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Subject: Comment Received from Public Access

Categories: [REDACTED]

Application Reference No. : SMD/2026/0254 Site Address: White Gate CLEWLOWS BANK BAGNALL STAFFORDSHIRE
ST9 9LP Stoke On Trent Comments by: Mr and Mrs Ladds

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Submission: Objection

Comments: Planning Objection & Application SMD/2026/0254

White Gate, ClewloWS Bank, Bagnall

I wish to submit the following objection to the additional information provided in support of Planning Application SMD/2026/0254.

Rather than addressing the concerns raised by local residents, the applicant's supplementary statement introduces further inconsistencies and leaves a number of significant planning matters unresolved. These issues reinforce the reasons why this application should be refused.

1. Contradictory information regarding family visits

The original application stated that there would be no external visitors to the property other than appropriate authorities. This formed part of the applicant's argument that the proposal would not materially increase activity at the site.

However, the supplementary information now states:

"Any contact between children and family members is carefully managed in accordance with individual care plans and safeguarding requirements and generally takes place at appropriate off-site locations or supervised venues."

The use of the word "generally" is significant. It clearly leaves open the possibility that family contact may take place at the property.

The applicant therefore cannot guarantee that family visits will not occur. This represents a material change from the impression given in the original submission and creates uncertainty regarding the level of vehicle movements associated with the development. The transport assessment has not considered this possibility and should therefore be afforded limited weight.

2. Highway safety has not been properly assessed

The applicant relies heavily on the comments of the Highway Authority. However, neither the applicant's submission nor the Highway Report adequately addresses the site's most significant constraint: its position immediately adjacent to a sharp bend on Clewlow's Bank.

The report confirms that vehicles can enter and leave the site in a forward gear, but this does not address the fundamental issue of increased vehicle movements joining and leaving a road where visibility is restricted by the alignment of the carriageway.

The applicant acknowledges residents' concerns regarding the bends in the road yet provides no evidence demonstrating why those concerns are unfounded beyond referring to internal operating procedures. Staff protocols cannot eliminate the risks created by the physical characteristics of the highway.

The proposal would generate vehicle movements throughout the day and night, including shift changes, transport for children, deliveries, professional visits, contractors, emergency services where required and, potentially, family visits. The cumulative impact of these movements on a narrow rural road with restricted visibility has not been properly assessed.

3. The transport implications of future education remain unknown

The supplementary statement confirms that children will receive education on-site for approximately the first twelve months before attending community-based educational settings.

No information is provided regarding where these schools are likely to be, how journeys will be undertaken, the frequency of those journeys or the resulting traffic implications. Likewise, there is no explanation of how older children would travel to and from school should they attend mainstream education.

This omission means the Local Planning Authority cannot properly assess the long-term transport impacts of the development. Planning decisions should not be based upon assumptions regarding future operational arrangements.

4. There is no guarantee children will never leave the property unsupervised

The applicant repeatedly states that children will never leave the property unaccompanied.

Whilst this may be the intended operational model, there can be no guarantee that vulnerable children will never abscond or leave unexpectedly. The possibility of such incidents is recognised across the residential childcare sector.

This concern is particularly acute because the property sits immediately adjacent to a sharp bend where, regrettably, traffic frequently travels above the posted speed limit. Should a child leave the property unexpectedly, the consequences could be extremely serious.

The application does not adequately assess this site-specific risk.

5. The garden is not secure

The applicant refers to the extensive private garden as providing ample recreational space.

However, ownership does not equate to security. The garden is not currently enclosed in a manner that prevents movement between neighbouring properties. Existing gaps within boundary planting provide routes into adjoining gardens.

Neighbouring properties are occupied by a range of residents and domestic animals. Any unintended trespass by vulnerable children could create avoidable safeguarding issues, conflict with neighbouring occupiers and risks for both the children and local residents.

The application contains no detailed proposals demonstrating how the site would be made secure.

6. The applicant presents a selective picture of its Ofsted record

The applicant relies heavily upon positive quotations from an Outstanding Ofsted inspection to reassure the Council regarding the operation of its homes.

However, the submission omits relevant findings contained within its own inspection reports. For example, the Ofsted inspection available at:

<https://files.ofsted.gov.uk/v1/file/50289647>

records that children have, albeit infrequently, gone missing from one of Halliwell's homes.

Whilst such incidents may be uncommon, they demonstrate that assurances that children will never be outside the property unaccompanied cannot be treated as absolute. The applicant's submission therefore presents only the favourable aspects of its inspection history while omitting information that is directly relevant to concerns raised by local residents.

The Council should not be relying upon carefully selected extracts included within the planning submission.

7. This is not comparable to a family dwelling

The applicant repeatedly seeks to characterise the proposal as operating like a large family home.

This comparison is misleading.

A family dwelling generates a domestic pattern of activity. By contrast, a children's residential care home requires shift-working staff, management attendance, social workers, healthcare professionals, education staff, Ofsted inspectors, maintenance contractors, deliveries and, by the applicant's own admission, potentially family visits.

This is the operational reality of a regulated residential institution operating on a 24-hour basis.

The application site lies within an exceptionally quiet rural village with no shops, limited services and no regular public transport. The intensity and pattern of activity associated with this proposal would be materially different from that of a normal dwelling and would inevitably change the character of the locality.

The applicant's repeated assertion that the development would function like a family home is therefore not supported by the operational evidence contained within its own submission.

Conclusion

The additional information does not overcome the concerns previously raised by local residents. Instead, it highlights inconsistencies within the application, leaves fundamental questions unanswered and fails to demonstrate that the proposal would be appropriate in this location.

In particular:

The applicant can no longer state that family visits will not occur.

The long-term transport implications remain unknown.

Highway safety concerns relating to the site's location on a sharp bend have not been adequately addressed.

The garden is not demonstrated to be secure.

The applicant has presented only selected extracts from its Ofsted record while omitting relevant findings.

The proposal cannot reasonably be described as comparable to a normal family dwelling.

Taken together, these matters create significant uncertainty regarding the true impact of the development on highway safety, residential amenity and the character of this quiet rural village.

For these reasons, I respectfully request that the Local Planning Authority gives these concerns substantial weight and refuses planning permission for Application SMD/2026/0254.

Yours Sincerely and Respectfully,

Mr and Mrs Ladds

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