

## Officers Report

Planning Application No: WL/2025/01244

**PROPOSAL:** Planning application for proposed change of use of a dwelling (C3) to a Children's Home (C2) and rear extension, internal works, and works to the existing garage.

**LOCATION:**

80 WALKERITH ROAD  
MORTON  
GAINSBOROUGH  
DN21 3BZ

**WARD:** SCOTTER AND BLYTON

**WARD MEMBER(S):** Cllr Rollings, Cllr Clewes, Cllr Carless

**APPLICANT NAME:** Illuminate Care Group

**TARGET DECISION DATE:** 16/02/2026

**CASE OFFICER:** Vicky Maplethorpe

**Recommended Decision:** Grant permission

**This application has been referred to the Planning Committee as there are outstanding objections from the Parish Council and local residents, who question if this is a sustainable location for the proposed use. The development is proposed within a tier 5 settlement where policy requires that the "*proposal must demonstrate that access to a range of services and facilities is possible, taking account of the likely occupants of such accommodation.*"**

**Site Description and Proposal:**

The application site is situated on the northern side of Walkerith Road, within the village of Morton. It lies within Flood Zone 3 (high probability) and a Sand and Gravel Minerals Safeguarding Area.

The site comprises a detached two storey dwelling with garden areas to the front and rear, and a private driveway leading to a detached garage located in the northwest side of the plot. Boundary treatments include low hedging along the southern boundary, tall hedging to the west, and low timber rail fencing to the east.

The surrounding context includes a dwelling to the northwest with open fields beyond, residential properties to the southeast, open countryside to the north, and a highway to the south with further residential development beyond.

The application seeks permission for a change of use of the existing dwelling (use class C3) to a children's home (Use class C2) including a single storey rear extension and conversion of existing garage to office.

### Relevant Planning History

Reference	Proposal	Decision
WL/2025/00931	Lawful development certificate for the proposed installation of a rear extension to dwelling and works to the existing outbuilding (garage) including alteration of existing wall, brick up existing window, replacing garage door with brick and 4no. windows.	Refused 11/11/2025 for the following reason: 'The proposed rear extension would not meet the requirement set out in section A.1 (j) (iii) of Class A, Part 1, Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended). This is because the proposed rear extension would extend beyond a wall forming a side elevation of the original dwellinghouse and would have a width greater than half the width of the original dwellinghouse. Based on the information provided, the proposal is not considered to be lawful, and therefore, Certificate of Lawfulness is refused.'
WL/2025/00957	Planning application for installation of access ramps, internal alterations, increase in parking provision, and extension to the existing dwelling.	Refused 27/1/26 for the following reasons: '1. The Local Planning Authority considers that the proposed development would significantly enlarge the existing 2 bedroom dwellinghouse in order to facilitate a material change of use in the property. It is considered that the proposed development does not fall within the statutory definition of a householder application under article 2(1) of the Town & Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) and requires a full planning application for permission to change the use of the property. This would enable the Local Planning Authority to fully assess the implications of the proposed development and its compliance with the Development Plan, including its compliance with policies S21 and S23 of the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan (2023); and policy MNP1 of the Morton

Reference	Proposal	Decision
		<p>Neighbourhood Plan (2021).  2. The Local Planning Authority considers that the developer has provided insufficient information through a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) to enable the Local Planning Authority to be satisfied that the development will be safe for its lifetime, taking account of the vulnerability of its users, contrary to policy S21 of the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan, MNP2 of the Morton Neighbourhood Plan; and paragraph 181 of the National Planning Policy Framework.'</p>

## **Representations**

Chairman/Ward member(s): None received

### Morton Parish Council:

We object for the following reasons: The application does not meet the standard set by Policy S23 (Meeting Accommodation Needs) of the CLLP - "Residential care accommodation, which is designed to accommodate those who need some form of on-site assistance and should be located in a settlement in levels 1 to 4 of the Settlement Hierarchy. If a demonstrable need is identified away from these settlements, then the proposal must demonstrate that access to a range of services and facilities is possible, taking account of the likely occupants of such accommodation." Morton is a Tier 5 settlement, and this property would not be appropriate. The planning statement prepared by Planning House and submitted on behalf of Illuminate Care Group in December 2025 misrepresents Morton which is near Gainsborough by stating that this village has access to facilities which it does not.

- Morton has no access to a mobile library.
- There are no large employers or 10 or more small to medium employers within the confines of the village.
- The bus service from Walkerith Road is hourly and operates from 07:10 to 19:10 hours.
- The main railway station at Lea Road is 4km from the location of the applicant's property.
- There is a Primary School but apparently there is no intention for the children housed at 80 Walkerith Road to attend it. It is believed that whoever conducted the research have confused Morton (Near Gainsborough) with Morton (Near Bourne) which does have more access to services including a post office and a mobile library.

- Morton has no safe road crossing points and planning authorities do have a requirement to consider that sufficient Safeguarding is in place and whether a location is suitable for a development when it is proposed to accommodate children with disabilities.
- The village has no health centre, and the nearest village shop is 1km from the property subject to the application. It is true that Morton is situated within close proximity to Gainsborough, but Morton is a separate and distinctive residential area which is not treated equally to its larger neighbour when it comes to the allocation of funding to increase recreational resources. The nearest well maintained safe play park for children is located over 1km away at Richmond Park on Morton Terrace. The disregard which West Lindsey District Council has for the CLLP by allowing similar developments all across West Lindsey is disturbing. The CLLP Tier system is designed to protect villages from certain development and to continually override it to establish residential care homes as outlined in this application sets a precedent which could lead to wider development considerations a particular concern when the area is a Level 3 Flood Zone.

The other area of concern which the Parish Council has is the inability of local people to be given the opportunity to voice their opposition to such decisions. Each decision regarding the establishment of these homes is restricted to the provision of an online comment which limits critical comment to established criteria for complaint. No opportunity is given in a formal planning setting to ask the applicant further questions concerning the establishment of such properties because the decisions are not taken before the planning committee where members of the public can attend.

It is the opinion of Morton Parish Council that this planning application should be called before a planning committee before a decision is taken.

Local residents: 8 letters of objection from No.s 39, 43, 45, 76 and 78 Walkerith Road; 11 South Street and 44 Nursery Vale, Morton.

Objections summarised below:

- Insufficient off road parking
- Disturbances and noise at all hours
- Anti-social behaviour if these are 'disturbed' children
- Applicant not a charitable organisation, it is for profit
- Will make 'old folk' and 'families with children' feel unsafe and vulnerable
- Lower house prices
- Turn a well kept and quiet area into something else
- Lack of public transport lead to 'boredom and destruction'
- Lack of transparency, integrity and material misrepresentation by applicants
- Unacceptable piecemeal and retrospective development
- Contrary to CLLP

- Harm to residential amenity
- Existing drainage and blocked sewer issues
- Cumulative impact. Must consider works at no. 70 Walkerith Road
- Highway safety
- Deeds state residential use only.

LCC Highways and Lead Local Flood Authority: No objections

LCC Archaeology: Based on the limited scope of the development in conjunction with the lack of known archaeology in the immediate area, we have no recommendations at this time.

Date Checked: 12/2/26

### **Relevant Planning Policies and Legislation:**

Planning law requires that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Here, the Development Plan comprises the provisions of the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan (adopted in April 2023), the Lincolnshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan (adopted June 2016) and Morton Neighbourhood Plan (June 2021).

### Development Plan

- ***Central Lincolnshire Local Plan 2023 –***

Relevant policies of the CLLP include:

- S1 The Spatial Strategy and Settlement Hierarchy
- S4 Housing Development in or Adjacent to Villages
- S7 Reducing Energy Consumption –Residential Development
- S20 Resilient and Adaptable Design
- S21 Flood Risk and Water Resources
- S23 Meeting Accommodation Needs
- S47 Accessibility and Transport
- S49 Parking Provision
- S53 Design and Amenity
- S61 Biodiversity Opportunity and Delivering Measurable Net Gains
- S66 Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows

<https://www.n-kesteven.gov.uk/central-lincolnshire/adopted-local-plan-2023>

- ***Morton Neighbourhood Plan (NP)***

<https://www.west-lindsey.gov.uk/planning-building-control/planning/neighbourhood-planning/all-neighbourhood-plans-west-lindsey>

Relevant policies of the NP include:

MNP1: Sustainable Development Principles

MNP5: Local Character and the Design of New Development

- ***Lincolnshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan (LMWLP)***

<https://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/planning/minerals-waste>

The site is in a Minerals Safeguarding Area and policy M11 of the Core Strategy applies.

National policy & guidance (Material Consideration)

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. It is a material consideration in planning decisions.

The most recent iteration of the NPPF was published in December 2023.. Paragraph 225 states:

*However, existing policies should not be considered out-of-date simply because they were adopted or made prior to the publication of this Framework. Due weight should be given to them, according to their degree of consistency with this Framework (the closer the policies in the plan to the policies in the Framework, the greater the weight that may be given).*

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planningpolicy-framework--2>

- National Planning Practice Guidance

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance>

- National Design Guide (2019)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-design-guide>

- National Model Design Code (2021)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-model-design-code>

### **Main Considerations:**

- Principle of development:
- Character and visual appearance;
- Residential amenity.
- Highway safety and parking provision:
- Flood Risk
- Energy Efficiency

- Ecology, biodiversity, and Net Gain:
- Other Considerations:

### **Assessment:**

#### Principle of the Development:

Planning law requires that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Planning permission is sought for the change of use of the dwelling (C3 Use) to a children's care home (C2 Use). The proposal would provide accommodation and care for up to three children. In addition to the children, there would be two full time staff present at the site during the daytime and the evening on a 24 hour rotating shift pattern.

Morton is defined as a medium village (tier 5) within the settlement hierarchy contained within Policy S1.

Policy S23 (Meeting Accommodation Needs) of the CLLP states that:

*“Residential care accommodation, which is designed to accommodate those who need some form of on-site assistance, should be located in a settlement in levels 1 to 4 of the Settlement Hierarchy. If a demonstrable need is identified away from these settlements, then the proposal must demonstrate that access to a range of services and facilities is possible, taking account of the likely occupants of such accommodation.”*

The site falls outside of tiers 1-4, and the second part of the policy is engaged, namely, *“the proposal must demonstrate that access to a range of services and facilities is possible, taking account of the likely occupants of such accommodation.”*

The application was accompanied with a Planning Statement addressing policy S23:

*‘Given the site’s proximity to Gainsborough, a Level 2 Main Town, the proposed use is considered to be in a sustainable and accessible location in accordance with Policies S1, S4, and S23 of the Local Plan. These policies seek to ensure that residential care homes are located close to essential services and community facilities, meeting the day-to-day needs of residents. The proposal is also supported by Policy MNP 1 of the Morton Neighbourhood Plan as the site location is appropriate for the proposed use.’*

Within the Morton Neighbourhood Plan it states that *‘Morton has a range of community facilities including a primary school (Morton Trentside), a nursery, a public house and two shops, including a small purpose built Co-op. There is a well-used village hall which is host to many different groups/activities and a church. In Gainsborough there are doctor and dental surgeries and a minor injuries unit at the John Coupland Hospital. There are secondary schools and higher education colleges, again nearby in Gainsborough.’*

As detailed within the Morton Neighbourhood Plan there are some services and facilities located within Morton but a far wider range of services and facilities are

available within Gainsborough just a few minutes bus ride away. There is a bus stop approx. 1 minutes walk (70m) away from the application site which has an hourly bus service into Gainsborough during the week and at weekends.

Whilst the proposed change of use would be located outside of tiers 1-4 of the settlement hierarchy within Policy S4, given the scale of the operation and the existing use of the site as a dwelling, which could house a similar number of children and that Morton itself has ample public transport provision, a co-op and Premier supermarket stores as well as a Village hall and Primary School, all located a short walk away of the building that is the subject of this application it is considered to be a sustainable use of the site. It is considered that a range of services and facilities is possible, taking into account the intended occupants. It is therefore considered that the development would accord with Policies S1 and S23 of the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan; MNP1 of the MNP; and the provisions of the NPPF.

### Character and Visual Impact

Policy S53 of the CLLP states that all development must achieve high quality sustainable design that contributes positively to local character, landscape and townscape, and supports diversity, equality and access for all. Development must relate well to the site, its local and wider context and existing characteristics.

A single storey rear extension and the conversion of the existing detached garage to an office are the only external alterations proposed as part of this application to change the use to a children's care home and the building will continue to have the appearance of a residential dwelling.

Concerns have been raised with regards to a 'cumulative' impact of childrens homes in the area, in particular application WL/2025/00957 at 70 Walkerith Road, Morton. However, this householder application was refused on 29/1/26 and is not subject of an application for a change of use. Whilst the over-supply of children's homes within a particular area may unduly impact on the character of an area, it is not considered that this would be the case within Walkerith Road should permission be granted.

Therefore, the proposal would accord with Policy S53 of the CLLP and the provisions of the NPPF in this regard.

### Residential Amenity

Policy S53 of the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan states that all development must not result in harm to people's amenity either within the proposed development or neighbouring it through overlooking, overshadowing, loss of light or increase in artificial light or glare.

Policy MNP5 of the Morton Neighbourhood Plan states that development should recognise and complement the local character of the area, respect the existing form and grain of development.

Residential properties and their garden areas surround the site to the north west and south east with the highway located to the immediate south west of the site and open countryside to the north.

Objections have been received from neighbouring residents relating to noise and disturbance, anti-social behaviour and impact it would have on existing residents in the area.

The proposed use would be residential in nature. Three children would be resident at the property with two full time staff present at the site during the daytime and the evening.

There is a potential for increased comings and goings from vehicles due to shift changes and visitors to the house etc. This is unlikely to be highly dissimilar to a single residential dwelling; it is not considered that there would be any significant changes in character, noise or disturbance to what would be expected from a large family dwelling. As such, it is not considered that the proposed use would have any significant impact on the amenity of nearby residents.

It is considered that the proposed use and occupancy levels would be similar to that of a use as a typical family home, and therefore the proposed use would not be considered an over-intensification of the existing use, nor excessive in nature.

It is noted that residents have raised concerns with regard to the potential behaviour and nature of the children who would reside at the property. Within the Planning Statement it states that '*the intention is to provide a safe, warm and family environment*'. There is no substantiated evidence to suggest that the proposal would give rise to any 'anti-social' forms of behaviour, and the home would be expected to be subject to Ofsted regulations.

The application also seeks permission for a single storey rear extension across the width of the dwelling, measuring 4m in depth with a flat roof at a height of 3m.

Based upon the above assessment it is therefore considered that the proposal would not unacceptably harm the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers, and would therefore accord with Policy S53 of the CLLP, and the provisions of the NPPF.

#### Highways, Access and Parking

Local Plan Policy S47 and S49 requires well designed, safe and convenient access for all, and that appropriate vehicle parking provision is made for development users. Policy S49 sets car parking standards for different types of development. It is proposed to change the use of the dwelling (C3) to a children's care home (C2) for up to 3 children and 2 staff onsite at all times. Appendix 2 of the CLLP requires 3 car parking spaces for 3 bed dwellings.

It is noted that the property only has provision for 2no cars to park within the site, however, the parking arrangements remain unchanged from the existing dwelling and having visited the site, it is clear that there is on street provision in the nearby vicinity of the site that could accommodate on-street parking. There would be 2no members of staff at the site, and it would mainly be during the staff changeover that the number of staff at the site would increase.

Whilst it is noted that the proposal would likely increase the number of cars associated with the property during changeover times, it is not considered that the

proposal would be too dissimilar to the use of the property as a C3 dwellinghouse and the number of cars that would reasonably be expected for occupiers of the house to have.

Lincolnshire County Council Highways have no objections to the proposal, and have commented that 'the proposal will not have an unacceptable impact on the public highway'.

Therefore overall, it is considered that the proposal would not unacceptably harm users of the public highway, and the proposal is therefore considered to accord with Policy S47 of the CLLP, and the provisions of the NPPF.

### Flood Risk

The site is located close to the River Trent and lies within Flood Zone 3a according to the Environment Agency's (EA) Flood Map for Planning. This is categorised as having a 'high probability' of flooding.

Policy S21: Flood Risk and Water Resources relates to development proposals being in areas at the lowest risk of flooding and being adequately drained.

The National Planning Policy Framework indicates that a sequential approach should be used in areas known to be at risk from any form of flooding. However, per Paragraph 176 of the Framework, applications for some minor development and changes of use should not be subject to the sequential or exception tests but should still meet the requirements for site-specific flood risk assessments (FRAs).

The need for the exception test will depend on the potential vulnerability of the site and of the development proposed, in line with the Flood Risk Vulnerability Classification set out in Annex 3. The proposed C2 use is classed as a 'more vulnerable use', as is the existing C3 use within the Flood Risk vulnerability classification.

A Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) has been submitted which states:

*'The proposed extension will be designed so that:*

- Finished floor levels will be set no lower than the existing ground floor level of the dwelling.*
  - The extension will not contain any sleeping accommodation.*
  - Flood resilient construction techniques may be incorporated where appropriate.*
- The proposal does not increase the number of occupants at risk during a flood event.'*

The FRA goes on to state:

*'The proposed extension will not increase flood risk elsewhere:*

- The increase in built footprint is minor.*
- Surface water runoff will continue to drain to existing garden areas.*
- No increase in discharge to local watercourses or sewers is proposed. Where possible, permeable surfaces will be retained in the rear garden to maintain infiltration.'*

It is therefore considered that the proposed change of use and extension will be safe for its lifetime and will not increase flood risk elsewhere. The proposal is therefore compliant with national and local policy S21 of the CLLP.

### Energy Efficiency

Policy S13: Reducing Energy Consumption in Existing Buildings encourages applicants to consider all opportunities to improve the energy efficiency of that building. The proposal is for the change of use of the dwelling to a children's care home. It is therefore considered that it would be unreasonable to request changes to the proposal given the nature of what is proposed, and as S13 only encourages applicants to consider improving the energy efficiency of the building, it is not considered to be reasonable or necessary to include conditions in this regard.

### Biodiversity Net Gain

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) is mandatory on minor developments from 2nd April 2024 under Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as inserted by Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021). It requires that development must deliver a net gain of 10% to ensure that habitats for wildlife are left in a measurably better state than they were before the development.

This is also a requirement of local policy S61 of the CLLP which requires "All qualifying development proposals must deliver at least a 10% measurable biodiversity net gain attributable to the development. The net gain for biodiversity should be calculated using Natural England's Biodiversity Metric". However, the statutory legislation takes precedence over the policy in respect of any conflict.

The Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Exemptions) Regulations 2024 set out the exemptions in which the biodiversity gain planning condition would not apply. The 'De minimis exemption' states that development that would not impact a priority habitat or would impact on-site habitat less than the following are considered to be exempt from providing biodiversity net gain: - 25 square metres (5m by 5m) of on-site habitat - 5 metres of on-site linear habitats such as hedgerows. It is noted that this application is for the change of use of an existing building. Given the nature of the proposal, it is considered that the proposal would be exempt from delivering a biodiversity net gain.

### Other matters:

#### Drainage

The proposal is for the change of use of a dwelling to a children's care home (with a small extension) which is positively drained, therefore further information in regard to drainage is not required. It is therefore considered that the scheme would accord with Policy S21 of the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan.

### **Conclusion and reason for decision:**

The proposed development has been assessed against policies S1 The Spatial Strategy and Settlement Hierarchy, S4 Housing Development in or Adjacent to Villages, S6 Design Principles for Efficient Buildings, S7 Reducing Energy Consumption – Residential Development, S20 Resilient and Adaptable Design S21 Flood Risk and Water Resources, S23 Meeting Accommodation Needs, S47 Accessibility and Transport, S53 Design and Amenity of the Central Lincolnshire

Local Plan 2023 and policies MNP1 and MNP5 of the Morton Neighbourhood Plan and Policy M11 of the Core Strategy. Furthermore, consideration has been given to guidance contained within the National Planning Policy Framework, National Planning Practice Guidance, National Design Guide and the National Design Code, as well as all other material considerations and representations received.

In light of this assessment, it is considered that the proposal is acceptable in principle. It would not harm the character and appearance of the surrounding area, nor unacceptably harm the amenities of the occupiers of neighbouring dwellings or increase the risk of flooding. As such, approval of the application is recommended.

**Decision Level: Committee**

Recommended Conditions:

**Conditions stating the time by which the development must be commenced:**

1. The development hereby permitted must be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To conform with Section 91 (1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

**Conditions which apply or require matters to be agreed before the development commenced:**

None.

**Conditions which apply or are to be observed during the course of the development:**

2. With the exception of the detailed matters referred to by the conditions of this consent, the development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the following drawings and documents:

FF-230-2 Rev A dated July 25

FF-230-3 Rev A dated July 25

FF-230-5 dated July 25

FF-230-7 dated July 25

FF-230-8 Rev A dated July 25

The works shall be carried out in accordance with the details shown on the approved plans and in any other approved documents forming part of the application.

Reason: To ensure the development proceeds in accordance with the approved plans and to accord with the National Planning Policy Framework and Policy S53 of the Central Lincolnshire Local.

3. On site staffing numbers shall not exceed 2 other than at shift changeover times and arranged visits and the use shall only provide care accommodation for a maximum of 3 children at any one time.

Reason: In order to maximise the sustainability of the development to accord with the National Planning Policy Framework and local policies S23 and S53 of the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan.

**Human Rights Implications:**

The above objections, considerations and resulting recommendation have had regard to Article 8 and Article 1 of the First Protocol of the European Convention for Human Rights Act 1998. The recommendation will not interfere with the applicant's and/or objector's right to respect for his private and family life, his home and his correspondence.

**Legal Implications:**

Although all planning decisions have the ability to be legally challenged it is considered there are no specific legal implications arising from this report.