff member would be able to use the existing parking space to the front of the dwelling. As part of its Environmental Policy, the company will actively encourage its employees to use public transport to travel to work, therefore no need for parking provision. The other residents would be children who would not be of an age to be able to own or drive a car. It is not intended that the use would attract a high number of visitors, however, this can be sufficiently accommodated locally on the street, as would a family dwelling.

Parking on the surrounding streets is largely unrestricted. The scale of the development proposed would be commensurate of family living and it is therefore considered the proposed use would not have a significant impact on the impact on parking in the area, the free flow of traffic or cause highway issues. As such, the proposed development is considered to be acceptable and would comply with UDP Policies CF1/1, CF3, HT2/4 and HT6/2.

Carbon and Energy Statement

The proposed development falls within the scope of Policy JP-S2 of the Greater Manchester Places for Everyone Development Plan – Carbon and Energy, which requires developments to contribute to carbon neutrality by minimising energy demand and maximising energy efficiency. In line with this policy, and the requirements of the 2022 Part L of the Building Regulations, the conversion will incorporate energy-efficient measures and sustainable building practices to reduce operational carbon emissions while providing a safe and comfortable living environment for children and care staff.

The proposal would result in no external or internal physical changes to expand the size of bedrooms and result in the change of use to a care home. Therefore, the change of use will not need use substantial construction materials. However there can be air tightness improvements through careful

detailing, sealing, and draft-proofing of the building envelope and zoned heating systems to ensure efficient use of energy based on room use and occupancy patterns.

There would be minimal environment impacts that will arise as part of the change of use. Four children living in shared accommodation would prove more a sustainable use of resources including water and energy than if the user moved into a self-contained flat. The heating system, lighting and water-saving appliances can be modernised and in accordance with building regulations.

The site is highly sustainably located and users do not need vehicles for transport, as residents will use active travel including walking and public transport. Bury train station is located a 10 minute walk from the site.

Digital Connectivity Statement

Policy JP-C2 of the Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan for Greater Manchester – Digital Connectivity requires that all developments support the provision of affordable, high-quality digital infrastructure, including full fibre-to-the-premises (FTTP) connectivity and operational internet access, unless it can be demonstrated that this is technically infeasible or unviable.

The proposed conversion of a detached dwelling into a children's care home will provide high-quality, reliable digital infrastructure in line with Policy JP-C2. Efforts will be made to secure full fibre-to-the- premises (FTTP) connectivity, with existing infrastructure retained and upgraded where appropriate. This will be available to all residents and staff with secure internet access for children with appropriate safeguarding controls.

Digital connectivity will play a vital role in ensuring the care home's operational efficiency, communication capacity, and resident support systems.

Conclusion

This report has highlighted that the proposal, subject to this application, is in accordance with the Council's planning policies and national planning policy.

For the above reasons the development is sustainable development and is also in accordance with national policy and guidance. Therefore, in the absence of any other material considerations to justify otherwise, it is respectfully requested that development be considered as acceptable in principle.

Should the Planning Authority request any further information in order to process this request, please contact **Homz** (hello@homz.uk) directly as the acting agent and we will be more than happy to deliver any additional information as and when required.

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