

Application Number	Date of Appln	Committee Date	Ward
143315/FO/2025	10th Jul 2025	23rd Oct 2025	Withington Ward

Proposal Change of use from a House in Multiple Occupation (Class C4) to a children's home for up to three children (Class C2).

Location 8 Beech Grove, Manchester, M14 6UY

Applicant Mr Ben Hollins, Care Group Northwest Ltd

Agent Mislav Omazic, Planning by Design

Executive Summary

This application is for the change of use of the property from a House in Multiple Occupation to a children's home for three children aged between 11 and 18. Three support workers and a manager would be present on site and would offer 1:1 support. No physical alterations are proposed to the property.

Concerns have been received from two Ward Councillors and Children's Commissioning that sufficient children's homes are provided in the M14 area. No objections have been received from local residents or Withington Civic Society.

Description

8 Beech Grove is a two storey semi-detached residential property, the authorised use is that of a five bed House in Multiple Occupation (Class C4). There is a small walled garden to the front of the property and a small garden to the rear previously laid to lawn. Access to the rear of the property is taken down a shared ginnel between two pairs of semi-detached properties. The area is residential in nature, with residential properties adjoining 8 Beech Grove on three sides, as well as on the opposite side of the highway.

The applicant is proposing to change the use of the property to a children's residential home (Class C2) for three children aged between 11 and 18 years old. The proposed accommodation would consist of the following:

- Ground floor – living room, kitchen, staff room/office and utility room.
- First floor – 2 x single occupancy child's bedrooms, a shower room and ensuite staff room.
- Loft – a single occupancy child's bedroom.

The home will be staffed by a Registered Manager, supported by a team of six full-time Residential Support Workers, along with a pool of relief staff to cover leave and unexpected absences. Staff will operate on a 12-hour shift pattern and offer 1:1 support to the three children.

Consultations

Local Residents – No comments received.

Withington Civic Society – The civic society have confirmed they have no observation to make in respect of the proposal.

Ward Members – Joint correspondence has been received from Councillors Chambers and Wills, these comments can be summarised as follows - :

- The applicant states that they manage an existing facility called Oasis House in Fallowfield, but an internet search does not show any details
- The applicant states they have never been subject to an Ofsted inspection, therefore there is no quality assurance or independent audit
- Of the three directors two have no prior experience of children's social care
- The other director has worked as a teacher but has no direct experience of working in children's care
- The proposed location is in an area of high HMO density and a large student population
- Concerns expressed about such companies operating within Manchester and how they are impacting on social care budgets

Children's Commissioning – Children's Commissioning would not support the proposal as there are already 53 children's homes operating in Manchester. There are six children's homes in the M14 area and as a result would not support further homes in this area of Manchester.

Environmental Health – Suggests the imposition of conditions in relation to waste management and acoustic insulation.

Highways Services – Highway Services have made the following comments:

- In comparison to the former use, the level of vehicle trips generated is not anticipated to be dissimilar as such no highways concerns are expected
- it is not expected that the proposed usage would result in an unacceptable increase in parking demand in the local area.
- To encourage sustainable travel use a secure and sheltered cycle parking provision for two cycles should be made, this can encourage the use of a more sustainable mode of transport.
- The provision of a refuse storage area within the curtilage of the site is considered appropriate in ensuring no obstruction on the adjacent highway. It is understood that refuse collection will form part of the existing waste collection arrangements

Policies

The National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024) – The National Planning Policy Framework sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. It provides a framework within which locally prepared plans for housing and other development can be produced. Planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, i.e. the Core Strategy Development Plan Document and accompanying policies, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The National Planning Policy Framework is a material consideration in planning decisions.

Paragraph 11 states that plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which for decision-taking means:

- c) approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or
- d) where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:
 - i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear strong reason for refusing the development proposed; or
 - ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole, having particular regard to key policies for directing development to sustainable locations, making effective use of land, securing well-designed places and providing affordable homes, individually or in combination.

Paragraph 12 states that the presumption in favour of sustainable development does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision-making. Where a planning application conflicts with an up-to-date development plan (including any neighbourhood plans that form part of the development plan), permission should not usually be granted. Local planning authorities may take decisions that depart from an up-to-date development plan, but only if material considerations in a particular case indicate that the plan should not be followed.

In addition to the above, Sections 5 (*Delivering a sufficient supply of homes*) and 8 (*Promoting healthy and safe communities*) is of relevance:

Paragraph 61 in Section 5 states that to support the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed, that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed

Paragraph 63 states that the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policies. These groups should include (but are not limited to) those who require affordable housing; families with children; looked after children; older people (including those who require retirement housing, housing with-care and care homes); students; people with disabilities; service families; travellers; people who rent their homes and people wishing to commission or build their own homes.

Paragraph 96 in Section 8 states that planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which promote social interaction, are safe and accessible and enable and support healthy lives.

The Places for Everyone Plan – This plan was adopted on 21 March 2024, as such the Plan and its policies are now a material planning consideration in the determination of planning applications. The Plan and its policies must therefore be given significant weight in the planning balance. The relevant policy is set out below:

Policy JP-Strat9 (Southern Areas) – This policy states that the economic competitiveness, distinctive local neighbourhood character and environmental attractiveness of the southern areas will be protected and enhanced. There will be a strong emphasis on making as much use as possible of suitable previously developed (brownfield) land and promoting the roles of the areas' town centres and its other key assets.

Policy JP-H3 (Type, Size and Design of New Housing) – This policy states that development across the plan area should seek to incorporate a range of dwelling types and sizes to meet local needs and deliver more inclusive neighbourhoods. Where appropriate, this should include incorporating specialist housing for older households and vulnerable people.

Core Strategy Development Plan Document – The Core Strategy Development Plan Document 2012 -2027 ("the Core Strategy") was adopted by the City Council on 11th July 2012. It is the key document in Manchester's Local Development Framework. The Core Strategy replaces significant elements of the Unitary Development Plan (UDP) as the document that sets out the long-term strategic planning policies for Manchester's future development.

A number of UDP policies have been saved until replaced by further development plan documents to accompany the Core Strategy. Planning applications in Manchester must be decided in accordance with the Core Strategy, saved UDP policies and other Local Development Documents. Relevant policies in the Core Strategy are detailed below

Policy SP1, *Spatial Principles*, - Development in all parts of the City should make a positive contribution to neighbourhoods of choice including creating well designed places that enhance or create character and protect and enhance the built and natural environment.

Policy DM1, *Development Management* – This policy states that all development should have regard to a number of specific issues, of which the following are of most relevance:-

- Appropriate siting, layout, scale, form, massing, materials and detail.
- Impact on the surrounding areas in terms of the design, scale and appearance of the proposed development. Development should have regard to the character of the surrounding area.
- Effects on amenity, including privacy, light, noise, vibration, air quality, odours, litter, vermin, birds, road safety and traffic generation. This could also include proposals which would be sensitive to existing environmental conditions, such as noise.
- Community safety and crime prevention.
- Design for health.
- Vehicular access and car parking.
- Effects relating to biodiversity, landscape, archaeological or built heritage.
- Flood risk and drainage.

Policy H10, *Housing for people with additional support needs* – That proposals for accommodation for people with additional needs will be supported where:

- There is not a high concentration of similar uses in the area already;
- The development would contribute to the vitality and viability of the neighbourhood;
- There would not be a disproportionate stress on local infrastructure, such as health facilities.

The policy states further that the Council welcomes the development of appropriately designed accommodation which enables people with additional support needs to maintain an independent lifestyle and supports the work of housing associations and other agencies in this respect.

Furthermore, it clarifies that people with additional support needs may include homeless people, elderly people, people with mental health problems, people who have experienced domestic violence, people with a long- term debilitating illness, people who suffer drug or alcohol addiction, young people with specific support needs and people with learning or sensory disabilities.

Policy T 2, *Accessible areas of opportunity and need* – This states that the Council will actively manage the pattern of development to ensure that new development is easily accessible by walking, cycling and public transport, connecting residents to jobs, centres, health, leisure, open space and educational opportunities. The policy also requires that appropriate car parking and cycle storage is provided.

Policy EN19, *Waste* – This states that the Council will require all developers to demonstrate the proposals consistency with the principles of the waste hierarchy (prevention, reduction, re-use, recycling, energy recovery, and disposal). Developers will be required to submit a waste management plan to demonstrate how construction and demolition waste will be minimised and recycled.

Saved UDP Policies – Policy DC2, *Rest Homes and Nursing Homes* – Policy DC2.1 states that in determining planning applications for rest homes, nursing homes and other uses within Class C2 of the Use Classes Order, the Council will have regard to:

- a) The effect of the operation of the business on the amenity of neighbouring residents;
- b) The standard of accommodation for the intended occupiers of the premises, including the availability of private outdoor amenity space;
- c) The effect of the proposals on visual amenity;
- d) The availability of adequate, safe and convenient arrangements for car parking and servicing;
- e) The ease of access for all, including disabled people;
- f) The desirability of avoiding an over-concentration of special needs or housing in any one area of the City;
- g) The desirability of broadly maintaining the existing character of a residential street or group of adjoining streets.

Policy 2a.1 states that planning permission will be refused when it cannot be demonstrated that development proposals will contribute to the achievement of the following objectives for the City's local communities:

- i. to ensure a more even spread of "special needs" accommodation within local areas and across the City as a whole, in order to encourage provision closer to where needs arise and avoid the need for people to move from their local community to find the accommodation they require;
- ii. to ensure the protection of the residential character and amenity of family housing within established communities;
- iii. to avoid the unnecessary loss of the bigger dwelling houses available for larger and extended families;
- iv. to help local communities accommodate a range of special needs without the risk of social stress;
- v. to avoid stigmatising a particular neighbourhood or a particular type of accommodation;
- vi. to create and retain a positive perception of all areas of the City as a contribution towards the goal of maintaining stable and self-sustaining communities;
- vii. to attempt to sustain the vitality and viability of local economies, by encouraging a wide diversity of social groups to live within all parts of the City;
- viii. to avoid creating disproportionate stress on local services, such as health and education; and
- ix. to avoid additional pressure on primary and secondary health care provision in parts of the City where there are already identified concerns about adequacy of services

Policy DC2b.1 states that in deciding whether or not to grant planning permission for Class C2 housing accommodation the Council, in consultation with other competent agencies, will from time to time assess whether or not localised parts of the City have already reached their effective capacity to accommodate further special housing needs.

Policy DC2.2 states that there will be a general presumption in favour of Class C2 uses within residential areas, subject to other relevant policies of the Plan.

Policy DC2.3 states that notwithstanding policy DC2.2, the Council will require any development in this category to meet the Council's current approved accommodation standards for developments of this kind and provide usable external amenity space.

Policy DC26, "Development and Noise" – Policy DC26.1 states that the Council intends to use the development control process to reduce the impact of noise on people living and working in, or visiting, the City. In giving effect to this intention, the Council will consider both:

- a) the effect of new development proposals which are likely to be generators of noise; and
- b) the implications of new development being exposed to existing noise sources which are effectively outside planning control.

The Manchester Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy (G&BIS) – The G&BIS sets out objectives for environmental improvements within the City in relation to key objectives for growth and development.

Building on the investment to date in the city's green infrastructure and the understanding of its importance in helping to create a successful city, the vision for green and blue infrastructure in Manchester over the next 10 years is:

By 2025 high quality, well maintained green and blue spaces will be an integral part of all neighbourhoods. The city's communities will be living healthy, fulfilled lives, enjoying access to parks and greenspaces and safe green routes for walking, cycling and exercise throughout the city. Businesses will be investing in areas with a high environmental quality and attractive surroundings, enjoying access to a healthy, talented workforce. New funding models will be in place, ensuring progress achieved by 2025 can be sustained and provide the platform for ongoing investment in the years to follow.

Four objectives have been established to enable the vision to be achieved:

1. Improve the quality and function of existing green and blue infrastructure, to maximise the benefits it delivers
2. Use appropriate green and blue infrastructure as a key component of new developments to help create successful neighbourhoods and support the city's growth
3. Improve connectivity and accessibility to green and blue infrastructure within the city and beyond
4. Improve and promote a wider understanding and awareness of the benefits that green and blue infrastructure provides to residents, the economy and the local environment.

Issues

Principle of the Proposal –The Use Class C2 covers properties in use as residential institutions where care and accommodation is provided. These include care homes, hospitals, nursing homes, residential schools or colleges and training centres. This use class includes the personal care of children. The property is currently vacant but has formerly been in use as a small- scale HMO (Use Class C4). It therefore has a history of shared residential accommodation with associated noise and activity. The proposed development would provide a relatively low level of occupation that would be restricted to three residents by way of an operational condition. There would be management protocols in place, and a line of accountability proposed for 8 Beech Grove. It is not considered that the proposal would place undue pressure on local services as the previous use as a 5 bedroom HMO could hold the same or greater numbers of occupants if lived in by 5 individuals, or if the property as a C3 dwellinghouse was lived in by a larger family.

In this instance the proposed C2 use would not operate as a larger scale institution, nor as three individuals leading separate lifestyles, but rather as a family living together, eating together and taking part in activities together. An application for planning permission is not always required in circumstances where the lawful use of a property is that of a single family house and a change to a small scale children's home is proposed. This depends on number of children and care package details involved.

Concerns have been raised that there are six other children's homes within the M14 area. However, it is not considered that the level of existing provision within the M14 district, which comprises of approximately 17,252 properties, is excessive or results in accumulative material planning impacts so as to warrant the refusal of this application. Furthermore, there is no evidence that the neighbourhood in which the property is located is subject to a high percentage of other supported housing establishments, either purpose built or benefitting from a change of use.

As a result, it is not considered that the use of this property as supported housing would be contrary to the locational constraints of the Policies H10 and DC2 above, i.e. an overconcentration of Class C2 uses within any particular neighbourhood. In addition, due to the modest numbers that would be accommodated within the property, it is not felt that the use would place undue pressure on local services or have a detrimental impact upon the residential character of the area. Given this it is considered that the use of the dwellinghouse as a children's home is acceptable in principle.

Notwithstanding this, the impact of the proposal upon existing levels of residential and visual amenity enjoyed within the vicinity of the site, and upon levels of pedestrian and highway safety enjoyed on Beech Grove and the surrounding highway network, must be assessed.

Residential Amenity – The proposed development seeks to provide accommodation for up to three children aged between 11 and 18 years, supported by a Residential Manager and up to three staff present on-site at any one time, delivering one-to-one support. The scale and intensity of the proposed use are considered modest and comparable to that of a typical large family occupying a four-bedroom dwelling of this nature. As such, it is not anticipated that the level of activity associated with the use, including staff changeovers occurring on a 12-hour shift basis, would result in any significant adverse impact on the residential amenity enjoyed by the occupants of the neighbouring properties.

In terms of general activity associated with the proposed use, both within the dwelling and in the rear garden, it is considered that such activity would be domestic in nature and scale. As such, it is not anticipated that it would result in any significant harm to the residential amenity of neighbouring occupiers.

While Environmental Health have recommended the inclusion of an acoustic insulation condition, it is considered that this is not necessary in this instance. The limited number of occupants and the domestic character of the proposed use do not suggest a level of noise or disturbance that would justify such a requirement.

Privacy – It is not considered that the proposed use of the property as a children's home would result in any unacceptable loss of privacy for adjoining residents. The rear boundary treatments would be upgraded as part of the proposal. The nature of the use remains domestic, and no alterations are proposed that would introduce overlooking.

Visual Amenity – The applicant is not proposing to undertake any physical amendments to the exterior of the property, and the outward appearance of the building would remain that of a semi-detached dwellinghouse. As a result, it is not considered that the proposed change of use would have a detrimental impact upon the existing levels of visual amenity enjoyed within the vicinity of the site. There may be several cars present at any one time, but those visual impacts would be no more than a busy household.

Car Parking – While the property does not benefit from any in-curtilage car parking provision, it is considered that the anticipated number of staff present at any one time would not give rise to significant parking demand. It is considered that there is sufficient capacity within the surrounding highway network to accommodate any additional on-street parking associated with the proposal.

Pedestrian and Vehicular Safety – The proposed use is not anticipated to result in a level of vehicular activity that would be significantly greater than that associated with a typical dwellinghouse. The number of vehicle movements generated by staff changeovers and occasional visitors is expected to be modest and consistent with the established residential character of the area. As such, it is not considered that the proposal would give rise to an unacceptable impact on existing levels of pedestrian or highway safety enjoyed along Beech Grove or the surrounding highway network.

Disabled Access – Due to the age and internal layout of the property, as well as the structural constraints posed by load-bearing walls, it is not feasible to make the property fully accessible to individuals with physical disabilities. However, the property benefits from adequately sized rooms and circulation space, which would allow access for ambulant disabled individuals. Given the nature and scale of the proposed use, this level of accessibility is considered acceptable.

Waste Management – The existing domestic waste storage arrangements would be sufficient for a use of this scale. To ensure that this continues to be the case the waste management condition recommended by Environmental Health would be attached to any consent granted.

Cycle Storage – A condition requiring the installation of a cycle storage facility within the curtilage of the property is suggested in this instance.

Ward Members Comments – Whilst the concerns raised by Ward Members are acknowledged, the material planning issues raised are dealt with above whilst other points are not material planning considerations and would be fully assessed through other mechanisms such as any licensing and Ofsted registration process.

Conclusion

The proposed use is one that is compatible in a residential neighbourhood such as this one. The scale and nature of the children's home is modest and comparable to that of a typical larger family dwelling, and it is not anticipated that it would result in any significant harm to residential or visual amenity. The absence of external alterations ensures that the character and appearance of the property and surrounding area would be preserved. Furthermore, the proposal is not expected to generate a level of vehicular activity or parking demand that would adversely affect existing levels of pedestrian or highway safety.

Other Legislative Requirements

Equality Act 2010 – Section 149 (Public Sector Equality Duty) of the Equality Act 2010 requires due regard to the need to: Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act and; Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not share it. The Equality Duty does not impose a legal requirement to conduct an Equality Impact Assessment. Compliance with the Equality Duty involves consciously thinking about the aims of the Equality Duty as part of the process of decision-making.

Human Rights Act 1998 considerations – This application needs to be considered against the provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998. Under Article 6, the applicants (and those third parties, including local residents, who have made representations) have the right to a fair hearing and to this end the Committee must give full consideration to their comments.

Protocol 1 Article 1, and Article 8 where appropriate, confer(s) a right of respect for a person's home, other land and business assets. In taking account of all material considerations, including Council policy as set out in the Core Strategy and saved policies of the Unitary Development Plan, the Director of Planning, Building Control & Licensing has concluded that some rights conferred by these articles on the applicant(s)/objector(s)/resident(s) and other occupiers and owners of nearby land that might be affected may be interfered with but that that interference is in accordance with the law and justified by being in the public interest and on the basis of the planning merits of the development proposal. She believes that any restriction on these rights posed by the of the application is proportionate to the wider benefits of and that such a decision falls within the margin of discretion afforded to the Council under the Town and Country Planning Acts.

Recommendation APPROVE

Article 35 Declaration

Officers have worked with the applicant in a positive and proactive manner based on seeking solutions to issues arising from the consideration of this application.

Condition(s) to be attached to decision for approval

1) The development must be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date of this permission.

Reason - Required to be imposed pursuant to Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

2) The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the following drawings and documents received on 26 June 2025:

- a) Drawing no. M14-01 V3 - Site Location Plan and Existing and Proposed Block Plans
- b) Drawing no. M14-04 V3 - Proposed Floor Plans
- c) Supporting Information (Business Plan for Care Group Northwest Ltd)
- d) Supporting Information (Planning, Design and Access Statement)

Reason - To ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the approved plans. Pursuant to policies SP1 and DM1 of the Manchester Core Strategy.

3) Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (or any order revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification) the building shall only be used as a children's home and for no other purpose (including any other purpose within Use Class C2 of the Schedule to the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended), or in any provision equivalent to that Class in any statutory instrument revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification).

Reason - In the interest of residential amenity, pursuant to policy DM1 in the Manchester Core Strategy.

4) Prior to the commencement of the development hereby approved, details of a scheme for the storage (including segregated waste recycling) and disposal of refuse shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the City Council as Local Planning Authority. The details of the approved scheme shall be implemented as part of the development and shall remain in situ whilst the use is in operation.

Reason - In the interests of residential amenity and public health, pursuant to Policy DM1 in the Manchester Core Strategy.

5) Prior to the first occupation of the development hereby approved, details of secure cycle storage facilities shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the City Council as Local Planning Authority. The approved facilities shall be fully installed and made available for use prior to occupation of the children's home and shall be retained in perpetuity thereafter.

Reason - To ensure that adequate provision is made for secure and accessible cycle storage in the interests of promoting sustainable travel choices and reducing reliance on the private car, in accordance with Policy T1 of the Manchester Core Strategy.

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

The documents referred to in the course of this report are either contained in the file(s) relating to application ref: 143315/FO/2025 held by planning or are City Council planning policies, the Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester, national planning guidance documents, or relevant decisions on other applications or appeals, copies of which are held by the Planning Division.

Background Documents:

National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024)
Places for Everyone Plan Joint Development Plan Document for Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan 2022 to 2039
Manchester Core Strategy Development Plan Document 2012 -2027
Manchester Unitary Development Plan – Extant Policies
The Manchester Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy

The following residents, businesses and other third parties in the area were consulted/notified on the application:

Highway Services
Environmental Health
MCC Supported Housing Monitoring Group
Withington Civic Society

A map showing the neighbours notified of the application is attached at the end of the report.

Representations were received from the following third parties:

Highway Services
Environmental Health
Children's Commissioning
Withington Civic Society

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