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From: planningcomments@staffs Moorlands.gov.uk
Sent: 28 July 2026 16:21
To: Planning Comments (SMDC)
Subject: Comment Received from Public Access

Categories: [REDACTED]

Application Reference No. : SMD/2026/0250 Site Address: John Munroe Independent Hospital Reacliffe Road
Rudyard Staffordshire ST13 8RU Leek Comments by: Cressida Leaman

From:

The Casey
Casey Head Farm
Casey Head Farm
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ST13 7QX

Phone: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

Submission: Objection

Comments: Re: Planning Application SMD/2026/0250

Dear Members of Horton Parish Council,

I write as a parent of children attending Horton St Michael's C of E First School.

At the outset, I wish to make clear that I do not object to the provision of mental health services or secure healthcare facilities in principle. However, I do object to this application in its current form because I do not believe the planning authority has been provided with sufficient information to enable either consultees or the decision-maker to properly assess the proposal.

The application seeks a material change of use from Class C2 to Class C2A. This is not an insignificant amendment. It proposes the introduction of a secure residential institution immediately adjacent to a primary school, a special school, residential properties and a public right of way. In those circumstances, I would expect the application to be supported by comprehensive information explaining exactly what is proposed and how any impacts have been assessed.

Instead, the information currently available appears to be extremely limited.

Like Horton St Michael's First School, I have been unable to identify any Planning Statement, Operational Management Plan or equivalent document explaining the operation of the proposed facility. Without that

information, it is impossible for parents, local residents, the Parish Council or, in my view, the planning authority itself to properly assess the proposal.

In particular, the application does not appear to explain:

- * the nature of the proposed service;
- * the intended patient cohort;
- * the level of security proposed;
- * the proposed capacity of the site;
- * staffing levels and operational management;
- * arrangements for patient leave, supervision and transport;
- * perimeter security and emergency procedures;
- * liaison arrangements with neighbouring schools; or
- * how the interaction between the proposed use, the public right of way and the neighbouring educational establishments has been assessed.

These are not minor operational details. They are central to understanding the planning implications of the proposed change of use.

I fully support the objection submitted by Horton St Michael's School. The Headteacher is entirely correct to highlight the absence of sufficient supporting information and the school's statutory safeguarding responsibilities.

As a parent, I am particularly concerned that children regularly use the Forest School and outdoor learning areas immediately adjoining the public right of way. Whilst I make no assumptions about the nature of the proposed patient group, the application provides no evidence demonstrating that the relationship between a proposed C2A secure institution, neighbouring schools and the public right of way has been properly assessed. That information should be available before any planning decision is taken.

The former hospital has been closed for a significant period and has undergone extensive refurbishment. This is therefore not simply a continuation of an established use. It is a proposal to bring the site back into operation under a materially different planning use. In those circumstances, I respectfully suggest that the planning authority should require a robust evidence base before determining the application.

Accordingly, I ask Horton Parish Council to recommend that Staffordshire Moorlands District Council should not determine this application until the applicant has provided sufficient information to enable proper public consultation and informed decision-making. In particular, I believe the applicant should be required to provide:

- * a comprehensive Planning Statement;
- * an Operational Management Plan;
- * details of the intended patient cohort and proposed security arrangements;
- * an assessment of safeguarding implications for neighbouring schools;
- * an assessment of the interaction with the adjoining public right of way;
- * details of emergency procedures and liaison protocols with neighbouring schools;
- * and confirmation of consultation with Staffordshire Police, the Care Quality Commission and other relevant safeguarding bodies.

This objection is not based upon prejudice towards people experiencing mental ill health. It is based upon the fundamental planning principle that applications should be determined on the basis of sufficient evidence. At present, I do not believe that threshold has been met.

I respectfully ask the Parish Council to support the school's objection and request that the application is either supported by the necessary information before it proceeds further or deferred until consultees and the public have had a fair opportunity to consider a complete proposal.

Yours faithfully,

Cressida Leaman

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