

Caroline Tranter
The Planning Inspectorate
Temple Quay House
2 The Square
Bristol
BS1 6PN

The Birches
Pinewood Park
Southampton
SO19 6AL

8 November 2023

Appeal Reference: APP/W1715/W/23/3324730
Relating to: Hilltop, Pinewood Park, Southampton SO19 6AL

Dear Caroline,

On behalf of all the neighbours residing in close proximity to Hilltop we understand all our previous representations have or will be forwarded to the Planning Inspectorate. We ask you to seriously consider all previous representations as we feel many are still relevant.

With regards to Rymacare's Appeal Statement, we strongly object and ask you to also consider the following:

Rymacare's Planning Attempts History for Hilltop as a Care Home

Rymacare and Mr Leather's first attempt to have Hilltop approved for use as a Care Home was LDC/20/88428, which was refused as being unlawful as the proposed 6 adults with learning difficulties would not be living in a single household. The proposal was for some of the residents to live in the main house and some in the Annex which was converted from a garage. As approval for this LDC was not granted, Mr Leather later submitted Planning Application F/22/93935 which was also refused and is now the subject of the above stated Appeal Reference.

However, when application F/22/93935 was refused in February 2023, Rymacare and Mr Leather immediately submitted LDC/23/94708 which reduced the proposed number of adults with learning difficulties from 6 to 5 and stated that all residents would live in the main house. Furthermore, this LDC clearly stated:

- 5.3 "The Annex has now been removed as residential and will now only be used as "Storage" for company equipment."
- 5.4 "The 5 Adults and carer will now reside together in the main residential dwelling - not including use of the annex building."
- 5.5 "All communal areas of the house will be shared by all 5 Adults and Carer as a single household."

The changes and commitments stated by Mr Leather in LDC/23/94708 satisfied the relevant approval requirements and a Certificate was issued in April 2023. However, since this LDC was approved, a lady has been living in the Annex for several months now. We are not sure if she is a carer or private tenant.

Then, within only 4 months of gaining approval to use Hilltop as a care home, Rymacare submitted LDC/23/95788, in which they again attempted to have the Annex approved as residence for 1 Adult and 1 Carer. Quite rightly this application was refused.

Now, within a matter of weeks of LDC/23/95788 being refused, Rymacare and Matt Leather submit this Appeal in an attempt to discredit EBC Planning, bypass previously refused LDC applications and backtrack on their previous commitments (stated in LDC/23/95708).

As neighbours, we feel Rymacare are acting deplorably in their attempts to gain additional planning approval for Hilltop and such an appeal should be seen for what it is and be rejected. The Committee decision to refuse original application F/22/93935 was not borderline, rather a unanimous vote by all 10 Councillors on the Committee.

Potential Impact of an Adult resident with learning difficulties living in the Annex

The nearest neighbouring property to "Hilltop" is "Rowan" and the current distance between these two houses is approximately 10 metres. If Rymacare's Appeal attempt is successful, they would be able to house a resident in the Annex which is approximately 0.5 metre to the side and approximately 3 metres back from Rowan bungalow.

This would dramatically increase the noise disturbance already experienced by the Small family living at "Rowan".

Furthermore, previous attempts by Mr & Mrs Small to approach Rymacare staff at Hilltop regarding noise disturbance resulted in, what we neighbours consider to be an aggressive, written response from Mr Leather threatening us with police action if any neighbour were so much as to step within Hilltop's boundary. Clearly, Mr Leather and Rymacare have once again demonstrated their lack of regard for neighbouring private residents.

Rymacare's Appeal Statement suggests their Hilltop Care Home is amongst approximately 16 other residential properties which is inaccurate and misleading. There are, in fact, only 7 private properties in the immediate vicinity of Hilltop, 3 on the same side of the road as Hilltop and 4 opposite. The other properties are 200 to 300 metres away, surrounded by woodland, at the end of a track.

Rymacare claims they have taken measures to ensure their care homes do not have a negative impact on the local community and environment. As far as we neighbours are concerned nothing is further from the truth. We find their attitude towards what was a small, quiet, countryside, residential area offensive and extremely disappointing. Any approval to use the Annex for additional residents, would only exacerbate noise disturbance and the number of waste bins parked on the street, sometimes overflowing with waste. Staff cars are often parked out on the street when there are plenty of parking places available in Hilltop's driveway. Examples of this are shown in the attached pictures.

Rymacare's references to Distances and Ease of Access to Local Amenities and Services

Rymacare's Appeal Statement devotes several pages to argue the close proximity and ease of access to local amenities and services from Hilltop's location. This is simply not true nor practical when one considers the walkways and road systems from Pinewood Park to many of the facilities listed.

Pinewood Park is effectively a small hamlet and the only practical way to get to local amenities and services is by private transport. Every adult living in Pinewood Park has their own car, including children who have reached driving age. It is the only safe and practical way to get to and from local services and amenities.

Attempt to walk out of Pinewood Park and you are immediately on the A27 with no public transport services and a narrow walkway on only one side of the road. Head north and you have to cross the M27 for which the busy slip roads leading to junctions 7 and 8 of the M27 have no walkways, so you have to detour east or west via Hedge End or West End to find pathways but you still have to first encounter walking along and crossing the very busy A27. Try to walk to the Tesco Superstore and you have to cross extremely busy carriageways merging to and from Windover roundabout, accessing junction 8 of the M27.

Rymacare state they will provide their own transport but is that really practical for up to 6 adult residents and if so, why haven't they done so whilst operating Hilltop as a care home for the past seven months?

To Summarise

As neighbours to Hilltop we find Rymacare's attempt at an Appeal deplorable but not surprising. Hilltop's location does mean that any adults living there are to all intent and purposes isolated. Hilltop Care Home is approved for 5 residents but we believe there has never been more than 2 or 3 adults living there at any one time and yet they want approval to increase it to 6. Why? Could the relatively low numbers be a reflection on how loved ones of potential residents view the location of Hilltop.

Rymacare seem to say whatever they need to gain planning approvals for Hilltop and then do whatever they want afterwards with absolutely no regard for their neighbours. Just look at the attached pictures showing bins and waste products constantly left outside Hilltop's borders, as well as cars parked in the street when there is ample parking available on Hilltop's driveway. We are convinced that any expansion of Hilltop would be detrimental to potential residents and neighbours alike and ask you to firmly reject this Appeal for all the explanations and reasons covered in this and previous representations.

Yours Sincerely

All Neighbouring Residents of Hilltop
(Signature list attached)

P & L Small
Rowan, Pinewood Park:

J & S Hobden
Avalon, Pinewood Park:

G & M Clarke
Casamia, Pinewood Park

A & B Gray
The Birches, Pinewood Park

M & A Carter
Windgarth, Pinewood Park

A Willison & G Crawford
Fairbarn, Pinewood Park

P & S Tranor
Ragged End View, Pinewood Park