

Committee:	Planning Committee
Date of Meeting	26 November 2025
Application Reference	DC/25/70770
Application Description	Proposed change of use from dwellinghouse (Class C3) to residential home for up to four children (under 18 years of age) (Class C2) and use of the existing lodge for one child (under 18 years of age) for a transition unit in preparation for independent living (Class C2).
Application Received	25 June 2025
Application Address	The Roundhouse, Reservoir Passage, Wednesbury WS10 9DH
Report Author	William Stevens
Lead Officer	Tammy Stokes
Ward	Wednesbury North
Appendices (if any)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Plan ref and title (location plan first) 2. Block plan (if provided) 3. Floor plan(s) 4. Elevation plan(s)

1. Application Summary

- 1.1 The application is being reported to Planning Committee because three material planning objections have been received.
- 1.2 To assist members with site context, links to Google Maps is provided below:

[Aerial - The Roundhouse](#)

[Street View - The Roundhouse](#)

2. Recommendations

That planning permission is granted subject to the following conditions relating to:

- i) Site management scheme,
- ii) Restrictions of use of the children's home,

- iii) Details of external lighting,
- iv) Cycle storage details,
- v) Parking laid out and retained, and
- vi) Security plan.

3. Reasons for the recommendation and conditions

The proposed change of use would be acceptable in this location and would not harm the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers, with particular regard to traffic movements, noise/disturbance and highway safety. The proposal would therefore accord with Policy SAD H4 of The Site Allocations and Delivery Development Plan Document where it seeks to ensure that proposals for specific needs housing are compatible with adjacent uses.

4. Key Considerations

4.1 The site is not allocated in the development plan however relates to an existing residential property.

4.2 Material planning considerations (MPCs) are matters that can and should be taken into account when making planning decisions. By law, planning decisions should be made in accordance with the development plan unless MPCs indicate otherwise. This means that if enough MPCs weigh in favour of a development, it should be approved even if it conflicts with a local planning policy.

4.3 The material planning considerations which are relevant to this application are:

- Highways considerations - traffic generation, access, highway safety, and parking,
- Anti-social behaviour issues,
- Further information requested, and
- Structural change concerns.

5. The Application Site

5.1 The application property is situated at the end of a cul-de-sac within a residential area. The application site is a unique local landmark residential property which includes a moat, tennis court and windmill.

5.2 Planning History

Planning permission was granted for the property back in 1990. Last year an application for a school on the site was submitted but subsequently was withdrawn, and the use of the site remains a dwelling. A full list of the planning history is provided below:

DC/25338	Erection of dwelling house and double garage. (Amendments to approval DC/22143).	Granted with Conditions 27/02/1990
DC/27095	Windmill.	Granted with Conditions 06/12/1991
DC/96/32493	Proposed access gate, alterations to frontage and pavilion.	Granted Approval 30/07/1996
DC/24/70031	Proposed change of use of 4 bed dwelling (Class C3) and associated ancillary buildings to a school (Class F1(a)).	Withdrawn

6. Application Details

6.1 The uses of the existing buildings proposed are broken down as follows:

The Lodge

6.2 The existing one-bedroom apartment known as the lodge would remain as a one-bedroom apartment to be used for one child (under 18 years of age) for a transition unit in preparation for independent living.

The Round House

6.3 The Round House currently is a three-bedroom property and would become a four-bedroom children's home. The proposal intends to create a fourth bedroom and ensuite on the first floor. A new ramp serving this property would be built.

The Garage

6.4 The four-space garage would remain as a four-space garage.

The Windmill and Tennis Court

6.5 The windmill and tennis court would remain unchanged.

Physical Changes

6.6 The physical changes across the site are:

- i) the increase in vehicle parking spaces to be provided (see plans PO2 and PO3 for comparison). Off street parking would increase from five to eight with an additional dedicated disabled space making nine spaces on site. Highways have commented on the application (see point 8.5 below).
- ii) A new cycle shelter is proposed
- iii) A disabled access ramp to the Round House, and
- iv) The existing iron railings and stone pillars to the north of the site are to be removed and the planting beds to be reduced to no more than 0.6m above ground level.
- v) Existing first floor modified from study and part storage to create fourth bedroom and ensuite.

Additional Information

6.7 The proposed home will be registered with Ofsted and the applicant states that the company currently operates six Ofsted registered homes, and they state that all of which have achieved a GOOD rating across all inspection areas.

6.8 The applicant states that the new home will work closely with Sandwell Local Authority to prioritise placements for young people within the borough. This approach will help reduce the need for out-of-area placements, which can often create additional pressures for families and professionals and disrupt family contact.

6.9 The home will be registered with Ofsted to accommodate young people aged 8 to 17, who have emotional and behavioural difficulties. The staff will have extensive training and experience to meet the needs of the young people in placement. The home will operate in full compliance with the Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015, the Quality Standards, and Ofsted's Social Care Common Inspection Framework. The Registered Manager and Responsible Individual will complete comprehensive location risk assessments to ensure appropriate matching of young people, taking into account environmental factors and local crime statistics.

- 6.10 Regarding transport links and the suitability of the area, the Registered Manager will ensure that thorough matching assessments are undertaken prior to each admission. This process will align with their impact risk assessments, location risk assessments, and the individual needs of both the new and existing residents. All staff receive training on the Missing from Care policy and procedures, as well as each young person's individualised plans.

Staffing Structure and Hours

- 6.11 The following staff will be on site at the said times:

- Registered Manager: Monday – Friday, 9:00am – 5:00pm
- Deputy Manager: Monday – Friday, 9:00am – 5:00pm
- Day Staff: 10:00am – 10:30pm (5 staff members; when all young people are in placement on 1:1 staffing levels)
- Waking Night Staff: 10:00pm – 10:30am (three-night wakes when home is at capacity)

A 30-minute handover period ensures continuity of care, with no staff arriving or leaving simultaneously.

Safety and Security

- 6.12 The home will be equipped with external CCTV to protect the property and monitor external areas. Security lighting will also be installed around the premises to enhance safety. This will be conditioned accordingly.

7. Publicity

The application has been publicised by 143 neighbour notification letters and by site notice. Three objections and two neutral comments have been received and are summarised below:

- a. The site is currently near to an existing drug and anti-social problem and the introduction of vulnerable children to the area would make the current situation worse,
- b. Concerns have been raised about the potential for a constant stream of vehicles entering and exiting the site, compounded by the current issues residents suffer from due to the existing nursery nearby. This could exacerbate conflict with pedestrians accessing the nearby alleyway and for existing residents being able to park in the area.
- c. Concerns raised due to the lack of information given, and the objector questions; Are these children with special needs regards physical or mental disability or are they anti-social "problem" children from outside of the area? With the latter they are concerned that this could possibly bring an element of criminality, to what is predominantly a very quiet

residential area. Also, they ask who is responsible for the running of the site and these children's behaviour?

- d. Concerns have been raised over the structural changes and the health implications to their family members.

8. Consultee Responses

The following consultee responses have been received:

8.1 Pollution Control (Air Pollution & Noise):

No objections but have recommended the imposition of conditions pertaining to a management scheme (before the use is commenced), and external lighting scheme (before the development is brought into use).

8.2 Councils Ecology Officer:

Confirmed the proposal is exempt from Biodiversity Net Gain.

8.3 Strategic Transport and Planning:

No significant concerns, cycle storage condition required.

8.4 Council Conservation Officer:

No objections.

8.5 Highways

No objections.

8.6 West Midlands Police

They have recommended the imposition of conditions pertaining to a security plan and management plan.

9. Relevant Planning Policy Considerations

The following policies are relevant to the determination of this planning application.

9.1 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The NPPF sets out government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.

Highway safety

The framework promotes sustainable transport options for development proposal and states that developments should only be prevented or refused on highway grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.

9.2 Development Plan Policy

The following policies of the council's development plan are relevant:

Site Allocations and Delivery Development Plan Document – (SADD)
SAD H4 – Housing for People with Specific Needs.

The Council will encourage the provision of housing to cater for the special needs of people. Proposals for specific forms of housing, including care homes, where they are compatible with adjacent uses; the suitability of the site and building; and the character and quality of the resulting environment.

10. Material Considerations

10.1 Highways considerations - traffic generation, access, highway safety, and parking.

Highways have reviewed the application and have raised no objections to the application. The development provides adequate parking provision within the site which is significantly above what is normally expected on such uses.

10.2 Antisocial issues.

The applicant cannot control existing anti-social issues outside of the application site, however they can control what happens within the site and are governed by Ofsted for the children's safety.

10.3 Further information.

Paragraphs 6.1 to 6.11 explain in detail the proposal for the site.

10.4 Structural change concerns.

Whilst I hear the concerns of the objectors, the only construction proposed is cycle storage, a ramp for wheelchair use and modification to the existing first floor study to a bedroom and ensuite. There are no other changes proposed.

11 Conclusion

11.1 All decisions on planning applications should be based on an objective balancing exercise. This is known as applying the 'planning balance'. To summarise: the proposal should be approved unless any adverse impacts of granting the permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against development plan policies or, where those policies are out of date, the NPPF as a whole. Where national policy takes precedence over the development plan, this has been highlighted in paragraph 11 (National Planning Policy Framework).

11.3 On balance the proposal accords with the provisions of relevant development plan policies and there are no significant material considerations which warrant refusal that could not be controlled by conditions.

12. Legal and Governance Implications

- 12.1 The Planning Committee has delegated powers to determine planning applications within current Council policy. Section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 gives applicants a right to appeal when they disagree with the local authority's decision on their application, or where the local authority has failed to determine the application within the statutory timeframe.

13. Other Relevant Implications

- 13.1 Health and Wellbeing - The proposal would ensure that children and young people in Sandwell are able to grow up in a safe, stable loving home.
- 13.2 Crime and Disorder Act 1998 – The proposal had undergone consultation with West Midlands Police and their recommendations have been conditioned as part of the recommendation.

14. Background Documents

- 14.1 None.

15. How does this deliver the objectives of the Strategic Themes?

- 15.1 All of our residents, including our children and young people, are active participants in influencing change – through being listened to, their opinions are heard and valued.

Relevance Check

Budget Reduction/Service Area:

Service Lead: Tammy Stokes

Date: 10 November 2025

In what ways does this Budget reduction have an impact on an outward facing service? How will the service feel different to your customers or potential customers?

N/A

If not, how does it impact on staff e.g. redundancies, pay grades, working conditions? Why are you confident that these staff changes will not affect the service that you provide?

N/A

Is a Customer Impact Assessment needed? No