

**From:** [planning@staffmoorlands.gov.uk](mailto:planning@staffmoorlands.gov.uk)  
**To:** [Planning \(SMDC\)](#)  
**Subject:** Comment Received from Public Access  
**Date:** 14 March 2017 06:25:19

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Application Reference No. : SMD/2016/0807 Site Address: Padwick Farm Mount Road Leek Staffordshire ST13 7LY Leek

Comments by: R Jayes + H. Owen

From:

Padwick House  
Mount Road  
Lowe Hill  
Leek  
Staffordshire  
ST13 7LY

Phone:

Email:

Submission: Objection

Comments: Please note we did not receive the formal neighbour consultation letter (within 20mtrs requirement) from the Council and were made aware of this planning application on 11th March. Our comments are as follows:

1) The siting of these camping units is near to a line of trees which provide a corridor for foraging and commuting bats and may also be used as overnight roosts. Using a bat detector we know feeding bats are present along this line of trees bounding the Ashbourne Road. Of note we found a dead bat on our drive adjacent to the line of trees. This was reported on 21st August 2013 with photographs to Staffordshire Ecological Centre who confirmed it as a Natterers bat. We have no objection to providing copy of our communication and photographs. This species is relatively scarce in the UK - refer here: [http://www.bats.org.uk/pages/-natterers\\_bat-817.html](http://www.bats.org.uk/pages/-natterers_bat-817.html). The habitat survey necessary for the Biodiversity Report (late 2015) with the planning application should have revealed this record through a desktop search.

2) Application form section 9: the application ¿description of proposal¿ is for a ¿shepherd hut¿ but the plan(s)/drawings reference is for a log cabin - inconsistent information please clarify.

3) For planning application SMD/2014/0132 section 10 only 10 parking spaces were declared onsite with 0 proposed. Application SMD/2016/0807 states the existing number of spaces as 20. This needs clarification since 10 of the 20 parking spaces do not appear to have planning approval. A similar inconsistency in parking spaces was raised by Highways in the refused planning application SMD/2015/0783 for 4 camping units.

4) Application form section 13: we suggest the answer to 13a should be yes ¿ bats are a protected species, active overnight and therefore can be disturbed by overnight camping. Bats can be found on the development site as well as land adjacent or near to the proposed development.

5) How many people does each proposed hut accommodate? Current camping restrictions are 15 persons for the camping barns. Please clarify what the proposed maximum is for this proposal.

6) The location plan suggests there is a wall or fence between the entrance to the proposed camping unit area

and the parking area to Padwick Farm. It is unclear where the path and access to the proposed units will be, please clarify.

7) The development is a further expansion of the camping facilities in what is a quiet residential area. The proposed units as per the drawing are less than elegant and would not be in-keeping for the elevated site which is a gateway into the historic market town of Leek. We note that the Town Council in their planning meeting of Tuesday 19th January 2016 recommended refusal of a very similar proposal on these same grounds at the same property (ref SMD/2015/0783) so it is not clear why that view would change completely over a relatively short period of 14 months. (ref letter Mr Weaver SMDC to Julie Taylor Leek Town Clerk dated 20th January 2016). The Town Council should justify this complete reversal.

8) The increased level of camping facility will inevitably add to traffic on a very narrow access lane used by farm traffic and walkers. The signage at the entrance to this lane states clearly 'unsuitable for motor vehicles'. The camping site vehicular entrance visibility is also poor. These points have been raised for previous planning applications at this property and additional traffic is ill advised on safety grounds.

9) The camping barns have been in operation for about 2 years. Whilst we have no issue with traditional log burning fires there have been a number of occasions when chemicals have been used to start/maintain fires and/or barbecues and the resulting smoke has been noxious within our garden. This we find unacceptable and we can only see this worsening with the proposed units and increased level of camping since we will be subjected to smoke from two different directions (depending on the wind) which will degrade our amenity.

10) We are also aware of noise issues late at night and into the early morning particularly with party groups. The additional camping facilities are likely to exacerbate the issue for neighbouring properties. For 9) and 10) we need assurances that our amenity will be protected, how it will be managed and that issues arising will be dealt with promptly, fairly and reasonably.

11) Camping barn guests returning from a night out in Leek may choose to take the main Ashbourne Road route home past Lowe Hill Farm and take a short cut over the dry stone wall adjacent to the entrance to Padwick House to reach the proposed camping units. We need assurances this will not be allowed to happen, how it will be managed and that issues arising will be dealt with promptly, fairly and reasonably.

In summary:

We object to this planning application and the change of use of this field, which if approved is likely to lead to future applications to expand the camping facilities.

The increase in intensity of camping in this way is inappropriate for this area and gateway to Leek.

(We note here that correctly managed with due consideration for neighbours the previous conversion of the cow sheds at this property was sympathetic and in keeping with the area.)

The proposed location of the camping units has the potential to interfere with a bat foraging and commuting route which includes a reported and identified scarce bat species.

The application is simply a minor revamp of the refused planning application SMD/2015/0783 and should therefore be similarly refused with the land remaining solely for grazing purposes.

(printed copy hand delivered to Council reception, Leek)