

01/06/21

Application Ref 2021/91682

Dear Sir/ Madam,

I am writing to you in relation to my concerns over the proposed change of use planning application for Wall Nooks, Wall Nook Lane, Cumberworth; from a C3 dwelling house to a C2 residential care home.

I wish to register my **strong** opposition to this proposal. It is impossible to discuss this change of usage without taking into due consideration the reasons for this change; i.e. the proposal of Compass Children's Homes LTD, to use this dwelling to care for five young people who have behavioural/emotional/mental, and other difficulties. In all likelihood, at the extreme end of the problematic spectrum.

Listed below are some of my concerns:-

1. I have lived in this area (and specifically Wall Nook Lane) for the last 35 years. It is very remote with no direct access links to any public transport. This road, and the immediate area, form a quiet, rural hamlet, with low levels of noise, disturbance and crime. The majority of residents are elderly/retired and many (such as myself) live alone. This area has no public amenities or nearby access to bus/train services, or in fact any type of public transport. During bad weather (which is common here due to altitude & remoteness), we can easily be cut off as a result of poor snow clearance unless the local farmer clears the road. Street lighting is extremely poor, there are no pavements, and all adjoining roads (including Wall Nook Lane) are subject of the national speed limit. To walk around the area during the hours of darkness is to feel extremely vulnerable.
2. How would the above impinge on the lives of these vulnerable children/young adults who are probably used to living in an inner-city area? Locally we have no youth centres, parks, recreational facilities, sports facilities, gyms, etc. It will be very difficult if not impossible for these young, troubled people to socialise. They will have no experiences of living in an agricultural area surrounded by fields & deep unprotected quarry. If the children are free to

come and go as they please, where are they able to go to? Who would supervise & be responsible for them?

3. Parts of this area are regularly visited by groups of adults who park up in cars. They are known to be smoking . As a local walker (as cautious as I must be, bearing in mind my comments above), I am aware of the detritus left behind from such activities. There is no council CCTV within the area. The presence of males in parked up cars is not good news for any child who is escaping from substance/sexual abuse to the extent that they need to be in a care home. There is very little, if any police presence in this area.
4. Having worked opposite a large council run care home for 17 years I am very aware of the typically aggressive & antisocial behaviour, foul language etc. that inevitably come from such an establishment. From experience, I am all too aware of the mindless offences of damage that some young people can cause/create within their surroundings. I do not feel, or believe that the staffing levels linked with this company are adequate for the needs of these troubled young people. If these residents have to be taxied here, there and everywhere, how can the staff watch over the remaining residents when some are at home and some at other locations? Any poor management of this facility will directly affect & negatively impact upon my quality of life. This company is well known for poor staff relations and they have frequent runaways from their other centres. Why would this proposed home be any different? There is already a fear of challenged young people from this care home arising among the local householders who have children. **This is particularly valid because the fear is as a direct result of this possible change of use.**
5. One of the most important concerns linked with this change of use are young people trespassing around this area at night i.e. in farm yards, quarries and around livestock. These can all lead to serious accidents, likely remaining undiscovered until too late. It would also be inevitable that damage/theft of machinery, livestock, domestic animals etc. would occur, thus leading to an increase in crime.
6. I have 17 years' experience as a Pastoral Deputy Head Teacher of a large comprehensive school, and also of being in charge of young people with special educational needs. I am therefore well aware of the challenges these children/young adults will bring to our local community. Coupled with the remoteness of this area I do not feel or believe that this is even a suitable place, never mind the best place to have such a facility. Not only for the concerns of the current householders but for the development needs of the children in regards to socialisation and mental health therapies.

7. I have excellent relationships with the local residents, and I feel content and safe in the knowledge that we all look after and support each other. I am able to walk around the area alone, largely without any fears or concerns for my safety. This will change should this application be granted. how can I can I challenge any inappropriate behaviour and continue to feel safe knowing that children/young adults with problems are residing so close to my home address? This will massively impact (negatively) my quality of life, to which, I feel the least I can expect is to feel safe within my own home, and indeed the immediate area surrounding it.

I repeat – I cannot stress this enough - I strongly oppose this change of use application and the proposal of compass children's home LTD to be allowed to inhabit this dwelling. The two situations cannot be considered as two single entities.