

<u>APPLICATION NO:</u>	26/00296/FUL	<u>CASE OFFICER:</u>	Louise Robinson
<u>WARD:</u>	Whitefield	<u>PARISH:</u>	N/A
<u>LOCATION:</u>	9 North Park Road, Kirkby Park, Kirkby, Knowsley, L32 2AR		
<u>PROPOSAL:</u>	CHANGE OF USE RESIDENTIAL DWELLING (USE CLASS C3) TO CHILDRENS CARE HOME (USE CLASS C2) FOR UP TO 2NO. CHILDREN		

Site Description

The application site comprises a two-storey four-bed dwelling located on North Park Road, Kirkby Park, Kirkby. The property is situated within the Article 4 North Park Road Conservation Area. The dwelling is characterised by brick to all elevations, has a gable tiled roof, and has white windows. The property currently benefits from a single storey mono-pitched rear extension and a single storey flat roof garage to the side. There is off-street parking available to the front and there is also good-sized gardens to the front and rear of the dwelling.

The surrounding area is primarily residential. The dwelling is primarily surrounded by two-storey detached, semi-detached and terraced dwellings to the north, south and west. The Carters Arms Public House is to the east of the site. To the northeast of the site is Millview Retirement Home. A small shopping precinct can be found to the southeast of the site along Glovers Brow (B5192).

Site Constraints

- Article 4 – North Park Road.
- North Park Road Conservation Area

Proposal

Planning permission is sought to change the use of the existing residential dwelling (Use Class C3) to a children's care home (Use Class C2) for a maximum of 2no. children.

- There would be a maximum of 2no. children between the ages of 7 – 17 years.
- The home would cater for children that have emotional and behavioural difficulties.
- The care home would have up to 2 staff at any one time, operating on a 1:1 staff / child ratio. Where the risk assessment identifies a higher need, staffing may be increased to a 2:1 staff ratio for an individual child for a limited period of time.
- The home would operate with a core team of 6 staff members comprising 1no. deputy manager, 2no. senior support workers and 3 support workers.
- The staff would work on a 2 day on, 4 day off shift pattern, with shifts typically operating on a 24-hour care model.
- A registered manager would visit the site on an ad-hoc basis between 9am – 5pm Monday to Friday.
- Shift changeover would take place during the morning between 10am –

10.30am.

- Visitors to the site would be limited and would be arranged in advance.
- The care home would be regulated by OFSTED.
- No physical changes are proposed to the external appearance of the property.
- Off-street parking is available to the front of the property.

Consultations

Children's Services – Raises no concerns.

Conservation – No objections.

Environmental Health – No objections.

Highways – No objections.

Representations

This application was publicised by letters to 6 neighbouring properties and a site notice displayed near to the site. 2 objections were received in response to the consultation.

The objections raise concerns across several key themes:

Character of the area and Conservation Area

- Not in-keeping with the residential character of the neighbourhood.
- Concerns over the impact on the Conservation Area.
- Perceived shift from a family dwelling to a more intensive care use.
- View that there are already too many children's homes in the area.

Traffic and highway safety concerns

- Increased vehicle movements from staff, visitors and service providers.
- Existing parking pressures likely to worsen.
- Potential highway safety and access concerns
- Staff would have to rely on private vehicles due to staff and visitor travel patterns.
- Local services are already under pressure.

Impact on neighbouring amenity

- Increased noise, disturbance and activity from 24-hour operation.
- Potential loss of privacy and residential amenity for neighbours.
- Concerns about evening and overnight impacts.

Concerns regarding occupants and behaviour

- Previous experience of children's homes leading to anti-social behaviour.
- Reports of verbal abuse, police attendance and neighbour disputes.
- Concerns that similar issues could arise again.

Suitability of the location

- Concerns that the area is not an appropriate location setting for vulnerable young people.
- Unsure whether the location can provide a stable and secure environment.

Planning History

No relevant planning history.

Relevant Policy

Paragraphs 11 and 12 of the December 2024 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) have been superseded by the August 2026 NPPF. The presumption in favour of sustainable development is now set out in Policies S3 to S5 of the NPPF (2026).

Paragraph S3 of the NPPF (2026): Presumption in favour of sustainable development states:

1. Decisions on development proposals should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development. This means:
 - a. Policy S4 in this Framework should be applied when considering development proposals within settlements;
 - b. Outside settlements, Policy S5 should be applied; and
 - c. In all locations, development proposals that accord with both an up-to-date development plan and the decision-making policies in this Framework should be approved without delay.
2. Where a development proposal falls partly within and partly outside a settlement, Policies S4 and S5 should be applied to the relevant parts which are inside or outside of the settlement boundary (as appropriate), before coming to an overall view on the proposal.

Paragraph S4 of the NPPF (2026): Principle of Development within settlements states:

1. Development proposals within settlements should be approved unless the benefits of doing so would be substantially outweighed by any adverse effects, when assessed against the national decision-making policies in this Framework.
2. In applying Policy S4, the circumstances in which the benefits of approving development are likely to be substantially outweighed by adverse effects include (but are not restricted to) situations where the development proposal would:
 - a. Have a substantial adverse impact in relation to:
 - i. The allocation or safeguarding of land or buildings for particular uses in the development plan, unless there is no reasonable prospect of an application coming 24 forward for the allocated use, or there is evidence that the safeguarding is no longer appropriate; or

- ii. The application of the policies in this Framework for existing recreational land and facilities (HC7), Local Green Space (HC8), areas of particular importance for biodiversity and geodiversity (N6), Protected Landscapes (N4) and development within residential curtilages (L2(1)(d)).
- b. Involve the whole or partial loss of undeveloped land which is used for a cemetery or burial ground; or for water storage and/or flood risk management (unless suitable compensatory provision is made that does not increase the risk of flooding either on or off-site); or
- c. Fail to comply with one of the national decision-making policies which state that development proposals should be refused in specific circumstances.

Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

The principal statutory duty under the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 is to preserve the special character of heritage assets, including their setting. LPAs should, in coming to decisions, consider the principal Act, which states the following:

Conservation Areas – Section 72 (1)

In undertaking its role as a Planning Authority the Council, in respect to any buildings of land in Conservation Areas, should pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.

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.

NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

Policy P5 Maintaining Public Safety and Security
Policy HE9 Conservation Areas

PLANNING (LISTED BUILDING AND CONSERVATION AREAS) ACT 1990

Section 72 (1) Conservation Areas

KNOWSLEY LOCAL PLAN: CORE STRATEGY

Policy SD1 Sustainable Development
Policy CS1 Spatial Strategy for Knowsley
Policy CS2 Development Principles
Policy CS7 Transport Networks
Policy CS16 Specialist and Supported Accommodation
Policy CS19 Design Quality and Accessibility in New Development
Policy CS20 Managing the Borough's Historic Environment

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

Policy H5 Development within Primarily Residential Areas
Policy DQ5 Development in Conservation Areas

Article 35 Statement

The Local Planning Authority has acted positively and proactively in determining this application by assessing the proposal against all material considerations, including planning policies and any representations that may have been received and subsequently determining to grant planning permission in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development, as set out within the National Planning Policy Framework.

Assessment

PRINCIPLE OF DEVELOPMENT

The application site is allocated as a Primarily Residential Area, as per the Knowsley Local Plan: Core Strategy. Given the residential nature of the proposal, the change of use of the property to a children's care home is considered to be acceptable in principle, subject to compliance with local planning policy and guidance.

RESIDENTIAL AMENITY

Policy CS19 of the Core Strategy requires new developments to maintain a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings by avoiding unacceptable impacts on existing residents and future occupiers.

The application does not propose any physical works to the property; however, residents have raised concerns that the proposed use would result in noise and disturbance that would affect their amenity due to the increased noise, disturbance and activity from the 24-hour operation.

It is noted that there would be noise associated with comings and goings from the property in the form of car doors opening and closing and the noise of engines, however, such noises would be infrequent and would not take place late at night or early in the morning. The shift changeovers are proposed to take place every other day in the morning and would take a maximum of 30 minutes. The level of coming and goings from the property through the C2 use are not likely to be greater than that associated with a large 4-bedroom family house (existing use) and would not result in significant harm to the residential amenity.

Furthermore, C3 dwellinghouses can be subject to noise issues, anti-social behaviour and disturbance depending on the conduct of the homeowner.

The application has been reviewed by Environmental Health who raised no objections to the proposal.

It is considered that for the reasons outlined above, the proposed use as a home for 2 children would largely function in a similar matter to that of the existing use, namely a 4 bedroom residential property and would not cause undue harm to the amenity of the neighbouring residential properties. .

In summary, the proposal is not considered to be harmful to the amenity of the existing and future occupiers and would accord with Policies CS2 and CS19 of the Core Strategy.

HIGHWAYS

Policy CS7 of the Core Strategy states that new development will be required to be:

- a) Located and designed to prioritise accessibility and sustainable modes of travel through a choice of walking, cycling, public transport, and incorporate access for private vehicles.
- d) In compliance with adopted cycle, car, disabled and service vehicle parking standards for different types and scales of new development.

The proposed development will utilise the existing vehicular access serving the property from North Park Road. No changes are proposed to the means of access and Highways are satisfied that the existing access arrangements are suitable to accommodate the proposed use. The site benefits from acceptable visibility for vehicles entering and leaving the property and no highway safety concerns are identified in relation to the continued use of the existing access arrangements.

The proposed use would operate in a manner comparable to many family dwellings within the surrounding residential area, with day-to-day activities and travel patterns associated with a domestic residential environment. Given the small scale of the proposal, accommodating up to two children, the traffic generation associated with the development is not anticipated to differ significantly from that of the existing lawful residential use. As such, the proposal would not result in a severe impact on the operation or safety of the local highway network.

The proposal relates to the reuse of an existing dwelling and does not involve any significant alterations to the site's internal layout. Adequate space exists to accommodate the proposed use, whilst emergency and service vehicles would continue to operate from the public highway in the same manner as any other residential property within the area.

There is sufficient space within the site to accommodate four vehicles. Highways consider this level of provision to be acceptable for the scale and nature of the proposed children's care home and sufficient to minimise demand for on-street parking. There are no highways concerns regarding the parking provision.

The site is located within an established residential area with access to local facilities and pedestrian infrastructure. It also has good links to public transport, with Kirkby train stations and several bus stops close to the property. Staff will have good options available for sustainable transport.

Highways have reviewed the application who has no objections to the proposal, due to the small scale of the proposal. As such, the proposal would not result in an unacceptable impact on highway safety or a severe residual cumulative impact on highway safety and would be in accordance with Policy CS7 of the Core Strategy.

IMPACT ON THE NORTH PARK ROAD CONSERVATION AREA

Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

The principal statutory duty under the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 is to preserve the special character of heritage assets, including their setting. LPAs should, in coming to decisions, consider the principal Act, which states the following:

Conservation areas – Section 72 (1)

In undertaking its role as a planning authority the Council, in respect to any buildings or land in conservation areas, should pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.

Policy HE9 of the NPPF (2026) outlines that:

- 1) Development proposals within or affecting the significance of conservation areas should:
 - a) Retain and conserve buildings and other features which make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the conservation area where possible.
 - b) Consider the area's special architectural or historic interest (as identified as part of the designation of the conservation area) in the design of development.
- 3) Proposals which conserve those elements of a conservation area that make a positive contribution to the area (or which better reveal its significance should be supported).

Policy CS20 of the Core Strategy outlines that development proposals in Knowsley should preserve or enhance the borough's historic and architectural assets, including Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas, Historic Parks and Gardens and archaeological remains, together with other local areas, buildings and structures of historic importance. The council will:

- a) Require preservation of the local distinctiveness and character of historic assets through sensitive design of new development, including appropriate integration with their setting and immediate landscape.

Policy DQ5 of the Replacement UDP outlines that new development within or close to a Conservation Area must preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Area, having regard to the following:

- a) The scale, form, massing, height, materials and architectural detail of existing buildings in the Conservation Area.
- b) Existing plot layouts and the street scene.
- c) Important views into, within and out of the Conservation Area.
- d) The need to preserve existing open spaces, structures and landscape features (such as trees and hedges, walls, and traditional paving).

- e) Likely levels of noise, pollution, traffic, parking or disturbance that may be caused by the development.
- f) The visual impact of any vehicular access, parking or servicing / delivery areas that are needed to serve the development.

The proposal involves no external alterations to the property and would not affect the significance of the conservation area. This is supported by the Conservation Officer who raises no objections to the proposal.

In summary, the proposal would only involve internal alterations, with no changes to the elevations or the wider site. Therefore, the changes would cause no harm to the contribution made by the setting to the character and appearance of the North Park Road Conservation Area and would accord to Policy HE9 of the NPPF (2026), Policies CS19 and CS20 of the Core Strategy and Policy DQ5 of the Replacement UDP.

CRIME AND ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

Policy P5 of the NPPF (2026) outlines that development proposals should anticipate and address possible malicious threats and other hazards (whether natural or man-made) in relation to:

- a) Their occupiers and users, by identifying potential safety risks and proportionate mitigation opportunities which can be addressed through the design of the scheme. This applies especially where particular groups may be vulnerable to crime, or to the fear of crime – such as women and girls – or would be at risk from physical hazards.

Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 states that without prejudice to any other obligation imposed on it, it shall be the duty of each authority to which this section applies to exercise its various functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent,

- a) Crime and disorder in its area (including anti-social and other behaviour adversely affecting the local environment).
- b) The misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances in its area.
- c) Re-offending in its area.
- d) Serious violence in its area.

Policy CS19 of the Core Strategy states that to maintain a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings, development proposals will be required to:

- b) Minimise crime, fear of crime and anti-social behaviour, including good levels of natural surveillance and security.

There is no evidence that the proposal will worsen existing issues of crime and anti-social behaviour or lead to new instances or that it will be harmful to the welfare of the children in care. This is supported by Children's Services who raise no objections to

the proposal.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS – NEIGHBOUR OBJECTIONS

Two objections were received during the consultation period of the application raising concerns across several key themes of the character of the area and the conservation area, traffic and highway safety, impact on the neighbouring amenity, concerns regarding occupants and behaviour, and the suitability of the location.

The issues raised within the objections received are noted and have been addressed throughout the assessment of this application.

Conclusion

The proposed development is acceptable in principle and would not cause unacceptable harm in relation to residential amenity, highway safety, the character of the area / impact on the conservation area and crime and anti-social behaviour.

Therefore, the proposed development would comply with the Knowsley Local Plan: Core Strategy, Replacement UDP Policies, and guidance provided in the NPPF (2026), and is therefore recommended for approval, subject to conditions.

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 at the premises shall not exceed 2no. at any time.

Reason: In order to ensure no detrimental impacts on the local highway network and to maintain the level of amenity enjoyed by local residents.

- 4) The staffing levels and shift patterns associated with the use hereby permitted shall not exceed or differ those set out in the submitted Management Plan for Omega Care Group received 19 June 2026 and the completed Children's Home Pro Forma received 19 June 2026.

SCHEDULE 1

Date Received	Ref. No	Version	Drawing/Document Title
19.06.2026	-	-	CHILDRENS HOME PRO-FORMA

19.06.2026	-	-	LOCATION RISK ASSESSMENT
19.06.2026	-	-	MANAGEMENT PLAN
19.06.2026	-	-	STATEMENT OF PURPOSE
19.06.2026	002	-	PROPOSED FLOOR PLANS
19.06.2026	003	-	LOCATION PLAN
02.07.2026	-	-	HERITAGE STATEMENT

Signed Case Officer¹:

Louise Robinson

**Signed Authorising
Officer²:**

Jo Sheridan

Date:

18/09/2026

Informatives

Not applicable.

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

² 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