Bark Cottage
Hulme Lane
Hulme
Stoke on Trent
Staffordshire
ST3 5BH

25th May 2016

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re Planning Application SMD/2016/0288

I am writing to officially object to the proposed change of use at Bark House Farm. I have lived at Bark Cottage, the point where Bark House Farm's drive exits and enters onto Hulme Lane since 1986. My property will be the most affected by any changes. Historically traffic into and out of this driveway was light passenger car, tractors less than 5-tonne, plus one rigid 13-tonne lorry which did not operate on a seven day basis. Due to the size of the lorry and infrequent use there was little or no impact on the locality.

The reasons for my objection are as follows:

1. **Potential for structural damage to property**

   Bark Cottage is in excess of one hundred years old. This change of use will see an increase in the frequency and weight of vehicles (some of which will be 44-tonnes) which will pass within 1 metre of the property. To date I have not seen any evidence that any structural surveys have been carried out. Previously our walls and fence have been damaged on several occasions by vehicles.

2. **Pedestrian safety**

   Adjacent to my property the driveway is only 3.4m wide, the maximum width for a large goods vehicle is 2.55m, which leaves only 43cm per side should a vehicle and pedestrian meet at this point. This is a likely occurrence due to the lack of visibility of the driveway when entering/exiting the property using the rear gate. In the event of a problem, pedestrians or large goods vehicles would have nowhere to go due to a telegraph pole on one side and a brick wall on the other – very restrictive.

3. **Visibility and Lighting**

Given the volume of traffic that already uses Hulme Lane, the addition of 7 large goods vehicles slowly exiting from, and returning to the driveway on a daily basis will create a significant hazard for oncoming vehicles from the Weston Coyney direction. Oncoming vehicles which could be travelling up to 60mph will have restricted visibility of the junction and the lane layout does not provide sufficient braking distance to avoid collision.

Secondly during winter months, the proposed operation will see the junction being used within a 6 hour period of darkness. There is no lighting present, and the previously stated hazard would be increased.

Furthermore for this operation to be run safely the proposed site will need additional lighting, I have concerns regarding light pollution in the Green Belt.

4. **Nuisance**

Noise disturbance from passing large good vehicles and headlights shining into the property is a concern. The proposed start time for the operation is 05.00hrs, however drivers will arrive earlier than that time to warm up their large goods vehicles thus creating further disturbance for local residents. What constitutes unsociable hours?

This planning application has already been refused and one of the main reasons for re-applying is due to "very special circumstances". However, this is not a growth issue as stated within the application, it is about relocation. The applicants could look further afield for a suitable site. A 10 mile radius is too restrictive as most businesses would be prepared to travel further. Surely this cannot be the only site in North Staffordshire? If "80% of Leek Auction's business would be affected" then why not use the Leek Auction site for this proposed development? Currently the Leek site is under used so it would accommodate this proposal with ease. Just because time is running out at the haulage firm's current location it is no reason to try and overturn the previous planning refusal. Please consider Werrington Parish Council's previous objection based on the lane width being "too narrow".

Finally, since the original planning application was refused and based on the issues I have raised I feel that "very special circumstances" do not apply and this proposed development within the Green Belt is totally inappropriate for this area.

Yours faithfully

Mr R K Weston