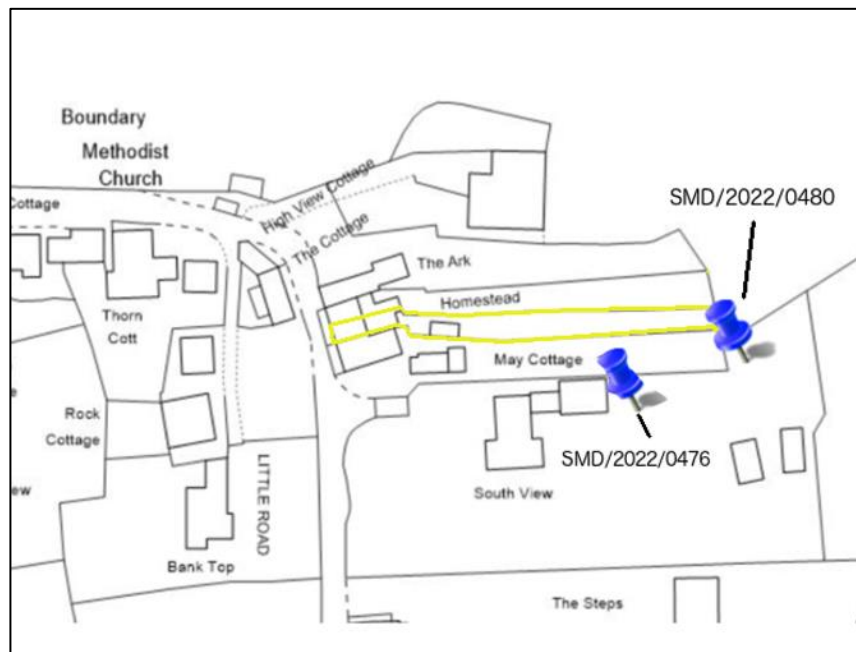


**OBJECTION TO TWO RETROSPECTIVE PLANNING APPLICATIONS AT
SOUTH VIEW, COMMONSIDE, BOUNDARY, STAFFORDSHIRE, ST10 2NU
(REF SMD/2022/0476 & SMD/2022/0480).**

I live at Foxglove Cottage, Boundary, ST10 2NU which resides between 5-10m away on the neighbouring from two retrospective planning applications (**SMD/2022/0476 & SMD/2022/0480**) at South View.

I have lived at my property for over eighteen years. In a professional capacity, I am a qualified Conservation Biologist and Ecologist who is actively involved in protected species surveys and licence applications with regard to planning and the law for close on twelve years. I oppose both retrospective planning applications at South View on both a personal and professional level.



Foxglove Cottage boundary (Yellow) in relation to location of two retrospective planning applications at South View.

**OBJECTION 1 - PLANNING APPLICATION REFERENCE SMD/2022/0476:
RETROSPECTIVE PLANNING PERMISSION FOR A RAISED PATIO.**

- **PRIVACY AND ACCUMULATIVE EFFECTS THROUGH NOISE, DISTURBANCE AND LIGHTING ON MY OWN PERSONAL AMENITY SPACE.**

Whilst the gross land holding area of Southview affords the luxury of several hectares of owned and rented land, both of the retrospective planning applications are to be buffered along the south facing boundary immediately adjacent to my own property (between 5-10m away). I consider the locations of both proposed developments to be overbearing and deleterious to my own private garden area and living space which equates to a modest 0.02ha in comparison.

The proposed raised patio is to be constructed ca.10m away from my own garden area, being sited at elevation against a boundary hedge, which will visually impact upon my privacy and into my own amenity space.



Proximity of building / raised patio area in relation to my garden area.

BUILDING TO BE USED AS A DWELLING?

I see that the application for a raised patio relates to an auxiliary building with architectural plans showing bedrooms and a day room space. Having lived at Foxglove cottage for over 18yrs, I am not aware that this outbuilding was annexed as a living space. The planning application only states a raised patio, but would seem to be part of a bigger development encompassing the renovation and change of use of this outbuilding? Can the LPA please clarify this.

BIODIVERSITY NET LOSS

Whilst I am not opposed to the principal of sustainable developments, I am opposed to any developments that result in habitat loss, degradation, light pollution and an overall negative impact to biodiversity.

“Biodiversity Net Gains” is an additional requirement, of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2019 [paragraph 109 and 175]), whereby sustainable developments should aim to increase overall biodiversity and net gains onsite for nature.

At this juncture (and before retrospective planning application had to be sort by the applicant), both developments (SMD/2022/0476 and SMD/2022/0480) have already resulted in a considerable negative loss to pre-existing biodiversity, and I consider both these started developments fall well short of the National Planning Policy Framework whereby:

“development should produces a net gain in biodiversity, and ensure that any unavoidable impacts are appropriately mitigated for”.

Given that planning permission was required for both developments, I am unaware of any preliminary ecological assessments being carried out to ascertain the full impact to protected flora and fauna including roosting bats or nesting birds within the zone of impact of the two developments.

This included felling and removal of a large number of a number of prestigious, veteran trees to the rear of the garden at Southview (in relation to raised patio), and part /full removal of hedgerows (in relation to concrete pads and erection of stable blocks).

PROTECTED SPECIES

If it had not been for my own personal intervention, an oak tree located on a transboundary between my property and that of Southview would have likely been indiscriminately felled along with all the other trees. This tree has a known bat roost for common pipistrelle present in it, whilst also being a haven for nesting birds and invertebrates. This tree resides ca. 20m away from the proposed raised patio area and <5m away from the proposed stable block application (SMD/2022/0480).

Schedule 5 of The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (and amendments) prohibits deliberate damaging, disturbing, destroying or obstructing any structure or place of refuge of listed fauna, such bat species.



Location of oak tree with epicormic growth and known common pipistrelle bat roost on transboundary next to proposed development SMD/2022/0480 (red) and mu property boundary (yellow).

Over forty native bird species have been recorded by myself within the radius of the proposed development area including Schedule 1 listed Barn owl, and a number of Red and Amber listed Birds of Conservation Concern (BoCC) in the UK. However, timing of tree felling and ground clearance was carried out over an extended period of time, which included some of the bird breeding season.

Furthermore, protected Great crested newt have also been recorded in my own garden pond 10m from the proposed development area and further to the south (200m – see below).



LIGHTING

There appears to be no lighting strategy for me to comment on at this stage. However, having overheard discussions and speaking directly with Mr. Glover as a result, it is my understanding that the applicant intends to erect lighting columns possibly from the house, raised patio area down to the stables as well as around the stables.

The proposed developments fall intrinsically under ILP Environmental Zone E2 - Rural:

Zone	Surrounding	Lighting Environment	Examples
E0	Protected	Dark	UNESCO Starlight Reserves, IDA Dark Sky Parks
E1	Natural	Intrinsically dark	National Parks, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty etc.
E2	Rural	Low district brightness	Village or relatively dark outer suburban locations
E3	Suburban	Medium district brightness	Small town centres or suburban locations
E4	Urban	High district brightness	Town/city centres with high levels of night- time activity

In both a conservational capacity and as a resident homeowner adjacent to the proposed developments, I want my garden to be completely dark and unilluminated. Darkness is a habitat in its own right, and I am therefore opposed to any lighting that fragments sensitive, rural habitats and creates sky glow in what is a predominantly semi-rural greenbelt area of low district brightness.

However I am concerned that additional lighting will cause excessive skyglow and light pollution into my garden region and onto adjacent habitats. Lights on lighting columns could have an adverse unacceptable effect on the dark sky, and the feeding and migratory habitats of other crepuscular and nocturnal species such as small mammals and invertebrates. There is a bat roost in the nearby Oak tree which would potentially be negatively impacted upon by increased disturbance and lighting

Although the Council does not have any specific policies relating to “dark skies” the National Planning Practice Guidance states that “Lighting schemes can also be costly and difficult to change, so getting the design right and setting appropriate conditions at the planning stage is important”. I attempted to flag this up to Mr. Glover.

Indeed, I have already made a polite request to Mr. and Mrs. Glover in relation to one single security light that had been fitted onto an outbuilding, which when left on, causes light pollution and impacts directly into my own garden space. This obtrusive light still persists unfortunately when left on, despite polite requests being made to redirect or place a canopy hood over it / put on a timer.

I therefore consider any additional lighting will further impinge upon my own amenity space given such close proximity of both developments and combined accumulative effects to link the developments together through lighting immediately adjacent to my home.

I consider a lighting strategy in this rural location to be important at this stage rather than relying on a condition. This comment applies to both the patio and stables applications.

PLANNING APPLICATION REFERENCE SMD/2022/0480:

RETROSPECTIVE APPLICATION FOR TWO CONCRETE BASES AND THE ERECTION OF TWO TIMBER STABLES ON SKIDS.

I am opposed to this development occurring approximately 5m away from my boundary for similar reasons based on accumulative and deleterious effects onto my own personal living space and impact to biodiversity and the rural environment.

THE NEED FOR THE STABLES

Only until recently has the land to the rear of Southview started to be used as a paddock for horses. The current 'new' owners of South View have made a number of material changes and there is already an existing stable block containing 4-5 stables now on the site (see below). This is more than large enough to accommodate the horse and pony currently present on the site. This stable block is shown in Drawing no. 01233 - AL(0)01 located to the SE of the proposal.

PRIVATE USE OR COMMERCIAL

What is the justification for more stables? None is provided. It is not clear whether the proposed development is for personal use only or for commercial use given that there are already existing stables on the site. If it is the intention to use a site for commercial use the road access is unsuitable and there would be a need for car parking? If it is for commercial gain then I am vehemently opposed to any such activities that will depreciate the intrinsic value and quality of my own home.



Existing stable block (background) in relation to concrete pads and extended track for intended stable blocks (foreground)

It is appreciated that the provision of appropriate facilities for outdoor recreation and sport can be permitted in the Green Belt as long as such facilities preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it.

Given that there are existing stables on the site I would question the need for the proposed stables and contend that they are not needed, don't preserve the openness of the Green Belt and conflict with Green Belt policy. As such they are inappropriate development.

LOCATION

The proposed stables would be located close to residential gardens. There are better alternative locations on the site. The submitted Site Plan shows the proposed development in a different location to that shown on Drawing no. 01233 - AL(0)01

The proposed buildings would not be screened. The recently laid down concrete pads are too close to the boundary to plant a hedge, which was otherwise present for many years but has subsequently been ripped out and replaced with timber post fencing (see below).



Proximity of development in relation to my boundary.

As a result an impact and visual intrusion into my own personal garden space due to removal of hedgerows has occurred notwithstanding a pending increase of artificial lighting and subsequent disturbance to follow should the LPA be minded to approve the retrospective planning applications.

I also have concerns regarding livestock being too close to neighbouring houses and subsequent animal feeds, manure heaps thus creating an increase of rats and horsefly infestation. A noticeable increase in rats has already been noted by myself and other nearby neighbours since livestock was reintroduced.

LOSS OF HEDGEROW & MATERIAL CHANGES TO SEMI-IMPROVED GRASSLAND



Section of a once continuous native hedgerow + scattered trees removed and replaced with an open timber post fence.

A section of once continuous native hedgerow + scattered trees has been indiscriminately removed which has stood there for more than 30 years and possibly the Hedgerow Regulations have been contravened. Sections of hedgerows were also removed around lower field margin boundaries.

Notwithstanding this, the loss of a substantial lengths of hedgerow and the associated trees harm biodiversity and wildlife. A look at Google Earth would show the trees and hedgerow before they were removed.

Intensive horse grazing can damage biodiversity and broad grassland habitats. A horse and pony would not necessarily have an adverse impact, whereas six or so horses could. Once again no biodiversity assessment has been undertaken to ascertain the value and loss of habitats within the zone of impact of the proposed developments.

MANURE

No manure heap is shown. One should be provided, and this should be properly constructed and located. I understand that the Council's Environmental Health team has a suitable condition.

There has been a significant increase of horse activities and manure fouling the front doorsteps to mine and other neighbouring houses which lead immediately out onto Little Road (Commonside Lane). This negatively impacts on our own neighbourhood amenities and risks contaminating our own houses, frontages and verges.

Conversely, since the developments were ordered to cease from the LPA enforcement officer prior to seeking retrospective planning permission, the number of horses and subsequent fouling of the lane has significantly decreased ten-fold since.



Horse excreta outside mine and neighbour's front doorsteps on Little Road.

THE APPLICATION DOES NOT SEEK PERMISSION FOR THE USE OF THE ADJOINING LAND FOR EQUESTRIAN USE.

Surely it should? the land is no longer in agricultural use?

To summarise, not one but two developments have been applied for retrospectively at South View that were otherwise deemed unlawful. I consider the expansion of raised patios, lighting, extended stable blocks and paddocks inappropriate in their proposed locations against neighbouring properties, whilst I regard activities to be deleterious to overall biodiversity, the character and amenities of the existing village, and do not fully preserve the integrity of the existing Green Belt policy.

I would therefore be grateful if the Local Planning Authority would consider my concerns and objections I have raised with regard to the validity of these two retrospective planning applications at South View.

Yours sincerely,

Mark Weston BSc Hons, MRSB

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