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To: [Planning Comments \(SMDC\)](#)
Subject: Comment Received from Public Access
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Application Reference No. : SMD/2021/0113

Site Address: Land At Bridge End Macclesfield Road Leek Staffordshire ST13 8LG

Comments by: Natalie Menzies & Lorraine Ingram

From:

15
Bridge End
Leek
Leek
Staffordshire
ST13 8LG

Submission: Objection

Comments: We are both resident/homeowners of Bridge End and we strongly object to this development. We registered strong objections, concerns and questions on the previous planning application (SMD/2017/0696) (SMD/2018/0679) which have not been answered with this new application. We will repeat them below and also add in additional concerns/objections relating to some of the points stated on this application.

We are unable to attach pictures to this page, so we will also email this objection in writing to the planning officer to include photographs.

The proposed site is via the private trackway attached to our property. We are registering strong objections to the proposed planning development for the following reasons:

1. Current usage

a. There are currently 8 houses on Bridge End, all having a minimum of 2 cars per house hold (some houses have more) and all cars are parked on the track, leaving a very narrow space in between to allow other vehicles through -- Pictures to be included in written version emailed to the planning officer.

The residents of Bridge End currently manage the space between ourselves ensuring we have our own spaces to park and make provisions for visitors. As a community we always try to adapt the parking where necessary to allow space for visitors and often have to block each other in to achieve it.

As you can see from the first picture there are three cars parked across the top of the track due to there being no through road. If this was turned into an access road then straight away we lose 3 parking spaces.

b. The top of the track is the wider part so it is used as a turning circle, but as cars are already parked there this is already a very tight space.

c. Many of the residents (including ourselves) use the side of the track for communal wheelie bin storage. This is because it is convenient for both the residents and refuse collectors as some houses have no other area to store their wheelie bins. - Pictures to be included in written version emailed to the planning officer.

If Bridge End is to be developed to highways standard this would have to include a

1.3 metre walkway. With the current width of the track I cannot see how this can be achieved while maintaining our existing car parking, turning circle, wheelie bin storage and safety.

d. The track at Bridge End is not only used as access to our houses, turning circle and for wheelie bin storage, it is also used as a safe communal space for the residents. Some of the properties do not have gardens so their children play safely out at the top of the track. If development was to take place these children would have no area to play outside.

We have a strong sense of community at Bridge End and the residents often use the track for communal/social gatherings such as BBQs, or general friendly discussions/chats.

Should Bridge End be turned into an access road we would lose our community and it would be devastating for not only for ourselves, but for the other residents of Bridge End.

2. Site Plan

SMD/2013/1099 was allowed on appeal. The Inspector included a condition to reconstruct the access road from the Highway to the site. It was highlighted that Bridge End was not included in the Site Plan. This current application yet again does do that.

This application is yet again ignoring the fact that the Bridge End track would need to be developed to sustain the increased traffic and that would come with a loss of amenities to all the residents at Bridge End.

3. Intensification of use

Opposite our home there is a raised field which is supported by a stone wall. We are extremely concerned that intensification of use with over 30 more cars up and down each day will damage this wall, causing land subsistence which could cause damage to our cars and homes on an enormous scale.

The track itself is a rough surface which is maintained by the residents. There are large pot holes which are sometimes filled in by the residents. 30 or more cars up and down the track each day greatly intensifies the use and it has not been taken into consideration as to detriment/damage the increased traffic would cause to the already rough surface.

4. Right of access

There is currently no right of vehicle access to the proposed site. From the pictures that will be emailed in written version to the planning officer, you can clearly see that the track past the gates have not been used by the landowner or by the cricket club for many years.

The gate is kept locked so cars cannot venture up there and the Bridge End residents hold the key. Not once in the 6 years that I have lived here, or the 20 years my neighbour has lived here has a vehicle passed through the gates.

5. Flooding to the houses at Bridge End.

The private track at Bridge End has been managed by the residents which included adding in a flood defense barrier (which looks like large speed bump) which then diverts excess water into a rain gully (also created by the residents). This was created after many of the homes at Bridge End were flooded in heavy rain when excess water ran down the from the Cricket Club end of the track. If Bridge End was used as an access road this flood barrier would have to be removed as it is too big to get an average sized car over. This then leaves the houses at Bridge End vulnerable to flooding. I have provided a video to the planning officer which demonstrates the excess water that can cascade down Bridge End in heavy rain even with the flood defense

6. Changing Bridge End

a. Bridge End is one of the oldest parts of Leek, with some of the houses dating back hundreds of years. The look of Bridge End, the atmosphere here, and the privacy and safety of a private road are some of the reasons many of the residents chose to live here. By developing the track we will lose some of the most important reasons for living here and it will irreversibly change our lives.

b. There are a set of gate posts on Bridge End track which are believed to be original posts for the entrance to Highfield Hall (included in pictures in written version emailed to the planning officer). There are also the original cobbles along certain parts of the track, which would date back before 1900s when the track was previously the old Earls Way. I would request that a Local Authority Conservation Officer visits the sight to assess the posts for cultural significance and preservation. The width between the gate posts is narrow so they would have to be removed to accommodate large vehicles such as refuse lorries, large delivery lorries or construction vehicles.

Bridge End is beautiful with the old houses, the old track, the gate posts and wildlife, which as residents we get to experience every day and as mentioned earlier are some of the reasons we chose to live here. For this to be developed and these things be lost would not only be a travesty to the residents, but to the history of the place.

7. Significant safety issue from Macclesfield road onto the track at Bridge End

The junction from the bottom of the track onto the Macclesfield Road would be inadequate to accommodate extra vehicles. This is a busy road and turning right out of the track or right into the track already has issues because of poor visibility and speed of oncoming traffic even though the it falls into a 30mph zone. There would need to be a significant improvement to this road layout if the access were to go ahead not just for vehicles but for pedestrians. In our opinion other access should be sought to the new development site such as using the existing turning already into the cricket club further along the Macclesfield road.

8. In snowy weather it is very difficult to get even half way up the track and residents have to pile their cars at the bottom of the track, making access to and from the track and the neighboring factory difficult. It would be impossible for residents of the proposed site to be able to access their homes in bad weather. There is simply not nearly enough room at the bottom of the track for Bridge End residents and the proposed site residents to be able to leave their cars at the bottom of the track.

9. Points stated on this application

a. Point 8 of the application form ¿ Pedestrian and Vehicle Access, Roads, Rights of Way. Please may I point out that the applicant has stated NO to the question: Is a new or altered vehicular access proposed to or from the public highway? So this suggests that the developer has no intention of developing any part of the track from the highway up to the site. As previously mentioned you cannot get standard sized cars over the flood defence, the first half of Bridge End (up to the gates) is unsuitable for the increased traffic and the second half of the track (upwards from the gates) is unsuitable for vehicles to get up.

It is also stated NO to the question Is a new or altered pedestrian access proposed to or from the public highway? This suggests that there will be no footpath from the site to the Highway. Considering it a fair distance between the highway and the proposed site how can residents of the new site walk safely to and from their homes with no footpath?

It is also stated NO to the question Do the proposals require any diversions/extinguishments and/or creations of rights of way? This should be answered YES as the developer has no right of way over Bridge End track so by using it as an access road he is trying to create a right of way over the track for the residents of the proposed site.

b. Point 14 of the application form ¿ Waste Storage and Collection states that ¿ample space provided within each plot for storage of wheelie bins¿. However, it does not state how those wheelie bins would be collected. Currently the refuse lorries can only get a certain way up the track to collect the current wheelie bins. The refuse lorries would be unable to access the site as the lorries would be too big to fit through the gates on the track and they can¿t get up the track at all if it has snowed. So are the residents of the proposed site expected to wheel their bins all the way down the track to where the current residents have their bins collected from? If so that is unacceptable for the new residents to travel that far with their bins and there is insufficient space on the track for an additional 12 bins (24 on the brown and blue collection days).

c. Point 5.8 of the Planning Statement states that for the previous applications for this site ¿the Local Authority (and Planning Officer) has concluded that there would be no adverse impact on the amenity of neighbouring residential occupiers¿ this is a disingenuous statement, as the local authority did not come to a conclusion about the concerns that the current residents raised due to the bottom part of Bridge End being excluded from the site plan.

Highways have stated on each application that ¿Bridge End is a private/unadopted road. The applicant should satisfy themselves that they have the appropriate rights and permissions to carry out works to Bridge End; that they have appropriate right of access; that they have rights and permissions to use Bridge End for construction vehicles¿ which the developer does not have and also states in SMD/2017/0696 that ¿as it is a private road, the reconstruction should be agreed with fronting owners¿ which is it not agreed.

At the previous Committee meeting (for SMD/2017/0679) the Chair stated that the access road leading up to the site is a private matter between the developer and the residents. Whilst this is true in a sense of legal rights, the access road needs to be taken into account by the Planning Committee due to detrimental effect and loss of amenities for the residents of Bridge End.

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