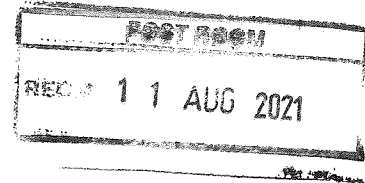


Karen Barker
Hollystones
Stilehouse Lane
Leek, Staffordshire, ST13 7LS

5 August 2021

Planning Officer,
SMDC



Dear Officer,
SMD/2021/0465

Erection of 1no. holiday cabin, installation of ground mounted photovoltaic panels and formation of vehicular access.

I wish to object to the above application.

The site is an open agricultural grazing field which lies between the iconic and highly valuable ridgelines of 'The Mount' and 'Morridge Top'

The site lies 'in the shade of The Peak District National Park' and also lies prominently within the area designated as 'highly sensitive Ancient Slope and Valley Landscape'

The application is for a substantial residential building together with residential amenities including a substantial fenced residential access road, patio, parking areas, and domestic ancillary installations.

The site lies outside the development boundary of Leek, and well outside the village boundaries of Bradnop and Thorncliffe.

The proposed development would have a negative and intrusive effect on the historic quality and nature of the site location and the surrounding areas.

(Policy SS2 "Other Rural Areas – this comprises the open countryside where development is normally unacceptable")

The proposal would be a clear domestic 'infill' at odds with and contrary to the identity, nature and historic value of the Ancient Slope and Valley Landscape which is characterised by isolated dwellings set in:

"• Strongly undulating or sloping landscape cut by small scale steep sided stream valleys

• Small scale mainly ancient irregular fields bounded by trees and hedgerows

• Extensive views from higher ground

• Intimate wooded valleys

• Stone buildings and drystone walls towards uplands "

(Ancient Slope and Valley Landscape Study)

Whilst the ancient 'intimate wooded steep sided stream valley' to the north side of the development would provide some screening from northern views during the summer months, the ancient planting is predominantly deciduous and recedes October through to April and would provide little if any screening.

This 'intimate wooded steep sided stream valley' is a home and refuge not only to local species of 'fauna and flora' but also to many varieties of local wildlife including voles, water birds, birds of prey, foxes, ground birds including pheasant, ducks and partridge, water hens, bats, owls, etc.

The proposal would remain highly visible from most vantage points and would be a very clear and obvious urban domestic intrusion into the landscape!

In the interests of clarity, the 'stable buildings' mentioned in the application are a field shelter for horses (surrounded by clutter of a van body and old storage caravan).

The field site is in current use for grazing of the applicant's horses.

Although 'Tourism' is the primary (and only?) justification put forward by the applicants, this would have a very minimal positive contribution (SS1) and does not satisfy criteria of 'essential need (SS10)

Overall the detrimental and harmful effects of domestication of this ancient slope and valley landscape site would far outweigh any possible benefits of provision of short/long stay visitor accommodation. There are numerous existing and designated visitor sites within easy reach, providing ample accommodation in suitable and accepted locations.

It is additionally likely that the proposed development would be utilised as living accommodation for the applicant(s).

This proposal if permitted would provide a clear precedent and encouragement to multiple further and similar applications across the wider area of the Staffordshire Moorlands.

In addition to forming in itself a domestic urban intrusion and detrimental change causing significant and demonstrable harm to the landscape, it would open the door to destruction of the very historic, scenic, tranquil and highly treasured nature of the Ancient slope and Valley landscape which is identified as being 'Highly sensitive to change'.

This would be highly detrimental and harmful to the areas' priceless and iconic contribution to the character and appeal of Leek as 'Queen of The Moorlands'. (Policy DC3)

Please refuse this intrusive application for development.

Yours sincerely,

Karen Barker