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Early Intervention & Prevention Unit
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Date: 22nd September 2021

Application: SMD/2021/0471
Location: Meadowstile Farm, Tower Hill Road, Brown Lees
Proposal: Proposed change of use from C3b dwelling to C2 residential care home

The proposal has been reviewed with particular reference to Police CPI's Secured by Design guidance and in accordance with the recognised principles of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design.

The following comments should be considered in the light of the following:

- Under the heading Promoting Safe and Healthy Communities, Para 92(b) of the NPPF 2021 states "Planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which are safe and accessible, so that crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion."
- Under the heading Achieving Well-Designed Places, Para 130(f) of the NPPF 2021 states "Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments create places that are safe ... and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience."
- Under the heading Planning Should Address Crime Prevention, Design Para 10 of the NPPG states "Designing out crime and designing in community safety should be central to the planning and delivery of new development";
- Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan - Design Consideration, Spatial Objective SO10 – "To deliver sustainable, inclusive, healthy and safe communities";
- The statutory obligation placed on local authorities to do all they reasonably can to prevent crime and disorder in accordance with Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998;
- The 2006 CABE document entitled 'Design and Access Statements: How to Write, Read and Use Them', which states "Statements should demonstrate how development can create accessible and safe environments, including addressing crime and disorder and fear of crime."

It is noted that although this is technically a change of use from dwelling to children's care home, the property has to all intents and purposes operated as such since 2006 caring for 2 children. The change of use would result in an increase in the number of children being cared for to 3. The views of the Neighbourhood Policing Team (NPT) have been sought who are in a position to advise whether and to what extent the existing facility presents any policing issues, and what effect an increase in number of children might bring.

A Police Community Support Officer within the NPT who has been the police point of contact for the home for the last 12 months has provided some useful observations. During that time he have only ever been required to speak with the residents when staff have thought a talk from a uniform would help and this has been in relation to internal matters dealt with by staff and not reported to police.

There have been a few incidents of missing children reports, but nowhere near as prevalent as most other homes. It is considered that staff only ring the police when it is absolutely necessary and appropriate, and that having visited many times, managers run the home with a great deal of consideration for the local community and how their presence does and could affect them. As far as the officer is aware, the neighbouring farm which shares a boundary fence with the home has never had cause to ring the police with a problem involving the home.

Consequently, in the light of the seemingly well run nature of the existing home and minimal number of incidents that arise there, Staffordshire Police have no objection to the change of use proposals.

Crime Prevention advice is given freely without the intention of creating a contract, and all comments and recommendations are site specific. Staffordshire Police and the Home Office do not accept any legal responsibility for the advice given.

David Elkington
Crime Prevention Design Advisor