

Planning

Growth & Development

Delegated officer report for planning application

Application no. 144236/LP/2025

Date registered valid: 9 October 2025

Proposal: Use of a dwelling (Use Class 3a) as a children's home for up to three children, with a manager and three carers, two of whom would stay overnight, working on a rota basis (C2).

Address: 37 Albert Road, Manchester, M19 2DU

Ward(s): Levenshulme Ward

Applicant: Attyia Shah Lynncroft Homes Ltd

Agent (if any): Adrian Rose Rose Consulting

Case officer: Robert Tyrer
Tel: 0161 234 4068
Email: robert.tyrer@manchester.gov.uk

Recommendation: Grant

Date of recommendation: 1 December 2025

Application details

Type of application: Certificate Lawful Development Proposed

Development type: Certificates of lawfulness

Date of site visit: Not Required

Standard consultations:

No consultations have been printed and sent.

Neighbour notifications

No neighbour notifications have been printed and sent.

Site notice

No site notice has been produced

Press advert

No press advert had been published

Departure from Development Plan: No

Environmental Statement: Not required

Description of site/building and area

The application site relates to a part 2/3 storey dwellinghouse end terraced dwellinghouse located on the corner of Albert Road and Forest Range. Located in a predominantly residential area within close proximity to Levenshulme District Centre.

Listed building: Not applicable

Conservation area: Not applicable

Tree Preservation Order: Not applicable

Description of development

The applicant is seeking a certificate of lawful development to allow the use of a dwellinghouse (Use Class 3a) as a children's home for up to three children, with a manager and three carers, two of whom would stay overnight, working on a rota basis (C2).

Consultations & Notification Responses

None Required - There is no statutory requirement to consult third parties, including neighbours. Any views expressed by third parties regarding the planning merits of the case, or whether the applicant has private rights to carry out the proposed operation, use, or activity, are irrelevant when determining the application.

Legislative Issues

Sections 191 and 192 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 provide for anyone (not just a person with a legal interest in the land) to apply to the local planning authority (LPA) for a lawful development certificate (LDC). A certificate is a statutory document certifying:

(1) in the case of an application under section 191, the lawfulness, for planning purposes, of existing operations on, or use of land, or some activity being carried out in breach of a planning condition; or

(2) in the case of an application under section 192, the lawfulness of proposed operations on, or use of land.

The onus of proof in regard to (1) is firmly on the applicant and the issue of a certificate will depend on the on factual evidence provided about the history and planning status of the building or other land and the interpretation of any relevant planning law or judicial authority. The relevant test of the evidence in this matter is "the balance of probability" and the applicants own evidence does not need to be corroborated by independent evidence. If the LPA have no evidence to contradict the applicant's version of events or make them less than probable, there is no good reason to refuse the issue of a certificate.

In regard to (2), this provides that, if the LPA are supplied with information satisfying them that the use or operations described in the application would be lawful, if instituted or begun at the time of the application, they shall issue a certificate to that effect; and, in any other case, they shall refuse the application.

In short, the purpose section 192 is to enable any person who wishes to find out whether any proposed use or operations would be lawful to apply to the LPA for that purpose.

The application needs to describe the proposal with sufficient clarity and precision to enable the LPA to understand (from a written description and plans) exactly what is involved in the proposal; and to submit whatever supporting information or legal submission that are to be relied upon in order to satisfy the LPA that a certificate should be granted for the proposal.

In making their decision on an application under section 192, the LPA ask themselves the hypothetical question - "If this proposed change of use had already occurred, or if this proposed operation had commenced, on the application date, would it have been lawful for planning purposes?" In doing so, the LPA will not only consider whether the proposal would involve "development" requiring an application for planning permission, but whether it would involve a breach of any existing condition or limitation imposed on a grant of planning permission which has been acted upon, and which therefore constrains what can be done on the land. The LPA will not make a proposal fit a scenario; the only question is whether the proposal made by the applicant is lawful at the time of submission.

Planning History

There have been no previous applications at this address.

The Application

This application is pursued under subsection (1) of section 192, which provides for an application to determine whether any proposed use or operations would be lawful for planning purposes.

Material Change of Use?

The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order states that where no more than six residents live together as a single household where care is provided, the lawful use is Use Class C3(b). The term "Care" also applies to Class C2, defined as follows:

- Use for the provision of residential accommodation and care to people in need of care (other than a use within Class C3 (dwellinghouses)),
- Use as a hospital or nursing home,
- Use as a residential school, college, or training centre.

This application seeks a Certificate of Lawful Proposed Development for the use of the property as Use Class C2. The existing lawful use is Class 3(a), and under normal circumstances, there would be no permitted change to Use Class C2. Therefore, an assessment based on 'fact and degree' is necessary to determine whether there is a material change of use.

Proposal

The proposal involves housing up to three children who will have either been diagnosed with learning disabilities and or emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

The home will be registered with Ofsted, as a specialist three-bedroom children's home. The supporting statement explains that the children will undergo an impact risk assessment to ensure that they integrate with the local community. It further states that this assessment will consider, the home, the environment, the community, peer groups and risk assessments against each child.

The children would live at the property on a long term basis, the property would not be used as a halfway house or emergency care housing for children.

Staffing

The children would be supported by three carers, working on a rota basis together with a manager.

- Shift Pattern:
 - Two carers will work 48-hour shifts, sleeping overnight at the property followed by 72 hours off.
- A daily carer would also visit each day
- Changeover Times: Changeovers will last around 15 to 30 minutes and occur at 8:30 am where one of the two overnight carers would swap.
- If a child of higher level of need is allocated to the home, the supporting statement indicates that it is sometime necessary for an overnight carer to stay awake. In these circumstances, one of the two overnight carers would arrive around 8:30pm and work until 8:30am, when a daytime carer would replace them.
- Manager Presence: A manager would visit on weekdays.

Existing Use and Accommodation

The existing property is in use as a five bedroom dwellinghouse (use class C3) and is currently occupied by two families, and as such there are four adults and five children.

In terms of accommodation the ground floor would contain a living room, dining room, kitchen and a laundry room.

On the second floor, there will be three bedrooms and a bathroom,

The third floor would have a further two bedrooms, one of the bedrooms would also be used as a carers office and there would be a carers bathroom.

The floor plans also show a cellar but there is no indication that this would be used for any specific purpose.

In the garden there is a space for one vehicle with access taken from Forest Range.

There are no proposed external changes to the property.

Visitor and Regulatory Oversight

The submitted statement indicates that there will be one OFSTED visit per year, visits by local social services every four to six weeks, and one Regulation 44 inspection (independent monitoring) each month.

Each child social worker would visit them but it may be the case that a social worker may visit more than one child if they are from the same local authority.

All other professional or clinical appointments and meeting would take place away from the home where possible.

In addition, family members and friends may visit, subject to prior arrangement and in accordance with each child's individual care plan. The statement also provides a schedule that shows on average two friends or family visits over the weekend and one mid week visit by another professional.

Parking and Transport

The property features a driveway and a garage that can accommodate one vehicle. Details provided show that the home manager would arrive by car and other carers would arrive by taxi, public transport or by bicycle.

Legal Precedent

The case **North Devon District Council v First Secretary of State [2003]** involved a legal dispute over whether the use of a property for residential care of children fell within Use Class C2 (residential institutions) or Use Class C3 (dwelling houses).

The High Court ruled that the use of the premises for up to two children, with care provided by non-resident staff, did not constitute a material change of use from its C3 classification.

The judgment clarified that carers who provide continuous 24-hour care but do not live at the premises cannot be regarded as living together with the children, thus falling under Class C2.

This precedent is significant for determining the classification of properties used for residential care.

Conclusion

The current use of the property is considered to fall within Class C3(a), as a private dwellinghouse and contains five bedrooms and is currently accommodating two families comprising of a total of four adults and five children.

In comparison with the proposal, use of the house as a home up to three children and their carers would not be materially different from its current use as a family home. The pattern of comings

and goings might be different to a private family home in some aspects, but there is no evidence that this would amount to a material change of use. If anything, the tight restrictions on social visits to the house would be likely to lessen the overall number of trips generated.

The dwelling can accommodate one vehicle off road and there are some restrictions on the public highway, in terms of double yellow lines but the highway could accommodate further parked vehicles.

In this case, it is accepted that the proposed use falls under Class C2, however, its use to care for three children would not be materially different from that of a dwelling house (Class C3). This is due to the way the property will be operated and managed. The impact would be similar to that of a family home. Therefore, the proposed use would not result in a development requiring planning permission.

There are no known conditions attached to any previous planning permission that would restrict the use in such a way as to prevent any such change.

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 a right to a fair hearing and to this end the local planning authority 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 recommendation given 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: Grant

Condition(s) to be attached to decision for approval OR Reasons for recommendation to refuse

1) Whilst falling within Class C2 of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended), the use of the dwellinghouse (Use Class C3a) as a children's home (Use Class C2) for up to three children, with a manager and three carers, two of whom would stay overnight,

working on a rota basis would not represent a material change from the existing use as a Class C3 dwellinghouse.

Appendix 1 – List of consultees & neighbours notified

Appendix 2 – Planning constraints

Article 4 Direction - Removal Of PD Rights Change Of Use From Class C3 To Class C4

Coal Authority - Surface Coal Resources - Name: Coal bearing strata at surface

Area Team Boundary - Name: SOUTH AREA