

19 March 2025

Supporting Statement

Change of Use from Dwelling (Use Class C3a) to a dwelling (Use Class C3b) for the care of 4 Children.

Higher Ashworth Farm, Meadow Head Lane, Ashworth Valley, Norden, Rochdale



1.0 Introduction

This statement sets out the design considerations for a proposal to convert an existing residential property from Use Class C3a, to a single household where care is provided for residents in Use Class C3b.

The statement has been prepared to address the requirements of The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) (Amendment) Order 2013. It considers the proposals in relation to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and local plan policies.

The applicant, Prosperity Children's Services Ltd (formerly Trinity Care), has a well-established reputation for offering residential, education and outreach services for vulnerable children. The organisation operates several properties in the North West of England with a clear focus on providing a stable, family-like home environment for looked-after children.

This property already benefits from a planning approval for the use of the building as a residential care home for two children. It is already registered and approved by Ofsted,

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operating to nationally recognised standards of care and supervision. The current application seeks to increase this number to four.

The children will reside at this property permanently. Whilst the carer may change from time to time, the principle remains that there will be constant and permanent adult supervision/caring provision for the children whose home this will provide.

This application is for a change of Use Class and will not require any operational development or other works to facilitate the proposed use.

The applicant continues to maintain Ofsted approval for this property, reflecting the suitability of both the building and its management for providing care to vulnerable children. Other properties within their portfolio are also successfully operating under Ofsted registration.

2.0 Site Context

The property is a substantial, early Victorian period detached 6-bedroom, 4-reception room house, with dining-kitchen area and large integral garage. It sits in approximately 1 acre of private curtilage, within easy reach of amenities and walks through farmland and wooded valleys. The farmhouse sits on a plateau above the Old House Brook and is surrounded by mature woodland to the south.

The property is approximately 450m from the nearest adopted highway, Edenfield Road, and is accessed along Meadowhead Lane with private vehicle or pedestrian access being the most likely mode of access.

3.0 Design

3.1 Amount

The proposals do not require any new construction to facilitate the accommodation of 4 children.

3.2 Layout

The proposals do not require any changes to the layout of the farmhouse to facilitate the increase in capacity.

3.3 Scale

The proposals do not require any new construction to facilitate the increase in capacity, meaning that there are no changes in scale.

3.4 Landscaping

The proposals do not require any landscape interventions to facilitate the increase in capacity.

3.5 Appearance

Appearance No external changes will be required to facilitate the increase in capacity.

3.6 Accessibility

The existing family home has provision for an ambulant disabled person to inhabit the ground floor, with the whole property being accessible to able bodied persons. There are no changes proposed to the layout required for this application.

The property has an area of tarmac / hardstanding to the rear, allowing for vehicle parking. Additionally, vehicles can be parked in the double garage in adverse weather. This is the current arrangement and no discernible differences will be observed.

4.0 Proposed Use

The proposed increase in capacity will enable this property to become the main residence for up to four children who require adult care/support.

The property will remain the main or sole residence of the children (medium- to long-term placement). It will continue to operate as a single household with all communal spaces shared. The adult supervisors/carers and children/young persons will eat together, and all will sleep at the property.

The property will run like any other home, acknowledging that today's home life is often quite different from that which was the 'standard' and traditional view of a home.

This proposal represents a modern family structure. The maximum number of children residing will be four, reflecting the natural scale of larger family homes and ensuring that each child benefits from the continuity of care provided by a small, stable team of carers.

Previous concerns raised around potential harm or disturbance were not supported by evidence. The property's scale, layout, and seclusion are well-suited to the care and supervision of four children, with no material impact on neighbouring amenity.

It is important to recognise that children in care deserve the same opportunities and experiences as any other children. This proposal provides exactly that, enabling them to grow up in an environment that is secure, nurturing, and as close to normal family life as possible.

8.0

Conclusion

This proposal seeks to build upon the existing planning approval and current Ofsted registration for two children and provide a permanent medium- to long-term residential home for four children/young persons. It aims to offer a traditional home environment to those who have not had that previously.

The ability to live in a traditional home, within a residential setting, best fits the needs of the children who would benefit from this proposal.

There is no material difference in the way this property will operate from its current use. It will remain a dwellinghouse and will retain the appearance of a dwellinghouse. There will be no external alterations to the property that would not be acceptable within the setting of this building. The character of use will remain the same, and there will be no greater level of disturbance or amenity impact than could be generated by the current use for two children.

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