

Planning Statement

217 Leicester Road, Markfield, LE67 9RF

1) Introduction

- 1.1. The statement supports an application made under Section 192 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) for a Certificate of Lawfulness of Proposed Use of Development (CLOPUD).
- 1.2. The Housing Minister on 23rd May 2023, issued a written statement on that sets out that the planning system should not be a barrier to providing homes for the most vulnerable children in society and 'to support effective delivery, unitary authorities should work with commissioners to assess local need and closely engage to support applications, where appropriate, for accommodation for looked after children as part of the authority's statutory duties for looked after children. In two tier authorities, we expect local planning authorities to support these vital developments where appropriate, to ensure that children in need of accommodation are provided for in their communities'.
- 1.3. The statement also sets out that planning permission will not be required in all cases of development of children's homes, including for changes of use from dwelling houses in Class C3 of the Use Classes Order 1987 where the children's home remains within Class C3 or there is no material change of use to Class C2. An application to the local planning authority can be made for a lawful development certificate to confirm whether, on the facts of the case, the specific use is or would be lawful. Where a Certificate is issued, a planning application would not be required for the matters specified in the certificate."
- 1.4. The application seeks confirmation that the proposed use of 217 Leicester Road, Markfield, LE67 9RF as a small-scale residential home for up to 3 children from the ages of 7-18 years old.
- 1.5. YMCA Leicestershire has been working with vulnerable people and young people since 1883 who have housing and support needs. Since 2019, YMCA Leicestershire has been nurturing and caring for children aged 7 – 18 years from Leicester, Leicestershire and Nottingham in Leicester City. YMCA Leicestershire would like to expand their Residential Care provision to Leicestershire County to meet the needs of children in Leicestershire.
- 1.6. Leicestershire County Council, Children and Family Services – Placement Market Position and Sufficiency Statement 2024-2027) highlights 'As of 31 March 2024, there were 726 children in care in Leicestershire, this number represents an increase from previous years and is the first annual increase in this cohort since 2021'. YMCA Leicestershire has been working closely with Leicestershire County Council who require children to be looked after within the local area and the 217 Leicester Road home will care and nurture children from Leicestershire County.

2) Context

Site and Location

- 2.1. The property is located in Markfield which is 7 miles to Leicester City, 8 miles to Loughborough and 6 miles to the town of Coalville.
- 2.2. The property is walking distance to Markfield Village center where there is a range of local shops and local businesses that can be accessed.
- 2.3. The property is a large, detached 4-bedroom property set within a large plot with a garage and off-road parking at the front of the property. The property will have two rooms for the team to use with their own separate bathroom. There is a bathroom, downstairs toilet and utility room, a large kitchen, dining room and sitting room. The property has a large fully enclosed rear garden with fencing around the property boundaries. Each child will have their own bedroom decorated to their own tastes.

3) The applicant

The nature of use

- 3.1. YMCA Leicestershire has an established relationship with Leicestershire County Council Children Services as they will be the key stakeholders in terms of residential placements. YMCA Leicestershire has one residential home in Leicester City and we they have cared children (60%) from Leicestershire County Council and therefore, YMCA Leicestershire would continue to support children from Leicestershire within the property in Markfield. The proposal property will be complementing YMCA Leicestershire's existing charitable aims, showing a continued commitment and partnership towards caring for local children.
- 3.2. The existing property is a large detached property and has the layout, facilities, services and character of a family home and the proposed use would not change this. The external appearance of the building would not change and the home would be providing up to 3 children with an environment as close as possible to that of a traditional family home. The home is off set from the main road and has privacy from established hedges.

4) Operational Management

Working Hours

- 4.1. The team will work on a rota undertaking shifts to provide 24/7 cover. Shift changes will normally take place twice at around 8.15am and 10.15pm. During the day there will be one to one staffing for each child (1 team member per child) until 10pm. From 10pm to 8am there will be two team members caring for the children overnight with on-call support if required. There will be a Registered Manager based within the home working Monday to Friday.

Staffing

- 4.2. In addition, each child will have an allocated Social Worker which will visit the property to undertake statutory home visits once every 4 – 6 weeks and this will

be by appointment. Family visits are often rare in Children Residential Homes. Any visits to the home by family members will be pre-planned in accordance within the child's family time arrangements and family time would often be away from the home. It is envisaged that children living within the property will be attending their existing school/college provision or the local schools to the property.

Supervision of Children and Noise Reduction

- 4.3. As with any family home, children will be completing day to day activities such as shopping, school runs and social outings with their carers. Food shopping will be delivered to the property once a week. The children residing at the property are subject to greater levels of supervision than children in a typical family home. For example, no child will be left on their own without supervision at any point, whereas in family homes, teenagers may be left unsupervised from time to time. It is therefore unlikely that any noise or disturbance would be materially different than could be expected if the property were occupied by a family with 3 children or more.

Parking

- 4.4. The property has sufficient off-road parking with a garage and additional space for at least 5 cars for the team and visitors attending the property. The property is situated off a side road and like other property owners, there is on road parking directly outside the home which could be utilised if required. However, it is not envisaged that there will be a need to park outside the property on a regular basis. The home is situated near bus stops.

Ofsted Registration and Relationship with Local Community

- 4.5. YMCA Leicestershire will be applying to Ofsted to register the home as a residential home for children aged 7 to 18 years old. The property will be fitted with external CCTV cameras as part of security and crime prevention. As part of the registration with Ofsted, the home will receive an Ofsted inspection every year and an inspection report will be produced. YMCA Leicestershire will have a complaints policy in place and the Registered Managers contact details will be shared with the neighbours. YMCA Leicestershire has developed excellent working relationships with local neighbours around the different services in Leicester City and it is hoped that relationships will be built and fostered within the community and neighbours of Leicester Road.