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Subject: Comment Received from Public Access
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Application Reference No. : SMD/2026/0250

Site Address: John Munroe Independent Hospital Reacliffe Road Rudyard Staffordshire ST13 8RU Leek

Comments by: Ian Flower

From:

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Submission: Objection

Comments: Objection regarding: Material Change of Use from C2 to C2a with associated 15ft fencing and 24hr floodlighting. Planning Application SMD/2026/0250

John Munroe Hospital, Rudyard

Dear Sir

I am writing to lodge my objection to this planning application in the strongest possible terms.

I am a parent of a child at Horton St Michael's first school and am totally appalled by even the possibility of this application being passed.

I can safely say nobody in the community is in favour of it.

1. Critical Omission of Technical Assessments

The applicant has failed to provide a Lighting Impact Assessment or an Acoustic/Noise Assessment.

Without these essential technical documents, the Council cannot safely evaluate the detrimental impacts of 24-hour floodlighting and operational noise on the neighbouring primary school and surrounding residential amenity. The application should be rejected or deferred until these assessments are produced for public scrutiny.

2. Inappropriate Development and Harm to Green Belt Openness

The proposed 15-foot (4.57m) high-security fencing constitutes an aggressively conspicuous structure that significantly harms the visual openness and rural character of the Green Belt. The applicant has failed to demonstrate the "Very Special Circumstances" required to justify such an intrusive, industrial-scale installation.

3. Failure to Preserve or Enhance the Conservation Area

A 15-foot security fence and continuous 24-hour floodlighting introduce a sterile, institutional, and hostile environment. This directly clashes with the historic, architectural, and visual qualities of the designated Conservation Area, failing the statutory test to preserve or enhance the area's character. The fence and lighting would clash aggressively with the local architectural heritage and natural landscape.

4. Unacceptable Impact on Community Amenity and Fear of Crime

The physical presence of a 24-hour floodlit, 15-foot fenced prison-like security measures directly adjacent to an active primary school introduces an overwhelming and unquantified fear of crime and safeguarding risk. This directly contradicts local plan policies regarding the creation of safe, healthy, and cohesive communities.

5. Inappropriate location and infrastructure

Under policy SS10 (Rural Areas Strategy) and general site selection rules, facilities must be appropriately situated regarding local infrastructure. The site lacks the infrastructure and would create traffic issues regarding increased use and access for emergency vehicles, secure patient transfer on narrow roads, that in places are almost single track. This is already a very busy road. The applicant has not included a traffic assessment in their application.

6. Light pollution and nuisance

Planning rules strictly regulate light pollution to protect residential amenity, local wildlife and dark sky environments. A 24 hour floodlit system introduces intense light spill. This will cause a public nuisance to neighbouring properties and potentially disturb the environment for children attending the school during winter dark months or after school activities. It also directly conflicts with local ecology and biodiversity targets.

7. Impact on tourism and viability of schools

Inevitably signage for the facility and knowledge of its vicinity would have a detrimental effect to what is a thriving local tourism business.

It would have a devastating effect on the intake to Horton St. Michael's first School and Horton Lodge special school.

8. Previous failures

The previous service provider had a dire record on providing safety for patients, the community and its own staff and consequently was forced to close in 2022 by the CQC. The applicant has links to the previous provider and this does not instill any feeling of comfort from my point of view.

The applicant gives no numbers of staff to be employed. This is a rural area and finding staff in any numbers with the necessary skill set for this work would be extremely difficult

With the best will in the world mistakes are made and the escape of patients housed in a C2A establishment into the immediate environment of primary school and special needs is terrifying.

As a parent of a 6 year old in Horton St. Michael's I implore you to reject this application. It is totally inappropriate in so many ways and would take my sons right to be educated in a safe, non-hostile and nurturing environment away.

Yours sincerely

Ian Flower

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