8 Blythe Mount Park
Blythe Bridge
Stoke-on-Trent
Staffordshire
ST11 9PP

18th May 2020

Dear Mr Hurst,

R.E. Objection to Application SMD/2020/0193, Furlongs Cheadle Road, Blythe Bridge.

We write this letter as a household of the above address, comprising of three adults of one family who live here.

We are writing to you regarding our concerns and objections to the proposed development of a change of use of C3a dwelling house into a C2 children's home; Furlongs Cheadle Road, Blythe Bridge.

Our family property is situated immediately adjacent to the side of the property known as the Furlongs and that property is immediately at the end of our back garden. The continued developments to the Furlongs and the gated community on this site have already had a significantly negative impact on our family and home. With this current proposal we have the following concerns.

Impact on traffic

The current access to the property from Cheadle Road, significantly impacts the traffic flow on this busy main road (A521) particularly at peak times. Current access to this gated community already causes significant disruption and the arising stationary or waiting traffic causes blind spots for vehicles leaving Blythe Mount Park. The access in and out of Blythe Mount Park by residents is already badly impacted by school traffic and street parking issues caused by parent's dropping off and collecting their children throughout the day or indeed by sixth formers who park here all day. The proposal of another business in this gated community with its specific needs would require more parking facilities that are stated in this application. Also, there is no evidence of consideration of the way in which the secured electromechanical gate opens and closes which itself impacts access to the Furlong's parking area. The gate reduces space for parking for the Furlong's and the shared access / driveway for the other two properties, which suggests the 'around six' car parking spaces that are sited in the proposal are actually not available. Four of the guaranteed spaces on the plans are for the other two properties (properties known as 'The Paddock' & 'The Stables'). This will either encourage parking in Blythe Mount Park, or increased parking on Cheadle Road, ultimately impacting on the local community stretching its limited capacity.

The application suggests that comings and goings would be similar to a typical resident household. This is patently not the case as it would be a staffed care facility - a busy enterprise and as such it would not be like 'a typical residence'. The application states there will be two 24 hour care workers at any one time. There would be three care workers over two shifts arriving and leaving twice per day. Two staff would be required to facilitate each school run as they intend to utilise the local high school. A weekly visit of two social workers. With these requirements and the social movements at the weekends, not including any possible arranged family visits to see the children at the property, this sees a minimum of between eight to ten movements per day. It also does not consider any additional needs that the business would be very likely to need on a regular basis. It also does not take into account any personal needs for the 'live in staff' or additional requirements of its residents to

access and leave the property. This access and the required frequency of access to this property under the proposed business changes we would argue, is excessive when compared a residential household. We would also argue that these movements would by far exceed the 'around six' car parking spaces sited in this application. Furthermore, these movements also do not account other routine activities such as for waste management or regulatory inspection.

Whatever consideration SMDC gave to the former application for the present gated community it is evident that little or no thought was given to the impact of the consequential traffic flow on Cheadle Road itself. The proposed application to change the Furlongs property from a C3a residential dwelling to a C2 children's home, which will be another business on this site, will increase further the number of deliveries to the site. There are current issues delivering to the site already. Access, because of the gates, currently impacts particularly when vans are turning right across the flow of traffic. Deliveries are already more frequent to the properties on this site, as although they may be registered as residential properties, according to the information at Companies House more than one business already operates from this site including a joinery business, JMC 1 Developments Ltd; Park Lane Properties and Cheadle Road Maintenance Company Ltd all registered at the Furlong's and none domestic deliveries and equipment to accept them are a regular occurrence.

The proposed changes will only make the traffic problem worse every time deliveries and other required services for the proposed new business find they are unable to access the site.

Noise

The noise from the properties in this gated community is already particularly loud and intrusive even with the current minimal occupancy in this supposed family setting. The increase in footfall from both residents, staff and visitors which are sited within the proposal would become much worse.

Privacy, the building and its surrounds

Because our home is overlooked by the garden of the rebuilt property known as the Furlongs, our privacy has already been mostly lost, and we have little ability to use our garden with any kind of privacy. Privacy would be lost completely if a change of use is permitted. The proposal submitted states that there would be no internal or external alterations to the building or its surrounds. There doesn't seem to be any evidence of what precautions would be in place to ensure the safety and security of the children who are place in the secure children's home.

The current surrounding's including boundary fencing which converge with the Furlongs property poses a potential risk to the immediate residents surrounding the Furlongs. The nature of the proposed children's home business to operate at the Furlongs indicating the secure nature of this facility is not appropriate and raises security and vulnerability concerns for ourselves and our community. Esland Care, who propose to run this facility, state that the care they provide is for children who have suffered trauma and are placed in similar homes around the country are done so as they have a tendency to abscond from their residence. This again increases our worry that this is an appropriate location for this facility. Quite frankly we are worried that children would abscond through our garden from the adjacent path at the side of the Furlongs and our home.

Alongside the boundary of this gated community is a public footpath leading to local garages and secluded pathway which can facilitate gathering of young people. A concern for the facility which must be considered.

A further concern regarding the Furlongs as a proposed suitable property to be used as a children's home for 11 – 15 year olds who have suffered trauma; is the location of properties and external access of suppliers etc that will be required to access the gated community and the businesses already operating there. As the nature of the children's home business from its application, will most likely deal with children suffering from dissociative attachment disorder or child sexual exploitation, the concern is that this will be in breach of safeguarding regulations.

There is at this time no way for us as local residents of knowing what scrutiny the council have already made to troubled and traumatised children being kept within a locked gated community and what risk that poses to the children, the staff or the local residents or ourselves. The application states that the residents receiving care at the Furlongs would be placed there as they have suffered trauma. Therefore, placements will be of variable duration and there would be frequent changes in children living there. This high turnover of occupancy is nothing like a normal residence and the associated challenges arising to the community would most likely have a significant impact on the local services and infrastructure. With the increased development in some areas of the village there is already concern to the local infrastructure and consideration needs to be taken as to whether it would cope further under these proposed circumstances.

The application is not clear in whether the children who will be located in this facility are children behind a locked gate which are not detained under law.

Schooling

The application states that it would try and utilise the local school for the residents. While Blythe Bridge High School would not require them to access public transport to get there, the suggestions in the application for home schooling or with the requirements of the residents to access other schooling further afield this again would impact the already increase traffic though the village.

If the residents did access Blythe Bridge High School, there are a number of teachers who live in Blythe Mount Park including on the boundary of the property to the proposed children's home who work at Blythe Bridge High School. The potential impact of this business has worrying concerns for the staff who live on the boundary to this proposed facility. There is also no risk assessment that we can see attached to this change of use application of the area in partnership with the police and the local authority raising further concerns for this children's home to operate at this location.

With all the above in consideration the question on the effect of the development on the character of the neighbourhood must be addressed. This current proposal of a change of use at the property known as the Furlongs will certainly impact in many ways particularly as a children's home at this location which are not favourable. The council need to define whether this area is a residential area or a business park with street parking.

Yours sincerely,

8 Blythe Mount Park