

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 home would be to care for 3 children 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 our children to build their confidence, help them in developing life skills and prepare them for life when they leave the home to transition to independence and preparation for Adulthood. This type of support has been found to be most effective in helping children to have normal lives and not experience problems in adulthood.

This proposal will need a change of use from Class C3 (dwelling house) to Class C2 (residential institutions). To change the residential house of 7 Wordsworth Way to a children's home, some internal modifications are needed to be made. The garage will be converted to create an office space for staff to work and for record keeping and there will be a new WC provision put in with a toilet and basin. Due to the amount of the people in the house at one time it was deemed necessary to have an extra. Toilet in the house downstairs. The open plan dining and living room will be separated to create two reception room spaces so that if the children want to be in separate spaces they can be without having to go to their rooms. The existing kitchen which is the original kitchen in the property will be changed and upgraded to be more functional and fitting for a family setting. On the first floor the existing bathroom will be upgraded to a new 4 piece bathroom suite and the adjoining WC which will have a basin installed in it. As well as modifications internally there will be statutory changes as well, a new rewire, new boiler 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 our children to have a more homely and stable place to live. As I have said this type of support has been found to be most effective in helping our children to have normal lives. Being a home environment this will help assist and prepare them for life when they leave the home. The end goal for this proposal is for our children to leave this home when they are a young adult being able to function and be a part of society and live independently confidently.