

<u>APPLICATION NO:</u>	25/00403/FUL	<u>CASE OFFICER:</u>	Lee Osborne
<u>WARD:</u>	Prescot North	<u>PARISH:</u>	Knowsley Parish Council
<u>LOCATION:</u>	139 Longmeadow Road, Knowsley Village, Knowsley		
<u>PROPOSAL:</u>	CHANGE OF USE FROM C2 - SUPPORTED LIVING (CONDITIONED TO 3NO ADULTS ONLY BY PREVIOUS APP - 13/00622/COU) TO C2 - CHILDENS RESIDENTIAL CARE HOME FOR A MAXIMUM OF 2NO CHILDREN AND 4NO. STAFF		

Site Description

The application relates to a detached bungalow on Longmeadow Lane and associated garden space. The locality is residential in nature and characterised by detached bungalows to this part of Longmeadow Road although there are two storey houses in the wider vicinity. The front garden is mostly grassed with a drive leading to a side/rear extension comprising a store, 2 en-suite bathrooms with store behind. Between the drive and the grassed area are some trees with shrubs; there is a clump of evergreens at the front with a deciduous and evergreen further back, and there are also shrubs. The trees are generally in poor condition and the tree/shrub strip does not add amenity to the environs.

Proposal

This application proposes the change of use from the existing approved use of the residential accommodation for up to 3 adults needing assisted living with accommodation for 1 carer to form a children's home (13/00622/COU) with up to 2 children living at the premises and up to 4 carers at the premises at any one time for the children, the number dependent on the needs of the children. Whilst both uses are within Use Class C2 of the Use Classes Order 1987 as amended planning permission is required as a condition was attached to planning permission 13/00622/COU that the use was restricted to Use Class C2 (supported living) for a maximum of three adults and for no other purpose. Therefore as the proposal is for a children's home (Use Class C2) for up to 2 children planning permission is required due to that previous restriction by condition.

The children would be between 8 and 17 years of age, and initially it is proposed that one child would live at the property although permission for up to 2 children is sought, and the property would be registered for 2 children. The children would encompass a range of needs including Emotional and Behavioural, Learning Disabilities and children who may require support with their mental health. All children would participate where they can in a form of education; this would be either mainstream school, or more commonly a specialist educational provision, or possibly a virtual school. There are no plans for home tutoring. Children would be matched in consultation with Knowsley Children's Services to ensure the children can be cared for and supported appropriately within the home and local community.

There would be a minimum of two cares and maximum of four; the home would

never exceed four carers on shift, or fall below two cares per shift, depending on number of children and their needs. Carers would work 'long days' from 8am to 8am completing a "sleep", with one shift change per day at 8am.

The Registered Manager would have no set hours and would work according to the needs and requirements of the children e.g. if a child needs increased support in the evenings the RM will focus their hours during that part of the day.

Social Workers and members of the child's multidisciplinary team would attend the premises when required. However, formal meetings would be arranged away from the property so as to not disrupt the local community, or any other child who may live at the home.

Some internal works are to be undertaken at the property. These include blocking some doorways, repositioning of kitchen, small section of studwork (non-load bearing) timber wall being removed and a small section of new studwork installed.

Consultations

Children's Regulatory Services (Knowsley Council) – No objection.

Commissioning Children's Services (Knowsley Council) – No objection.

Knowsley Parish Council - No comments received.

Representations

This application has been publicised by letters sent to 10 neighbours.

Three objections have been received, two from members of the same household. The objections are on the following summarised grounds:

- The documents are inaccurate and therefore misleading. The Statement appears to be a copy of another separate application for a different location e.g. it refers to the children that will live in "Sugar Lane". The application states "There is no proposed works to be carried out at the property other than a small cosmetic renovation... namely painting and recarpeting throughout". This is incorrect as can be seen from the floorplans. Major internal restructuring moving key functions such as the kitchen to different locations is shown.
- The relocated kitchen (and assumed exhaust fan extractor) will be less than 2 metres from objector's bedroom window, resulting in noise and odours being projected into their home.
- The application states there are currently 3 parking spaces property which is incorrect as there are a maximum of two spaces available. There are insufficient parking spaces to avoid over-spill parking on the highway.
- Under the previous use (Adult Supported Tenancy), the property was used to house adults needing an element of care/support, with one of the residents a criminal who was convicted for crimes against local residents. Whilst recognising that this is a different age/risk cohort, there has been again a lack of community engagement with regard the proposals to ensure resident perceptions are acknowledged and where necessary addressed

- The current owner has allowed the property to lapse into a dilapidated state with garden front and back left heavily overgrown and trees posing risk to adjoining homes. There are no assurances that these issues will be resolved.
- With regard the previous use and the criminal who lived there, threats were made to set the property on fire which distressed local residents.
- Give children a place that is conducive for them to live, not a place that you happen to have, it's like fish out of water.
- 139 would be better sold as a bungalow, giving neighbours some peace of mind.

Planning History

K/APP/5166 - ERECTION OF EXTENSION/ALTERATION TO EXISTING GARAGE.
Granted: 25.06.1980.

13/00622/COU - CHANGE OF USE FROM C3 (RESIDENTIAL) TO C2
(SUPPORTED LIVING) FOR 3NO ADULTS AND HAVING ACCOMMODATION FOR
1NO STAFF. Granted: 24.01.2014.

Relevant Policy

Paragraph 11 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that planning decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development. This means approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or where the development plan is absent, silent or out of date planning permission should be granted unless the application of policies in the NPPF that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the NPPF taken as a whole.

Paragraph 12 of the NPPF clarifies 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, permission should not normally 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.

The development plan in Knowsley comprises the Saved Policies of the Replacement Unitary Development Plan, the Core Strategy Local Plan and the Joint Waste Local Plan. The following policies are relevant to the determination of this application.

KNOWSLEY LOCAL PLAN: CORE STRATEGY

CS2 - Development Principles

CS7 - Transport Networks

CS19 - Design Quality and Accessibility in New Development

SAVED POLICIES - KNOWSLEY REPLACEMENT UNITARY DEVELOPMENT PLAN (ADOPTED JUNE 2006)

H5 - Development within Primarily Residential Areas

Article 35 Statement

The Local Planning Authority has acted positively and proactively in determining this application by identifying matters of concern within the application (as originally submitted) and negotiating with the applicant, acceptable amendments to the proposal to address those concerns. As a result, the Local Planning Authority has been able to grant planning permission for an acceptable proposal, in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development, as set out within the National Planning Policy Framework.

Assessment

The proposal is to use the existing bungalow, last used as UseC2 – Supported Living for up to 3 adults, as a Children's Home, also in C2 Use, for up to 2 children to live at the property. Some internal works are to be undertaken. The property is in a residential area, and the principle of development / use is acceptable.

Residential Amenity Considerations

Internal works to the property would occur, but these would be no more than what could occur at any such property in the area. With regards the relocation of the kitchen, the relocation would be to what is an en-suite bathroom which would no longer be required. There is currently a mechanical extraction fan in that current position for the bathroom so there would be little difference in that regard. The extraction is/would be designed for domestic use and it is considered that noise and fume impacts would be marginal.

There would be some noise associated with comings and goings from the property at shift change. Such noises would be relatively infrequent and not particularly impactful and would take place once a day around 8am which is considered reasonable. Given the once a day shift change, and that the (one or two) children would most likely be attending educational establishments the level of coming and goings that would be generated by the proposed use is not likely to be greater than that associated with a family house and would not result in significant harm to residential amenity.

Whilst the children may have significant needs, there would always be sufficient carers at the property to ensure that the needs of children are met, even when the children are upset. It should also be noted that dwellinghouses can also be subject to noise issues, anti-social behaviour and disturbance depending on the conduct of the homeowner. Furthermore, the property could house up to 6 individual persons without planning permission being required and which itself could lead to considerable comings and goings, disturbance and so on.

Nevertheless, should planning permission be granted it would be prudent to attach a planning condition to limit the number of children to 2 and to limit the number of carers to 4 (except at shift change-over times), to prevent a larger number of children residing at the premises.

Subject to the recommended condition, it is considered that the proposal would comply with Policies CS2 and CS19 of the Core Strategy and Saved Policy H5 of the UDP.

Highways Considerations

NPPF Para 116 sets out that development should only be prevented or refused

on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.

Other than a short shift changeover once a day, there would be up to 4 carers and a manager at the premises. There is currently a drive which can accommodate 2 cars, and an area of hardstanding between the planted garden area and the bungalow. If an area at the side of the existing drive was hard surfaced 4 cars could be parked in the front garden area. The front store could accommodate bicycles in a covered and secure area. The road does not suffer on-road parking issues. In addition Longmeadow Road is relatively close to Knowsley Lane which is on a bus route. Given that some staff may travel by public transport or walk / cycle if local the parking is considered sufficient, provided that a condition was attached to any planning permission granted requiring the hatched area shown on the Proposed Site Plan drawing is hard surfaced before first use.

Overall, the parking spaces that will be provided are considered to provide sufficient parking to ensure that the proposal would not lead to unacceptable impacts on highway safety and would not cause significant harm to highway safety. Therefore, the application is consistent with NPPF para 116, and Core Strategy Policies CS2, CS7 and CS19, together with Saved UDP Policy H5.

Character of Area

The proposal would not involve external physical changes to the property with no changes to the elevations or the wider site, other than any changes required by condition. Overall, the changes do not harm the character of the area, and the proposal would comply with Policies CS2 and CS19 of the Core Strategy and Saved Policy H5 of the UDP.

Biodiversity Considerations

The planting strip that would need to be removed consists of some poor specimen trees and shrubs which do not add amenity of any significance to the locality and the removal of such would be acceptable. As the area of hardstanding that would be installed at approximately 22m² would be less than the BNG threshold of 25m² the hardstanding would be BNG exempt.

Conclusion

The proposal is acceptable in principle and would not cause significant impact on the residential amenity of neighbouring properties or highway safety, and with no physical changes proposed would have little impact on the character of the area. The proposal would be for up to two children with appropriate levels of carers around at all times so thereby able to limit noise and disturbance. The proposal complies with planning policies and the NPPF and is therefore recommended for approval.

Recommendation

That planning permission be granted subject to the following conditions:

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

Reason: In order to comply with the requirements of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

- 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans and documents listed in Schedule 1.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt.

- 3) The number of children residing at the premises shall not exceed 2 at any time, and the number of carers staffing the premises shall not exceed 4 at any time except shift changeovers.

Reason: In order ensure no detrimental impacts on the local highway network and to maintain the level of amenity enjoyed by local residents, and to comply with Policies CS2 and CS19 of the Knowsley Local Plan Core Strategy adopted January 2016 and Saved Policy H5 of the Knowsley Replacement Unitary Development Plan adopted June 2006.

- 4) No children shall reside under care at the property until the additional hardstanding adjacent the existing drive (as indicated by hatching on Drawing Nos P_03 - Existing Site Plan and Location Plan) has been installed for parking purposes. Only porous or permeable materials shall be used for this hard surfacing and shall not drain to the public highway. The area together with the existing hard surfacing shall be retained for parking purposes at all times thereafter.

Reason: To ensure that that there is appropriate provision of in-curtilage parking spaces in the interests of highway safety and amenity, and to comply with Policies CS2, CS7 and CS19 of the Knowsley Local Plan Core Strategy adopted January 2016 and Saved Policy H5 of the Knowsley Replacement Unitary Development Plan adopted June 2006.

- 5) The children's residential home hereby permitted shall only operate in accordance with the submitted Planning Statement Revision A received 09.09.2025.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt in the interests of residential amenity and to comply with Policies CS2 and CS19 of the Knowsley Local Plan Core Strategy adopted January 2016 and Saved Policy H5 of the Knowsley Replacement Unitary Development Plan.

- 6) Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987, the premises to which this permission relates shall be used for a children's residential home only and for no other purpose, including any other use falling within Class C2 of the Schedule to that Order or in any provision equivalent to that Class in any statutory instrument revoking and re-enacting that Order, except with the prior grant of a further planning permission.

Reason: To enable the Local Planning Authority to assess any proposal for a further change of use, whether or not it falls within the same Use Class and to comply with Policies CS2 and CS19 of the Knowsley Local Plan Core Strategy, adopted January 2016 and Saved Policy H5 of the Knowsley Replacement Unitary Development Plan, adopted June 2006

SCHEDULE 1

Date Received	Ref. No	Version	Drawing/Document Title
	P_02	B	LOCATION PLAN AND EXISTING SITE PLAN
17/07/2025	P01	D	EXISTING AND PROPOSED FLOOR PLAN AND LOCATION PLAN

Signed Case Officer¹: **Lee Osborne**

Signed Authorising Officer²: **Jo Sheridan**

Date: **03/10/2025**

¹ I confirm that I do not have a personal relationship with the applicant, agent or other interested parties; I also confirm that I do not have a financial interest in the site or the development proposed

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