



**North
Herts
Council**

Correspondence address:

PO Box 10613, Nottingham, NG6 6DW

Telephone: 01462 474000

Application for Planning Permission

Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)

Publication of applications on planning authority websites

Please note that the information provided on this application form and in supporting documents may be published on the Authority's website. If you require any further clarification, please contact the Authority's planning department.

Site Location

Disclaimer: We can only make recommendations based on the answers given in the questions.

If you cannot provide a postcode, the description of site location must be completed. Please provide the most accurate site description you can, to help locate the site - for example "field to the North of the Post Office".

Number

Suffix

Property Name

Address Line 1

Address Line 2

Address Line 3

Town/city

Postcode

Description of site location must be completed if postcode is not known:

Easting (x) Northing (y)

Description

Applicant Details

Name/Company

Title

Mrs

First name

Mirirai

Surname

Chown

Company Name

OptimumCare4u

Address

Address line 1

186 Whitehill Road

Address line 2

Address line 3

Town/City

Hitchin

County

Hertfordshire

Country

United Kingdom

Postcode

SG4 9HY

Are you an agent acting on behalf of the applicant?

☒ Yes

☐ No

Contact Details

Primary number

***** REDACTED *****

Secondary number

Fax number

Email address

Agent Details

Name/Company

Title

First name

Surname

Company Name

Address

Address line 1

Address line 2

Address line 3

Town/City

County

Country

Postcode

Contact Details

Primary number

***** REDACTED *****

Secondary number

Fax number

Email address

***** REDACTED *****

Site Area

What is the measurement of the site area? (numeric characters only).

697.00

Unit

Sq. metres

Description of the Proposal

Please note in regard to:

- **Fire Statements** - From 1 August 2021, planning applications for buildings of over 18 metres (or 7 stories) tall containing more than one dwelling will require a 'Fire Statement' for the application to be considered valid. There are some exemptions. [View government planning guidance on fire statements](#) or [access the fire statement template and guidance](#).
- **Permission In Principle** - If you are applying for Technical Details Consent on a site that has been granted Permission In Principle, please include the relevant details in the description below.
- **Public Service Infrastructure** - From 1 August 2021, applications for certain public service infrastructure developments will be eligible for faster determination timeframes. See help for further details or [view government planning guidance on determination periods](#).

Description

Please describe details of the proposed development or works including any change of use

The proposal seeks a change of use from Use Class C3(b) (a dwelling house occupied by up to six residents living together as a single household with care provision) to Use Class C2 (residential institution) for the operation of a children's residential care home.

Change of Use

- From: C3(b) – Single-family dwelling with care support
- To: C2 – Residential institution providing 24/7 care

Intended Use

- The property will accommodate three children, aged 5 to 17, who present with emotional and behavioural difficulties (EBD).
- The children will reside full-time at the property and receive structured care and support tailored to their individual needs.

Staffing Arrangements

- Up to three carers will be employed, operating on a rotational shift basis.
- A minimum of two carers will be present overnight to ensure continuous supervision and support.
- Staff will not reside permanently at the property and will rotate in accordance with scheduled shifts.

Physical Works

- No internal and external alterations are proposed to the building structure.
- Internal modifications may include:
- Installation of safety features (e.g., secure storage, fire safety systems)
- Existing parking arrangements will be retained, sufficient for staff and visitors.

Site Details

- The property is a semi-detached bungalow with an internal floor area of approximately 59 sqm, situated on a plot of around 697 sqm.
- The site is located within a residential area and has existing access from Whitehill Road.

Has the work or change of use already started?

- ☐ Yes
- ☒ No

Existing Use

Please describe the current use of the site

The current use of 186 Whitehill Road, Hitchin, SG4 9HY is classified as Use Class C3(b)—a dwelling house.

Is the site currently vacant?

- ☐ Yes
- ☒ No

Does the proposal involve any of the following? If Yes, you will need to submit an appropriate contamination assessment with your application.

Land which is known to be contaminated

- ☐ Yes
- ☒ No

Land where contamination is suspected for all or part of the site

- ☐ Yes
- ☒ No

A proposed use that would be particularly vulnerable to the presence of contamination

- ☐ Yes
- ☒ No

Materials

Does the proposed development require any materials to be used externally?

- ☐ Yes
- ☒ No

Pedestrian and Vehicle Access, Roads and Rights of Way

Is a new or altered vehicular access proposed to or from the public highway?

- ☐ Yes
- ☒ No

Is a new or altered pedestrian access proposed to or from the public highway?

- ☐ Yes
- ☒ No

Are there any new public roads to be provided within the site?

- ☐ Yes
- ☒ No

Are there any new public rights of way to be provided within or adjacent to the site?

- ☐ Yes
- ☒ No

Do the proposals require any diversions/extinguishments and/or creation of rights of way?

- ☐ Yes
- ☒ No

Vehicle Parking

Does the site have any existing vehicle/cycle parking spaces or will the proposed development add/remove any parking spaces?

- ☒ Yes
- ☐ No

Please provide information on the existing and proposed number of on-site parking spaces

Vehicle Type: Cars Existing number of spaces: 3 Total proposed (including spaces retained): 3 Difference in spaces: 0

Trees and Hedges

Are there trees or hedges on the proposed development site?

- ☒ Yes
- ☐ No

And/or: Are there trees or hedges on land adjacent to the proposed development site that could influence the development or might be important as part of the local landscape character?

- ☐ Yes
☒ No

If Yes to either or both of the above, you may need to provide a full tree survey, at the discretion of the local planning authority. If a tree survey is required, this and the accompanying plan should be submitted alongside the application. The local planning authority should make clear on its website what the survey should contain, in accordance with the current 'BS5837: Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction - Recommendations'.

Assessment of Flood Risk

Is the site within an area at risk of flooding? (Check the location on the Government's [Flood map for planning](#). You should also refer to national [standing advice](#) and your local planning authority requirements for information as necessary.)

- ☐ Yes
☒ No

Is your proposal within 20 metres of a watercourse (e.g. river, stream or beck)?

- ☐ Yes
☒ No

Will the proposal increase the flood risk elsewhere?

- ☐ Yes
☒ No

How will surface water be disposed of?

- ☐ Sustainable drainage system
☒ Existing water course
☐ Soakaway
☐ Main sewer
☐ Pond/lake

Biodiversity and Geological Conservation

Is there a reasonable likelihood of the following being affected adversely or conserved and enhanced within the application site, or on land adjacent to or near the application site?

To assist in answering this question correctly, please refer to the help text which provides guidance on determining if any important biodiversity or geological conservation features may be present or nearby; and whether they are likely to be affected by the proposals.

a) Protected and priority species

- ☐ Yes, on the development site
☐ Yes, on land adjacent to or near the proposed development
☒ No

b) Designated sites, important habitats or other biodiversity features

- ☐ Yes, on the development site
☐ Yes, on land adjacent to or near the proposed development
☒ No

c) Features of geological conservation importance

- ☐ Yes, on the development site
☐ Yes, on land adjacent to or near the proposed development
☒ No

Supporting information requirements

Where a development proposal is likely to affect features of biodiversity or geological conservation interest, you will need to submit, with the application, sufficient information and assessments to allow the local planning authority to determine the proposal.

Failure to submit all information required will result in your application being deemed invalid. It will not be considered valid until all information required by the local planning authority has been submitted.

Your local planning authority will be able to advise on the content of any assessments that may be required.

Biodiversity net gain

Biodiversity net gain is a legal requirement for planning permission introduced on 12 February 2024. All applications are required to either provide detailed information proving there will be a biodiversity increase; or explain why the requirement does not apply to the development.

Do you believe that, if the development is granted permission, the general Biodiversity Gain Condition (as set out in [Paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 \(as amended\)](#)) would apply?

- ☐ Yes
- ☒ No

Biodiversity net gain has been introduced as a general condition for planning permission. As set out in [The Environment Act 2021](#): "grants of planning permission in England [are] to be subject to a condition to secure that the biodiversity gain objective is met". Therefore, in England, all planning permissions are generally subject to biodiversity gain rules, unless they are specifically exempt or out of scope.

If you have stated that the biodiversity net gain requirement does not apply to your application you must provide the reason(s) why, and may also need to supply evidence (especially where you believe the application is eligible for the 'de minimis' exemption).

Please add all the reasons why biodiversity net gain does not apply and enter a justification for each one

Reason biodiversity net gain does not apply:
Self-build and custom build development

Are you building more than nine houses?:
No

Is the total size over 0.5 hectares?:
No

Do all buildings meet the definition of self-build or custom housebuilding as set out in [section 1\(A1\) of the Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015](#)?:
Yes

Does your Local Planning Authority require applicants for self-build and custom-build development to evidence their eligibility?:
No

Please justify the reason why biodiversity net gain does not apply:
The proposed change of use from Class C3(b) to Class C2 for a children’s residential care home falls under the category of development below the threshold, as defined by the UK Government’s Biodiversity Net Gain exemption criteria. The proposal involves a change of use only, with no new structures or external works that would alter the biodiversity value of the site. The site is a semi-detached bungalow in a suburban residential area, with existing hardstanding and garden space.

Note: Please read the help text for further information why developments may be exempt or not in scope.

Foul Sewage

Please state how foul sewage is to be disposed of:

- ☒ Mains sewer
- ☐ Septic tank
- ☐ Package treatment plant
- ☐ Cess pit
- ☐ Other
- ☐ Unknown

Are you proposing to connect to the existing drainage system?

- ☐ Yes
- ☒ No
- ☐ Unknown

Waste Storage and Collection

Do the plans incorporate areas to store and aid the collection of waste?

- ☐ Yes
- ☒ No

Have arrangements been made for the separate storage and collection of recyclable waste?

- ☐ Yes
- ☒ No

Trade Effluent

Does the proposal involve the need to dispose of trade effluents or trade waste?

- ☐ Yes
- ☒ No

Residential/Dwelling Units

Does your proposal include the gain, loss or change of use of residential units?

- ☒ Yes
- ☐ No

Please note: This question is based on the current housing categories and types specified by government.

If your application was started before 23 May 2020, the categories and types shown in this question will now have changed. We recommend that you review any information provided to ensure it is correct before the application is submitted.

Proposed

Please select the housing categories that are relevant to the proposed units

- ☐ Market Housing
- ☒ Social, Affordable or Intermediate Rent
- ☐ Affordable Home Ownership
- ☐ Starter Homes
- ☐ Self-build and Custom Build

Social, Affordable or Intermediate Rent

Please specify each type of housing and number of units proposed

Housing Type:	
Sheltered Housing	
1 Bedroom:	
1	
2 Bedroom:	
1	
3 Bedroom:	
1	
4+ Bedroom:	
0	
Unknown Bedroom:	
1	
Total:	
4	

Proposed Social, Affordable or Intermediate Rent Category Totals	1 Bedroom Total	2 Bedroom Total	3 Bedroom Total	4+ Bedroom Total	Unknown Bedroom Total	Total
	1	1	1	0	1	4

Existing

Please select the housing categories for any existing units on the site

- ☐ Market Housing
- ☐ Social, Affordable or Intermediate Rent
- ☐ Affordable Home Ownership
- ☐ Starter Homes
- ☒ Self-build and Custom Build

Self-build and Custom Build

Please specify each existing type of housing and number of units on the site

Housing Type:	
Houses	
1 Bedroom:	
1	
2 Bedroom:	
1	
3 Bedroom:	
1	
4+ Bedroom:	
0	
Unknown Bedroom:	
1	
Total:	
4	

Existing Self-build and Custom	1 Bedroom Total	2 Bedroom Total	3 Bedroom Total	4+ Bedroom	Unknown	Total
Housing Category Totals	1	1	1	Total	Bedroom Total	4
				0	1	

Totals

Total proposed residential units	4
Total existing residential units	4
Total net gain or loss of residential units	0

All Types of Development: Non-Residential Floorspace

Does your proposal involve the loss, gain or change of use of non-residential floorspace?
Note that 'non-residential' in this context covers all uses except Use Class C3 Dwellinghouses.

- ☒ Yes
- ☐ No

Please add details of the Use Classes and floorspace.

Use Class:

C2 - Residential institutions

Existing gross internal floorspace (square metres) (a):

105

Gross internal floorspace to be lost by change of use or demolition (square metres) (b):

0

Total gross new internal floorspace proposed (including changes of use) (square metres) (c):

105

Net additional gross internal floorspace following development (square metres) (d = c - a):

0

Totals	Existing gross internal floorspace (square metres) (a)	Gross internal floorspace to be lost by change of use or demolition (square metres) (b)	Total gross new internal floorspace proposed (including changes of use) (square metres) (c)	Net additional gross internal floorspace following development (square metres) (d = c - a)
	105	0	105	0

Loss or gain of rooms

Does the proposal include loss or gain of rooms for hotels, residential institutions, or hostels?

- ☐ Yes
- ☒ No

Employment

Are there any existing employees on the site or will the proposed development increase or decrease the number of employees?

- ☒ Yes
- ☐ No

Existing Employees

Please complete the following information regarding existing employees:

Full-time

0

Part-time

0

Total full-time equivalent

0.00

Proposed Employees

If known, please complete the following information regarding proposed employees:

Full-time

3

Part-time

0

Total full-time equivalent

3.00

Hours of Opening

Are Hours of Opening relevant to this proposal?

- ☐ Yes
☒ No

Industrial or Commercial Processes and Machinery

Does this proposal involve the carrying out of industrial or commercial activities and processes?

- ☐ Yes
☒ No

Is the proposal for a waste management development?

- ☐ Yes
☒ No

Hazardous Substances

Does the proposal involve the use or storage of Hazardous Substances?

- ☐ Yes
☒ No

Site Visit

Can the site be seen from a public road, public footpath, bridleway or other public land?

- ☒ Yes
☐ No

If the planning authority needs to make an appointment to carry out a site visit, whom should they contact?

- ☒ The agent
☐ The applicant
☐ Other person

Pre-application Advice

Has assistance or prior advice been sought from the local authority about this application?

- ☒ Yes
☐ No

If Yes, please complete the following information about the advice you were given (this will help the authority to deal with this application more efficiently):

Officer name:

Title

First Name

***** REDACTED *****

Surname

***** REDACTED *****

Reference

25/00389/GEN: Inquiry

Date (must be pre-application submission)

09/02/2025

Details of the pre-application advice received

1. Whether the proposed use falls under the C2 (Residential Institutions) or requires any additional planning permission.

You will require planning permission to change the use from C3 to C2 – because you are proposing shift pattern working this use would fit under C2 and not any other residential use in my informal opinion. You can search a number of application we have dealt with regarding childrens home on our website to give you a better understanding of what is required. [Search Results](#)

2. Any specific requirements or restrictions that apply to the proposed site.

We don't have any specific policies that deal with C2 uses. However please see our local Plan on our website for general policies. North Herts Local Plan 2011-2031 | North Herts Council As above please look at other application we have deal with to see what issues we look at. [Search Results](#)

3. Guidance on the process for submitting an application, if required.

You can submit a planning application on the Planning Portal website [Planning Portal](#). More information can be found here: [Submit a planning application | North Herts Council](#)

I should advise you that the above is an informal Officer opinion and does not constitute a formal decision of the Council.

Authority Employee/Member

With respect to the Authority, is the applicant and/or agent one of the following:

- (a) a member of staff
- (b) an elected member
- (c) related to a member of staff
- (d) related to an elected member

It is an important principle of decision-making that the process is open and transparent.

For the purposes of this question, "related to" means related, by birth or otherwise, closely enough that a fair-minded and informed observer, having considered the facts, would conclude that there was bias on the part of the decision-maker in the Local Planning Authority.

Do any of the above statements apply?

- ☐ Yes
- ☒ No

Ownership Certificates and Agricultural Land Declaration

Certificates under Article 14 - Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 (as amended)

Please answer the following questions to determine which Certificate of Ownership you need to complete: A, B, C or D.

Is the applicant the sole owner of all the land to which this application relates; and has the applicant been the sole owner for more than 21 days?

- ☐ Yes
- ☒ No

Can you give appropriate notice to all the other owners/agricultural tenants? (Select 'Yes' if there are no other owners/agricultural tenants)

- ☒ Yes
- ☐ No

Certificate Of Ownership - Certificate B

I certify/ The applicant certifies that:

- ☒ I have/The applicant has given the requisite notice to everyone else (as listed below) who, on the day 21 days before the date of this application, was the owner* and/or agricultural tenant** of any part of the land or building to which this application relates; or
- ☐ The applicant is the sole owner of all the land or buildings to which this application relates and there are no other owners* and/or agricultural tenants**.

* "owner" is a person with a freehold interest or leasehold interest with at least 7 years left to run.

** "agricultural tenant" has the meaning given in section 65(8) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990

Name of Owner/Agricultural Tenant:

***** REDACTED *****

House name:

Number:

186

Suffix:

Address line 1:

Whitehill Road

Address Line 2:

Town/City:

Hitchin

Postcode:

SG4 9HY

Date notice served (DD/MM/YYYY):

16/10/2025

Person Family Name:

Person Role

☐ The Applicant

☒ The Agent

Title

Mr

First Name

Sam

Surname

Shemi

Declaration Date

01/10/2025

☒ Declaration made

Declaration

I/We hereby apply for Full planning permission as described in the questions answered, details provided, and the accompanying plans/drawings and additional information.

I/We confirm that, to the best of my/our knowledge, any facts stated are true and accurate and any opinions given are the genuine opinions of the person(s) giving them.

I/We also accept that, in accordance with the Planning Portal's terms and conditions:

- Once submitted, this information will be made available to the Local Planning Authority and, once validated by them, be published as part of a public register and on the authority's website;
- Our system will automatically generate and send you emails in regard to the submission of this application.

☒ I / We agree to the outlined declaration

Signed

Samuel Shemi

Date

02/10/2025

Amendments Summary

- Duplicate details corrected: Applicant details were consolidated so the form no longer contains duplicate entries for applicant and agent.
- Question responses updated to Yes:
- Gain, loss or change of use of residential units — set to Yes because there will be a loss of a residential unit.
- Loss, gain or change of use of non-residential floorspace — set to Yes because there will be a gain of non-residential floorspace.
- Existing employees / change in employee numbers — set to Increase to reflect the proposed rise in employee numbers.
- Certificate B completed on the application form