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# Planning Statement

2 Forest Road, Sutton-in-Ashfield, NG17 3BB

**Abstract**

Change of Use from Dwellinghouse (C3) to children's care home (C2)

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## Executive Summary

This Planning Statement supports a full planning application for the change of use of 2 Forest Road, Sutton-in-Ashfield, NG17 3BB from Class C3 (dwellinghouse) to Class C2 (children's residential care home). The proposal is for a small, family-style home providing 24-hour care for up to two children under 18, with two staff working on a shift basis. No extensions or external alterations are proposed, and the property will remain domestic in appearance and operation.

The site lies within an established residential area in Sutton-in-Ashfield, with excellent access to schools, services, public transport and community facilities. The proposed use is small and stable, not a hostel, emergency provision or high-turnover facility. Day-to-day activity, including noise levels, garden use and comings and goings is expected to be comparable to a typical family household, supported by a clear management approach, visit controls and staff supervision.

The proposal is assessed against the National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024), including support for meeting the needs of groups requiring specialist accommodation, and the Written Ministerial Statement (May 2023) which confirms that planning should not be a barrier to providing homes for looked-after children and that appropriate applications should be supported. Locally, the development accords with saved policies ST1 and ST2 in principle and detailed terms, and with HG8, which provides the key framework for residential care proposals including design, amenity, garden provision, access and parking.

Highway impacts are low and appropriately managed. Parking demand is expected to be limited (staff shifts), with on-street parking typical of the area and a dedicated off-street parking space provided and retained within the rear curtilage (served by the existing dropped kerb and hardstanding) behind a gated fence of domestic appearance.

Overall, the proposal delivers clear social benefits by providing a small, regulated home for vulnerable children in a sustainable residential location, without material harm to character, residential amenity or highway safety. Subject to appropriate conditions and adherence to the Management Plan, planning permission is respectfully sought.

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## 1. Introduction

- 1.0.1 This proposal has been prepared in support of a full planning application for the change of use of 2 Forest Road, Sutton-in-Ashfield, NG17 3BB from a Class C3 dwellinghouse to a Class C2 children's residential care home.
- 1.0.2 The proposal is for a small, family-style home providing 24-hour care for up to 2 children under the age of 18, supported by 2 staff members. The property will remain domestic in character and appearance, functioning as a stable, long-term home for the young people who live there.
- 1.0.3 There is a well-documented and ongoing need for high-quality, community-based accommodation for vulnerable children and young people, allowing them to live in ordinary residential areas close to schools, services and support networks.
- 1.0.4 This proposal seeks to address the need by providing a carefully managed, small-scale children's home.
- 1.0.5 No extensions or external alterations are proposed, and the only minor physical change is the provision of a domestic-style gated fence to enable the use of the existing rear hardstanding as a single off-street parking space.
- 1.0.6 In practice, the property will function comparably to a standard household, consistent with the residential character of Forest Road. As such, it is expected there will be little to no influence/disturbance to the area.
- 1.0.7 This Statement is accompanied by 2 Appendices as follows:

***Appendix 1: Planning for accommodation for looked after children – Written Ministerial Statement (23 May 2023, UIN HCWS795)***

***Appendix 2: National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) – December 2024 (as amended 7 February 2025)***

***Appendix 3: Nottinghamshire County Council – Sufficiency & Commissioning Strategy for children in Nottinghamshire 2023–25***

## 2. Site Context and Surroundings

- 2.0.1 2 Forest Road, Sutton-in-Ashfield, NG17 3BB is a three-storey end-terrace dwelling located within an established residential area to the north of Sutton-in-Ashfield town centre.
- 2.0.2 The property forms the end unit in a terrace of similar houses, which together create a consistent, traditional residential street.
- 2.0.3 The immediate surroundings are characterised by residential uses, comprising terraces and other modest dwellings of a similar scale and form, with small frontages onto the street and private rear gardens or yards.
- 2.0.4 Forest Road itself functions as a typical local residential street with footways on both sides and on-street parking along the carriageway.
- 2.0.5 The property benefits from a front entrance directly onto Forest Road and a private rear garden, which is enclosed and forms part of the residential curtilage.
- 2.0.6 The site is very well connected for day-to-day living and access to services. It is well located for public transport, with bus stops on Forest Road (including the Forest Tavern stop) within a short walk (around 2–4 minutes), and the most convenient stop providing services towards Mansfield and Nottingham approximately a six-minute walk away (around 0.3 miles). The main town-centre shops and services, including Idlewells Shopping Centre (NG17 1BP), are also close by (approximately 0.9 miles, straight-line). Secondary education is readily accessible, with Quarrydale Academy and Sutton Community Academy both around 1.0 mile away. Overall, this demonstrates a well-served residential location where a small, family-style children's home can integrate successfully; if such provision is not supported in places with walkable services, schools and public transport, it is difficult to see where would be more suitable without isolating children from their community and support networks.
- 2.0.7 In land-use terms, it sits comfortably within a wider residential context, which is an appropriate location for a small, home-style children's residential use.

### 3. Proposed Development

#### 3.0 Overview of the Proposal

3.0.1 Planning permission is sought for the change of use of 2 Forest Road, Sutton-in-Ashfield, NG17 3BB from a Class C3 dwellinghouse to a Class C2 children's residential care home.

3.0.2 The proposed home will provide 24-hour care for up to 2 children under the age of 18. The children will live at the property as their main home on a long-term basis, within a setting that is intentionally domestic in scale and character. The intended use is designed to operate as a small, family-style home, rather than a large or institutional facility.

#### 3.1 Nature of the use and occupancy

3.1.1 The home is intentionally restricted to a maximum of 2 resident children. This cap is a deliberate choice to ensure that each young person receives the highest possible level of individual care, support and attention, and that the staff team can build strong, stable relationships with them in a calm, family-style environment.

3.1.2 The children will be under the age of 18 and of school or college age. They will live at the property as their main and settled home, rather than in short-stay or emergency placements. Each child will have their own bedroom and will be encouraged to personalise their space. Day-to-day life will mirror that of a small family household, with routines built around:

*Attending school or college;*

*Shared mealtimes;*

*Homework and study;*

*Leisure and relaxation in the living room and garden; and*

*Appropriate evening and morning routines.*

3.1.3 The property will not be used as a hostel, bail or probation accommodation, night shelter, crisis unit or high-turnover assessment centre. The emphasis is on providing a stable, nurturing, long-term home for a very small number of children.

### 3.2 *Internal layout and accommodation*

3.2.1 No external extensions or major structural alterations are proposed. Internally, only minor, non-structural changes will be made as necessary to support the safe and effective running of the home. The overall layout and feel of the building will remain that of a conventional dwelling.

3.2.2 The internal arrangement will comprise of:

#### **Ground floor**

*Entrance hallway*

*Shared living room*

*Kitchen*

*Office room*

#### **First floor**

*Two children's bedrooms, each occupied by one child*

*Staff sleep-in room, used by the on-duty night staff member*

*Bathroom and shower room*

#### **Second Floor**

*Staff sleep-in room, used by the on-duty night staff member.*

3.2.3 To the rear, the existing private garden will remain as an outdoor amenity space for the children, used for play, relaxation and gardening under normal noise and hours of use. Staff and children who travel by bicycle will be able to bring cycles into the rear garden for safe and secure storage within the curtilage.

### 3.3 *Staffing and supervision*

3.3.1 Care and support will be provided by a small, consistent team of trained staff employed by the operator. The staffing model is designed to ensure continuous support and supervision while retaining a quiet, domestic character in planning terms.

3.3.2 There would be two care staff providing 24-hour care on a rota basis. The care staff are non-resident and attend the property solely for the purposes of supporting and supervising the resident children. The staffing model is designed to maintain a quiet, domestic character, with the number of people on site closely controlled.

**3.3.3** Staff will operate on a rota to ensure continuous cover, using longer “block” shifts (48–72 hours) to promote stability for the children and to minimise shift handovers. Overnight cover is provided through a sleep-in arrangement, with on-duty staff remaining on site and available if required. In addition to the on-duty care staff, the Home Manager may attend during normal daytime hours for supervision/administration; therefore, the maximum staff presence would be up to 3 during the day and no more than 2 overnight. Staff changeovers will be managed to be staggered and normally in daytime hours, with only one staff member arriving as another leaves, to avoid multiple staff vehicles arriving at the same time.

**3.3.4**

**Figure 1: Staff Changeover Schedule**

<b>Day</b>	<b>Changeover Window</b>	<b>Staggered Changeover Detail</b>	<b>Block Cover</b>
<b>Monday</b>	10:00 – 10:30	10:00 Oncoming Staff 1 arrives / Outgoing Staff 1 departs 10:15 Oncoming Staff 2 arrives / Outgoing Staff 2 departs Handover complete by 10:30	72-hour block
<b>Tuesday</b>	None		Continuing block cover
<b>Wednesday</b>	None		Continuing block cover
<b>Thursday</b>	10:00 – 10:30	10:00 Oncoming Staff 1 arrives / Outgoing Staff 1 departs 10:15 Oncoming Staff 2 arrives / Outgoing Staff 2 departs Handover complete by 10:30	48-hour block
<b>Friday</b>	None		Continuing block cover
<b>Saturday</b>	10:00 – 10:30	10:00 Oncoming Staff 1 arrives / Outgoing Staff 1 departs 10:15 Oncoming Staff 2 arrives / Outgoing Staff 2 departs Handover complete by 10:30	48-hour block
<b>Sunday</b>	None		Continuing block cover

3.3.5 Care is overseen by a Home Manager, supported by two support workers from the regular staff team. The Home Manager will attend the property three times per week to provide supervision and ensure the home is run effectively.

Staff will support the children with:

*Daily routines and personal organisation;*

*Attending education, health and other appointments;*

*Developing everyday life skills (cooking, cleaning, laundry, budgeting); and*

*Social, recreational and community activities.*

3.3.6 In planning terms, this proposal sits at the lower end of the spectrum of C2 uses, and the level of comings and goings will be comparable to that of a small family household.

### 3.4 *Regulation and management*

3.4.1 The home will be operated by a Care Quality Commission (CQC) specialist provider of residential care for children and young people. The service will be registered and regulated in accordance with the relevant Ofsted framework for children's homes and will comply with applicable regulations and quality standards.

## 4. Planning Policy Framework (National Planning Policy Framework)

### 4.0 Overview

- 4.0.1 Decisions on this application should be taken in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 4.0.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is a key material consideration. The proposal has been assessed against the current NPPF (as updated), which sets out the Government's overarching objectives of sustainable development, including the need to provide a sufficient supply of homes, create mixed and balanced communities and support the needs of groups with specific housing requirements.

### 4.1 Relevant saved Local Plan policies

- 4.1.1 The saved policies of the Ashfield Local Plan Review 2002 continue to apply to the determination of planning applications, with due weight given according to their consistency with the NPPF.
- 4.1.2 For this proposal, the key saved policies are:

#### *ST1 – Development*

A strategic policy which permits development where, amongst other things, it does not adversely affect the character, quality, amenity or safety of the environment, does not adversely affect highway safety, and does not conflict with adjoining or nearby land uses.

#### *ST2 – Main Urban Area*

Identifies Sutton-in-Ashfield as one of the main urban areas where development is generally acceptable in principle, subject to detailed policy considerations.

#### *HG8 – Residential Care Facilities, Houses in Multiple Occupation, Bedsits, Flats and Hostels*

This is the most directly relevant housing policy. It states that development of residential care homes and similar uses will be permitted where:

*the amenity of neighbouring properties is protected;*

*design is acceptable in terms of appearance, scale and siting;*

*in the case of residential care homes, the outlook from bedrooms and communal rooms is adequate;*

*adequate private garden space is provided;*  
*boundary treatment provides an acceptable standard of privacy and visual amenity;*  
*access for vehicles and pedestrians, including disabled people, is safe and convenient;*  
*parking facilities are provided in accordance with Council standards; and*  
*landscaping complements and enhances the appearance of the development.*

## **5. Planning Policy Assessment**

### *5.0 Ashfield Local Plan Review (saved policies)*

#### *ST1 – Development*

The proposal sits within an existing residential area and does not alter the built form.

Activity associated with the use is domestic in character and scale, so there is no unacceptable effect on local character, amenity or safety.

With a clear Management Plan in place and modest staffing/visitor levels, the use will operate compatibly alongside neighbouring dwellings.

Accordingly, the scheme accords with the general criteria of ST1.

#### *ST2 – Main Urban Area*

The site lies within Sutton-in-Ashfield's urban area, which ST2 directs development towards.

The proposal reuses an existing dwelling rather than requiring new land release.

The location is therefore acceptable in principle.

#### **5.0.1** For clarity, the proposal is assessed against each element of Policy HG8 as follows:

##### ***a) The amenity of neighbouring properties is protected***

Residential amenity is protected by the very small scale of the use (maximum of 2 resident children), the continuous presence of trained staff, and the operational controls set out in the Management Plan. Detailed amenity considerations (noise, disturbance, comings and goings, privacy and garden use) are addressed in Section 7.

##### ***b) Design is acceptable in terms of appearance, scale and siting***

No extensions or external alterations are proposed, and the dwelling will remain visually

indistinguishable from neighbouring houses. The scale and siting are unchanged. Design and visual amenity are addressed in Section 6.

***c) In the case of residential care homes, the outlook from bedrooms and communal rooms is adequate***

The dwelling already provides normal residential outlook from existing bedrooms and communal rooms, and no alterations are proposed that would affect outlook. The proposal therefore maintains adequate outlook consistent with a typical dwelling in this terrace.

***d) Adequate private garden space is provided***

The existing private rear garden is retained as outdoor amenity space for residents. Garden use and management controls are addressed in Section 7.5.

***e) Boundary treatment provides an acceptable standard of privacy and visual amenity***

Existing boundary treatments are retained, maintaining current levels of privacy between properties. Privacy considerations are addressed in Section 7.4 and the boundary/curtilage arrangements are addressed in Section 6.

***f) Access for vehicles and pedestrians, including disabled people, is safe and convenient***

Pedestrian access remains via the existing frontage and there are no changes to the highway layout. Vehicle and pedestrian access considerations are addressed in Section 8.2.

***g) Parking facilities are provided in accordance with Council standards***

Parking demand is modest and managed. Parking provision and day-to-day operational controls (including the Travel, Parking and Arrival Protocol) are addressed in Section 8, with reference to Council standards and the established residential parking pattern in the locality.

***h) Landscaping complements and enhances the appearance of the development***

No changes to existing landscaping are proposed and all domestic garden areas are retained. The proposal involves only the replacement of the existing boundary fence with a gated fence. This alteration is minor in nature, appropriate to the residential setting, and results in no material harm to the visual amenity of the site or the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

- 5.0.2 Policy HG8 therefore provides a clear and directly applicable policy basis for considering the proposed Class C2 children's home at 2 Forest Road, particularly in relation to residential amenity, design, garden provision and access/parking.

### 5.1 National Planning Policy Framework

#### 5.1.1 Paragraph 62 – housing for different groups

National policy requires local planning authorities to assess and reflect in planning policies the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups within the community. These groups specifically include (amongst others) looked-after children and those who require specialist or supported housing. Re-using an existing dwelling to provide a small, regulated children's home for up to two looked-after children directly contributes to that requirement in a sustainable location close to schools, services and community facilities.

#### 5.1.2 Presumption in favour of sustainable development

The proposal makes efficient use of an existing building in a sustainable urban location.

No policy conflicts or significant adverse impacts have been identified in relation to amenity, character or highways.

The social benefits of providing specialist accommodation for children are clear and specific to this type of use.

### 5.2 National policy and Government intentions for looked-after children

- 5.2.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires local planning authorities to plan for the housing needs of different groups within the community, and to reflect those needs in both policies and decisions. The Government has made clear that this duty includes looked-after children and children in need of social services care.

- 5.2.2 On 23 May 2023, the Minister of State for Housing and Planning issued a Written Ministerial Statement (WMS) "*Planning for accommodation for looked after children*". The statement confirms the Government's commitment to supporting the development of accommodation for looked-after children and sets out several key expectations:

*"The planning system should not be a barrier to providing homes for the most vulnerable children in society."*

When care is the best choice for a child, it is important that the care system provides *“stable, loving homes close to children’s communities... the right homes, in the right places with access to good schools and community support.”*

Authorities should *“give due weight to and be supportive of applications, where appropriate, for all types of accommodation for looked after children in their area that reflect local needs and all parties in the development process should work together closely to facilitate the timely delivery of such vital accommodation for children across the country.”*

5.2.3 Subsequent Government material on NPPF reform has reinforced this direction of travel, indicating an intention to make explicit reference to the needs of looked-after children in the housing policies of the Framework (paragraph 63) and to ensure that every child has a secure home close to their community. Guidance produced by local planning authorities in response to the WMS consistently reiterates that children’s homes and similar provision are a form of specialist housing that national policy positively expects to be planned for and supported, where local impacts can be managed.

5.2.4 In line with national context, this application proposes a very small, community-based children’s home for up to 2 looked-after children in an existing dwelling within a normal residential street, close to schools, services and community facilities. It therefore falls evenly within the type of development the WMS and emerging NPPF changes are intended to support.

#### 5.2.5 Nottinghamshire local need and sufficiency context

Nottinghamshire County Council has published a Sufficiency and Commissioning Strategy for children in care and care leavers (2023–2025). This sets out how the authority will ensure there are enough placements, and the right types of placements, to meet local needs. The strategy emphasises the importance of providing stable homes that are as local as possible, and recognises that a small number of children will require residential care in “family-size” settings. The proposed development directly aligns with that approach by providing a small, regulated, community-based home (limited to two children) in an established residential location close to schools, services and support networks.

### 5.2.6 Given:

the explicit Government statement that the planning system “should not be a barrier” to homes for looked-after children; the requirement to assess and provide for the needs of this group when applying paragraph 63 of the NPPF; the clear expectation that authorities should give due weight to and be supportive of appropriate applications for such accommodation; and the local sufficiency context set out by Nottinghamshire County Council, the WMS and related national and local policy provide strong material considerations in favour of granting permission for this modest, small-scale Class C2 proposal, subject to the occupancy, staffing and management controls offered by the applicant.

## 6. Design, Appearance and Visual Amenity

- 6.0.1 The proposal does not involve any extensions or external alterations to the existing building.
- 6.0.2 The property will continue to appear as a three-storey end-terrace dwelling within the existing row, with the same front elevation, roof form and relationship to the street. There will be no signage or other institutional features. In townscape terms, the dwelling will therefore remain visually indistinguishable from any other house in Forest Road.
- 6.0.3 Internally, the layout will remain domestic in character, with living, kitchen and bathroom facilities arranged in a way consistent with a family home. The use of the rear garden as private outdoor amenity space is unchanged, and existing boundary treatments will be retained, maintaining the current pattern of enclosure and privacy between neighbouring plots.
- 6.0.4 The rear area already benefits from a concrete hardstanding served by the existing dropped kerb. As part of the proposal, this area will be used and retained as a single off-street parking space within the residential curtilage. The only physical alteration required to facilitate this will be the replacement of the existing fence with a gated fence of domestic appearance, maintaining visual amenity and avoiding the appearance of an exposed open forecourt.
- 6.0.5 If the rear driveway were not implemented, the practical parking requirement of up to two cars associated with the home will be accommodated on-street and would be comparable to the level of car ownership and visitor parking typically associated with a normal dwelling of this size. In either scenario, the proposal would not introduce any additional or unacceptable

visual clutter or over-dominant parking areas and would not detract from the established character and appearance of Forest Road. Therefore, minimal disruption is expected to the surrounding area.

## **7. Residential Amenity**

The surrounding area is wholly residential in character, and it is important that the proposed use sits comfortably alongside neighbouring dwellings. This section considers the likely effects on noise and general disturbance, comings and goings, privacy and garden use.

### *7.0 General scale and character of activity*

**7.0.1** The use is limited to 2 resident children with no more than 3 staff on site during the day, with only two present at night. The use would be akin to a standard household in terms of residents and comparable to the expected occupancy of a conventional family of a dwelling of this size and nature. The children will live at the property as their settled home, with routines and patterns of activity focused around school, meals, homework, leisure and sleep similar to other small families.

### *7.1 Noise and general disturbance*

**7.1.1** The main potential sources of noise are those typical of any domestic dwelling: everyday indoor living (conversation, cooking, television/music), normal use of the rear garden, and limited arrivals/departures by staff and pre-booked professional visitors.

**7.1.1** The proposal incorporates clear, practical safeguards to ensure that noise and disturbance remain at a domestic level and do not result in a material increase above a typical family home. These include:

Occupancy is strictly limited to a maximum of 2 children, avoiding the likelihood of large or boisterous groups.

The home will be staffed 24-hours a day, and staff are responsible for maintaining a calm environment, enforcing house rules, and intervening early if noise levels begin to escalate.

The staffing model utilises longer “block” shifts (typically 48–72 hours), which reduces the frequency of shift handovers and associated vehicle movements, particularly at unsociable hours.

The Management Plan will include defined “quiet hours” overnight (typically 22:00–07:00), during which residents are supported to follow settled routines and staff actively manage noise sources (e.g. television/music volume, indoor behaviour, doors/windows).

External activity and garden use will remain domestic in nature and will be managed so that noisy outdoor activity does not take place late in the evening.

Professional visits will be pre-booked and, wherever practicable, scheduled within normal daytime hours to avoid disturbance.

7.1.2 Given the very small scale of the use, the continuous staff presence, and the operational controls described above (secured through the Management Plan and capable of being reinforced by planning conditions), there is no reason to expect noise levels to exceed those associated with a typical household occupying an end-terrace dwelling. The amenities of neighbouring residents will therefore be safeguarded.

## 7.2 *Comings and goings*

7.2.1 Movements to and from the property will fall into three categories:

Children leaving for and returning from school/college and activities;

Staff arriving and leaving at the start and end of shift periods;

Occasional visits by visitors (e.g. social workers, reviewing officers, therapists).

*All visits are required to be booked in advance, unless exceptional circumstances, to ensure staggered visits.*

Young people are not allowed any more than 1 visitor at any one time.

7.2.2 There is no substantial evidence that has been provided to demonstrate that a small-scale C2 children’s residential home would directly increase crime, anti-social behaviour, or raise safety concerns. The planning system should proceed on the basis that any crime or anti-social behaviour, were it ever to arise, would be a matter for the police under separate regime and managed by the applicant’s experienced care team, with staff always present to respond promptly and effectively. The provision of care for vulnerable children is structured around an individual care plan supporting education, positive activities and, where required, counselling. This approach is intended to provide a stable, nurturing home environment and to ensure the

operation of the home is well managed, with due regard to protecting the residential amenity of neighbouring occupiers.

- 7.2.3 Comings and goings will be actively managed through the Management Plan to avoid peaks and to protect neighbouring amenity. In particular: staff rotas utilise longer “block” shifts (typically 48–72 hours) to minimise the frequency of changeovers; where a changeover is required it will be staggered so that normally only one staff member arrives as another leaves; professional visits will be pre-booked and, wherever practicable, scheduled within normal daytime hours and staggered to avoid multiple vehicles arriving at the same time; and deliveries will be managed in the same way as for a typical dwelling. With these measures, the level and pattern of activity will remain modest and should not result in a material or harmful increase compared with the lawful residential use of the property.

### 7.3 *Privacy and overlooking*

- 7.3.1 The proposal does not involve any new windows, changes to window positions, extensions or balconies. The existing relationships between the application property and neighbouring dwellings, in terms of window-to-window distances and garden boundaries, are unchanged.

#### 7.3.2 As such:

There is no increase in overlooking beyond the current situation.

There is no additional loss of privacy to neighbouring gardens or rear elevations; and

The privacy of the children and staff within the property is also preserved.

Existing boundary treatments to the rear garden will be retained, maintaining the current level of screening between plots.

### 7.4 *Use of the garden*

- 7.4.1 The rear garden will continue to be used as a private amenity space for the children, for play, sitting out and small-scale gardening. Use will be managed so that:

The garden is not used for noisy activity late in the evening;

Any outdoor play equipment is of a domestic scale;

Staff supervise outdoor use appropriately and intervene if noise levels risk disturbing neighbours.

- 7.4.2 These controls, combined with the modest number of residents, mean that garden use will remain consistent with normal expectations for a small family dwelling in this location.

## 8. Highway Safety

### 8.0 *Trip generation and vehicle movements*

8.0.1 The proposed C2 use would accommodate up to 2 resident children, supported by a small, consistent staff team. Staffing is controlled and is as described in Section 3.4, with two care staff on duty and a sleep-in arrangement overnight. Staff operate on longer “block” shifts (48–72 hours) to promote stability for the children and to minimise the frequency of shift handovers. As a result, staff arrivals/departures are inherently limited, staggered, and involve only one staff member arriving as another leaves.

8.0.2 In highway terms, the scale of activity will remain modest and will be managed through the submitted Management Plan (including the Travel, Parking and Arrivals Protocol) so that vehicle movements are limited and kept to sensible hours. Professional visits (e.g. social workers, therapists) will be pre-booked and staggered where practicable, and the home is not expected to generate servicing or delivery activity beyond that typically associated with a normal dwelling.

### 8.1 *Site access and manoeuvring*

8.1.1 Pedestrian access would remain via the existing front door onto Forest Road. No new pedestrian routes are proposed.

8.1.2 Vehicular movements associated with the use will take place in the same manner as other residential properties on the street. The proposal does not introduce any new junctions or changes to the highway layout.

### 8.2 *Parking and day-to-day operation*

8.2.1 The proposal includes a single off-street parking space within the rear curtilage (served by the existing dropped kerb and hardstanding). This space will be available for staff and/or pre-booked professional visitors. Any additional parking demand will take place on-street, in keeping with the established pattern of residential parking along Forest Road, and the use of public transport will be encouraged where appropriate. It is also noted that the absence of dedicated off-street parking is not uncommon in the immediate locality.

8.2.2 On-street parking is available on Forest Road and on nearby residential streets within a short walking distance, and staff and visitors will be expected to use available spaces considerately.

- 8.2.3 Saved Policy HG8(f) and HG8(g) are satisfied in that the proposal maintains safe and convenient access for vehicles and pedestrians (including disabled users), consistent with the established residential nature of Forest Road, and the associated parking demand is modest and managed.
- 8.2.4 For context, Ashfield District Council's Residential Car Parking Standards indicate that a 4+ bedroom dwelling would typically be expected to provide 3 parking spaces per unit, and in practice a dwelling of this size will reasonably generate two to three vehicles in ordinary Class C3 occupation.
- 8.2.5 In this case, however, the proposed use is small-scale and operationally controlled such that the maximum day-to-day parking demand is anticipated to be no more than the Council's indicated residential provision.
- 8.2.6 Any parking demand beyond the single on-plot space is mitigated by the availability of on-street parking in the surrounding streets, public transport accessibility, and the submitted Travel, Parking and Arrivals Protocol, which will ensure considerate parking behaviour, avoid obstruction, and manage the timing of shift changeovers.
- 8.2.7 The Management Plan (including the Travel, Parking and Arrivals Protocol) will require that staff and visitors:
- Park considerately and must not obstruct driveways, dropped kerbs, junctions, visibility splays, crossing points or the footway;
  - Manage shift changeovers to minimise overlap, and schedule professional visits where practicable; and
  - Avoid idling, unnecessary waiting, or unsociable parking behaviour.

8.2.8 Shift changeovers will be actively managed and staggered to minimise overlap and avoid peaks in vehicle movements, such that only one staff member arrives as another leaves. Changeovers will be scheduled during daytime to avoid late-night activity and minimise disturbance. Having regard to the 48–72 hour staff rotas, the limited frequency of changeovers, and the availability of public transport, the proposal will not give rise to any material harm to highway safety or residential amenity, with arrivals and departures generally limited to a single vehicle at any one time.

### 8.3 *Off-Street Parking*

8.3.1 For completeness, it is noted that the property benefits from an existing dropped kerb along the side elevation and sufficient side curtilage, with hardstanding already in place, to accommodate a dedicated off-street parking space. This space will be used for vehicle parking associated with the development, thereby further reducing reliance on on-street parking and ensuring no adverse impact on highway safety or the free flow of traffic.

8.3.2 A gated fence of domestic appearance will replace the existing fence to preserve visual amenity and avoid the appearance of an exposed open forecourt. The detailed layout of any such off-street space can be agreed by condition, if required.

### 8.4 *Sustainable travel*

8.4.1 Where appropriate, sustainable travel will be promoted for children, visitors and (where practicable) staff, including walking, cycling and public transport. In practice, staff often travel by public transport or are dropped off/picked up by family or friends, and where necessary may travel by taxi, further reducing reliance on private car use. The site is well located for public transport, with the most convenient bus stop providing services towards Mansfield and Nottingham approximately a six-minute walk away (0.3 miles). Cycles can be stored securely within the curtilage (for example within the rear garden), supporting non-car trips and helping to reduce reliance on private car use where feasible.

## 8.5 *Conclusion on highway safety*

- 8.5.1 Given the small scale of the use, the modest and managed number of vehicle trips, the clear operational protocol for considerate parking, the availability of on-street parking in the locality, and the provision of a dedicated off-street parking space accessed via the existing side drive, the proposal would not materially affect the safe or efficient operation of the local highway network. This position is further supported by the encouragement of sustainable travel and the common practice of staff using public transport, thereby minimising reliance on private vehicles. Highway safety for all users will be maintained.

## 9. Waste and Recycling

- 9.0.1 Domestic refuse and recycling arising from the use will be similar in volume and nature to that generated by a small family household occupying the property.

- 9.0.2 Household waste will continue to be managed through the standard Ashfield District Council collection service. The usual range of wheelie bins and recycling containers provided by the Council will be stored within the rear garden, kept neatly against a boundary so they are not visually prominent from the street and do not obstruct any access routes.

- 9.0.3 Key points of management are:

Bin storage remains entirely within the residential curtilage.

On collection days, bins will be moved to and from the usual presentation point on Forest Road in line with Council requirements.

Staff will ensure that bins are presented and returned promptly, avoiding them being left out on the highway for extended periods.

Additional internal recycling facilities (e.g. labelled kitchen bins) will be provided to encourage appropriate separation of waste.

- 9.0.4 The low number of residents and the domestic nature of the use mean that there is no requirement for commercial waste arrangements or large refuse containers. As a result, the proposal will not give rise to any adverse impacts in relation to street cleanliness, odour, vermin or visual clutter, and will operate in the same way as a normal dwelling in respect of waste and recycling.

9.0.5 To provide clarity and reassurance regarding the scale and operation of the proposed use, the Applicant would welcome a set of planning conditions along the following lines (wording to be agreed with the Local Planning Authority):

The use of the premises shall be for a children's home within Use Class C2 only, and for no other purpose (including any other purpose within Class C2) without the prior written approval of the Local Planning Authority.

The children's home shall accommodate no more than two children at any one time.

The maximum number of staff present at the premises at any one time shall be no more than three during daytime hours and no more than two overnight.

The development shall be operated in full accordance with the approved Management Plan (including the Travel, Parking and Arrivals Protocol and Neighbour Liaison arrangements).

The off-street parking space within the rear curtilage (served by the existing dropped kerb and hardstanding) shall be provided prior to first occupation of the use and retained for the lifetime of the development.

## 10. Conclusion

10.0.1 This application seeks full planning permission for the change of use of 2 Forest Road, Sutton-in-Ashfield, NG17 3BB from a Class C3 dwellinghouse to a Class C2 children's residential care home for up to 2 children under the age of 18.

10.0.2 The proposal makes effective use of an existing dwelling in the main urban area, providing a small, stable home for a very limited number of looked-after children in an ordinary residential street. The scale of the use, 2 children with a modest, consistent staff team, places it firmly at the lower end of the spectrum of C2 uses, with patterns of activity and vehicle movements comparable to those of a typical small family household.

10.0.3 The accompanying assessment demonstrates that:

The development accords with the Ashfield Local Plan Review policies, including ST1, ST2 and HG8, in respect of land-use compatibility, residential amenity, design, garden provision, access and parking.

- 10.0.4 The character and appearance of Forest Road will be preserved. No extensions, external alterations, signage or institutional features are proposed, and the dwelling will remain visually indistinguishable from neighbouring houses. A single, discreet off-street parking space will be provided and retained within the rear curtilage behind a gated fence of domestic appearance.
- 10.0.5 Residential amenity for neighbouring occupiers will be protected given the strict limits on occupancy and staffing, the domestic nature of day-to-day activity, and the safeguards set out in the Management Plan (including quiet hours, supervision, visitor controls and neighbour liaison).
- 10.0.6 Highway safety and parking will not be compromised. Trip generation will be modest and managed through the staffing rota and the Travel, Parking and Arrivals Protocol, supported by the provision of a rear off-street parking space and considerate on-street parking management consistent with the established residential pattern along Forest Road.
- 10.0.7 The use aligns with national policy, including the NPPF (paragraph 63) and the Written Ministerial Statement of 23 May 2023, which emphasise that the planning system should support appropriate accommodation for looked-after children and help ensure they have stable homes within their communities.
- 10.0.8 The applicant has set out and welcomes a clear schedule of planning conditions to control occupancy, staffing, the nature of the C2 use and adherence to the Management Plan (including the Travel, Parking and Arrivals Protocol). These provide the Local Planning Authority with clear and enforceable safeguards to ensure the use continues to operate at the small, calm and predictable scale proposed.
- 10.0.9 In light of the above, there are no identified adverse impacts that would significantly or demonstrably outweigh the clear social benefits and policy support for this form of accommodation. It is therefore respectfully requested that the Local Planning Authority grants planning permission.

## 11. Appendix

***Appendix 1: Planning for accommodation for looked after children – Written Ministerial Statement (23 May 2023, UIN HCWS7F5)***

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-statements/detail/2023-05-23/hcws795>

***Appendix 2: National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) – December 2024 (as amended 7 February 2025)***

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/67aaf8f3b41f783cca46251/NPPF\\_December\\_2024.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/67aaf8f3b41f783cca46251/NPPF_December_2024.pdf)

***Appendix 3: Nottinghamshire County Council – Sufficiency & Commissioning Strategy for children in Nottinghamshire 2023–25***

<https://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/media/valpr0dj/childrensufficiencycommissioningstrategy.pdf>