From: planningcomments@staffsmoorlands.gov.uk
To: Planning Comments (SMDC)
Subject: Comment Received from Public Access
Date: Monday, September 09, 2019 12:20:38 PM

Application Reference No. : SMD/2019/0525 Site Address: Brantwood Birchall Lane Leek Staffordshire ST13 5RA Leek
Comments by: E.A.SHARRATT.
From:

WOODPECKERS,
BIRCHALL LANE,
BIRCHALL
LEEK,
STAFFS.
ST13 5RA

Submission: Objection
Comments:

Dear Mr. Swithenbank,

re Planning Application SMD/2019/0525 Brantwood, Birchall Lane, Leek.

I write to advise you that I have strong objections to the application. If every owner on Birchall whose garden abuts the open countryside, including myself, were to erect a sizeable outbuilding like that at Brantwood, we would have a very different looking landscape and neighbourhood.

The whole of the Birchall Lane estate was developed over the years to sit well with the lay of the land coming down from Ballington Grange, and properties have been built to nestle in the hillside below and never be visible from the beautiful countryside. The erection of the outbuilding at Brantwood fundamentally changes this because of the engineering of the ground level at the summit, revealing this sizeable outbuilding ¿ something which was never meant to be.

The size and the views from the building suggest that the owners and their guests will spend a great deal of time there throughout the year, with the associated noise levels and invasion of neighbours¿ privacy. Indeed the outbuilding is overbearing to my own property, invading my privacy and spoiling the enjoyment of my large front garden, which I feel amounts to unneighbourliness. Sadly, in effect, the outbuilding fails to be sympathetic to the area in any way: it is not sympathetic to neighbouring properties, open countryside, wildlife, ancient woodland and users of the adjoining public byway. The adverse impact is enormous.

There is a national resurgence in awareness of the importance of our gardens for wildlife particularly providing corridors for wildlife between town and country. This is particularly relevant here as the rear garden boundaries provide a safe corridor for wildlife across the fields between Ballington and Birchall woodlands. The development of the outbuilding is extremely detrimental to this, particularly bearing in mind the close proximity to the boundary and all the activity taking place inside and around it on the leveled ground.

Given my age I no longer feel able to safely walk on the terrain of the cutting and the fields beyond. However, I am very familiar with adverse comments by people who do use the public byway and I share in their dismay at the negative impact the building has on the surrounding open countryside.

There is a restrictive covenant on Brantwood against this building which, although a private matter between the relevant parties, is nevertheless another indicator of how this garden land abutting the open countryside has always been respected and valued by past and present owners.

The unique and special nature of the environment we live in here has been preserved and maintained by generations before us and we are the beneficiaries. I am one of those who believes it behoves us in turn to respect their efforts and be proud to carry forward their good work to the benefit of everyone. Inappropriate development that doesn¿t comply with planning law and policy, of course, should be halted.

Applications for permission to build in garden land have been a major issue in Birchall Lane in recent years and the residents, to their credit, have grouped together to protect the neighbourhood from inappropriate development and to ensure that the integrity of our unique semi rural environment is not destroyed or damaged. A key issue here with the inappropriate development at Brantwood is the overpowering effect of the building in its elevated position on the site. This is a key ground on which the planning authorities have refused many applications on Heather Hills, The Moorings and Rivendell Lane.

In the interests of all the above matters, I urge you to refuse the application.

Yours sincerely,