From: Planning Comments (SMDC)
To: Planning Comments (SMDC)
Subject: Comment Received from Public Access
Date: 02 March 2020 08:28:25

Application Reference No. : DOC/2020/0024 Site Address: Land At Abbey View Fields Bridge End Macclesfield Road Leek Staffordshire Comments by: Mr Gosnold
From:
Highfield Lodge
Highfield
Leek
Leek

ST13 8SG
Phone:
Email:
Submission: Objection
Comments: We note that the letter accompanying this application now proposes to access the site via Abbey Green Road and a route via the former walled garden of Highfield Hall. This is not in accordance with the specified access of the extant planning permission. If safe and suitable access to the site via Bridge End cannot be achieved then planning permission should not have been granted. There is no map accompanying the letter and so the information submitted does not demonstrate how construction traffic and HGVs will cross from the access track to enter the site itself.

Looking at the geography of the area we assume this will require traffic to cross an agricultural field to the rear of the Cricket Club car park and then pass through the Cricket Club car park itself. The agricultural field is wet and muddy and we do not see how it will be practically possible for large construction traffic to be able to cross over it. If this is the proposed route it is likely some form of road surface will be necessary so as to facilitate vehicles being able to use it. This is not specified in the letter and is in itself a form of development that would require planning permission. Allowing development on this greenfield site would not be in accordance with the relevant Development Plan policies and would extend the envelope of development that has been allowed to take place at Highfield further into the open countryside. Given the topography of the area this hill is highly visible from views in the surrounding countryside, particularly when seen from Abbey Green Road, the Sainsbury¿s car park and the A523 towards the town centre. The development of this field would therefore be harmful to the character and appearance of the area.

We would also make the point that site traffic used the entrance via Highfield Lodge on Saturday 29 February when they arrived with two white vans and a mini digger. In reality we fear that this is what will happen when construction traffic access the site. Again this is not in accordance with the planning permission that was granted. In the recent appeal (3232103) on the small parcel of land at Highfield, the Inspector made observations about the access from Highfield including that there was restricted visibility for drivers when exiting the driveway onto Macclesfield Road, particularly to the north. The Inspector concluded that the shortfall in visibility is such that an increase in vehicle movements would have a detrimental impact on highway safety. The use of Highfield as an access by construction traffic would therefore not be suitable as it would be likely to have a detrimental impact on highway safety. Furthermore the width of the historic entrance gates is narrow and HGVs have difficulty fitting through it. Indeed one stone pillar has recently been damaged by a lorry accessing the drive as part of ongoing work associated with the two recently constructed dwellings.

Finally I would make the point that pedestrians accessing the Cricket Club from town along with many residents of Highfield and Bridge End use the route of the former turnpike road that passes from the Cricket Club to Bridge End as an alternative to walking along the busy A523 as it is a safe traffic free route. The traffic along the A523 travels at high speed and the pavement is narrow in places, particularly when the many lorries pass along it. It can be quite intimidating to walk along it with dogs and small children. So the former turnpike

road is used as a safe, more pleasant alternative. I would therefore ask that a pedestrian route is maintained along it during the construction of the development as otherwise more people will be forced to use their cars to drive into town rather than having to endure the unpleasant walk along the busy A523. The construction traffic that arrived on 29 February have already churned up the path such that it has made access for pedestrians difficult.

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