

Planning Statement

As part of the Sufficiency Strategy for Children's Social Care, the ambition is to place children within their local area where appropriate. When it is not safe for them to stay with their family. The council believe that every child deserves the right to a safe place to live, and is looking to open new homes for children that look and feel very much like a loving family home. The proposal is to open a home for up three children, aged between 8 - 17 years, who would be cared for by a team of carers. It is part of the sufficiency duty under the Children's Act that the Local Authority has sufficient placements for children and young people.

Due to the sufficiency, a number of children who are cared for have been placed in privately run care homes, outside of the Borough. This can often mean that they lose ties with their friends, families, schools and their community. This comes at a high cost to the council, and does not provide value for money for the residents of Rochdale. Placing children at a significant distance from their local area does not deliver the outcomes which Rochdale want for their most vulnerable children and young people. Children cared for by Rochdale Council are more likely to receive good quality care and it is more cost effective.

The use of the home would be to place 3 children with Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND) with a staff team working on a 24/7 rota. Each day there will be changeover of the carers who will be in the home caring for our children. During this changeover time there would be a handover of approximately a 30 minute duration and therefore more staff will be within the home. Also in the home, there will be an assistant manager and a registered manager, who normally work Monday to Friday. There could be occasions whereby there may be more staff on site.

The purpose of the home would be to support the children with personalised, professional care and support whilst giving the individual the chance to live as independently as possible and have a fulfilling and rewarding life as they transition to adulthood. This type of support has been found to be most effective in helping these children to have more stable lives and develop everyday skills. Having a more relaxed homely environment that provides the same surroundings everyday will only enhance the children's learning and development.

This proposal will need a change of use from Class C3 (dwelling house) to Class C2 (residential institutions). To change the residential house of 64 Bamford Way to a children's home for children with learning disabilities, some internal modifications are needed to be made. Firstly, the lounge and dining room will be separated so the current dining space will be converted into a sensory room for the children to use for them to use as a nurturing and calming space to aid in their development. The other works will be to create a fully compliant wet room in the original family bathroom so this is easier for the carers to wash the children. Furthermore, As well as modifications internally there will be statutory changes as well, a new rewire, upgrades to the boiler, boxing in the balustrade and fire safety improvements to comply with the operations of a residential children's home. See drawing (for full description of all works proposed.)

Overall, I believe this proposal is the best for these children to have a more homely and stable place to live. As I have said having a more relaxed homely environment will only enhance the children's learning and development. Being a home environment will prepare them for life when they leave the home to fend for themselves where possible. The end goal for this proposal is for the children to leave this home when they are a young adult being able to function and be a part of society and live either in a supported community or independently confidently.