

Supporting Statement

I am the owner of Memory Lane Day Centre in Rotherham, which provides care and support for patients of all ages living with Alzheimer's and dementia. Many of the individuals we support also have additional mobility issues due to age and other medical conditions.

As part of promoting wellbeing, social engagement, and maintaining a connection with the local community, I have on a number of occasions accompanied our service users to The Lounge. These visits have been extremely positive and genuinely beneficial.

The Lounge offers a calm, welcoming, and inclusive environment that is particularly well-suited to individuals living with dementia and cognitive conditions. The atmosphere is relaxed and not overwhelming, which is essential for our patients. The staff are consistently kind, patient, and attentive, showing a clear understanding of how to interact with vulnerable individuals. Our patients thoroughly enjoy visiting, often looking forward to the experience, and it is evident they feel safe, comfortable, and valued whilst there.

Opportunities like this are incredibly important. They help reduce isolation, support emotional wellbeing, and provide a sense of normality and enjoyment outside of a care setting.

It is also important to note that some of our patients will only feel comfortable sitting outdoors for a drink or food due to their medical conditions. For these individuals, access to a suitable and safe outdoor environment is not just a preference, but a necessity in order for them to attend and enjoy visits.

Although I believe the rooftop terrace is a wonderful addition and I personally look forward to visiting and enjoying this space, it is simply not suitable for certain individuals due to accessibility limitations.

However, following discussions with Carl, it is clear that during the summer months it would not be appropriate or fair to continue bringing certain individuals if the only outdoor option remains the rooftop terrace. A significant number of our patients are unable to manage stairs safely due to mobility limitations, meaning they would be excluded from accessing outdoor space altogether.

For this reason, I strongly support The Lounge's application for a front outdoor drinking area. The proposed front outdoor area would be fully accessible at ground level, with no stairs, making it suitable for individuals with mobility limitations.

This is a crucial point from a care perspective. An accessible outdoor space would allow all individuals, regardless of their physical ability, to enjoy fresh air and a social experience during the warmer months without barriers.

From a professional care perspective, this would ensure equality of access and allow us to continue bringing our patients without restriction. Being able to sit outdoors in a safe, welcoming, and easily accessible environment would significantly enhance their experience and overall wellbeing.

In my professional opinion, The Lounge is a valuable and positive addition to the local community, particularly for those living with dementia and other health conditions. The proposed outdoor area would further strengthen its role as an inclusive, supportive, and accessible venue for all.

I fully support this application.