Mr D. & Mrs J. Amos
Millers View
15th July 2024

Objection to Application: SMD/2024/0241
Location: 4 Millers View, Cheadle
Proposal: Change of use application to convert a C3 dwelling into a use class C2 Residential Institution for care of children including conversion of existing detached garage into 2-bedroom bungalow as already approved on application SMD/2023/0139

We are writing to object to this application on the following grounds. Our main concern is the potential impact on the living conditions of the residents in the immediate vicinity of the property due to the unsuitable location of the proposed care home.

- Due to the cul-de-sac arrangement, at least seven houses have back gardens in close proximity to the back garden of the property itself. The gardens are not particularly large and neither is there any mature growth of the type that is often found around many older style semi-detached or detached properties used for such residential homes. Four children playing together with the additional input of four supporting adults, could hardly be expected to generate an equivalent noise level to that which you might expect from the average 2/3 child family of siblings. The outside space is also likely to be used far more frequently, particularly if the children are unable to access, or have a reduced timetable in, educational establishments. For neighbouring residents, this could be akin to living next door to a round the clock playground facility.

- The frontages of the adjacent properties and of those across the road are literally two steps away from the intended property. This is too close to neighbouring properties in that there is no 'buffer zone' to allow staff and children the privacy to resolve any issues that may arise before they impact on the surrounding community.

In addition, we have the following concerns on behalf of residents and for the children who would be living at the home, many of which have already been highlighted by a considerable number of other residents on the estate.

- The road outside the property is not wide enough to accommodate street parking. When vehicles have been parked on the road it has caused access problems for residents and delivery drivers, even preventing refuse collections in the past. Inevitably, the turning spaces opposite the property will also be used by the home if additional parking is needed. This will leave no facility for other vehicles to turn round as beyond this there is a private shared drive which is access only for the three properties on it. Although this is clearly signposted, historically vehicles have tried to turn here when the turning space has been full, damaging resident's lawns.

- There will be increased traffic movement at shift changeovers and when other professionals visit. Since the seven vehicles accommodated will be double parked this will of necessity involve a considerable amount of noisy manoeuvring outside the neighbouring properties, whilst also interrupting traffic flow. Currently, the maximum number of vehicles accessing the property is three.

- The property is on a bend and fronts directly onto the road which is immediately accessible from the front door. There are no pavements and no safety zones within which to apprehend a child exiting the property at speed. Delivery drivers who are not familiar with the estate often drive far too quickly round here as it is not clear on the approach that the road ends at this point. This location would therefore place any child at risk but more so a vulnerable child intent on escape or with limited road safety awareness.

- There is a potential risk for vulnerable older children placed in this setting to come under the influence of the less desirable side of youth culture in Cheadle, as highlighted by the local police report. The recreation ground, already acknowledged as a hot spot for anti-social behaviour, is within easy reach of the proposed location. In addition, the dug-outs on Thorley Drive football fields are also well known to local residents as a hotspot for antisocial behaviour and underage drinking, with the broken bottles that are left behind being mentioned recently on Cheadle Facebook forum. These football fields are actually adjacent to the property and easily accessed by a footpath nearby.

Finally, we would like to draw attention to the following:

- The application form states that there are currently seven parking spaces which is not the case. At best, the property could be described as currently having defined parking for 3/4 cars and so there will be an increase of 3 or 4 parking spaces rather than a zero increase.

- The application form states that there are no valuable trees or hedges. There are actually trees and hedges adjacent to the property that are very 'important to the local landscape character' as they form an essential barrier between residents and either the Thorley Drive football pitches or public open space, not to mention the biodiversity value.

- The application form states that there is no is a water course within 20 metres of the property. However, there is one that runs to north of the boundary hedge, albeit overgrown and neglected. It is clearly marked on the land registry SF383543 as a ditch which runs the full length of Millers View and Millbrook Way and then into Cecilly Brook.

- The care home questionnaire identifies that there are four places in the home which will accommodate 'low risk' children supported by four carers. However, there are only three bedrooms for children in the main house. The bungalow provision for one child is clearly separate from this but there is no indication as to how this will be run and with what intent.

- The care home questionnaire sites previous experience of running one other residential children's care home in Bucknall. This is apparently the old doctor's surgery, now to be known as Harmony House, which has been granted planning permission by Stoke-on-Trent authority and is designated for children with EBD. We understand that it will be managed by Keystone Staffordshire Ltd. However, it is questionable as to whether or not this is operational since we have not been able to find it on the Ofsted website. If it is not, then the previous experience of running a home that is claimed is simply not evident.