

From: [Steve Massey](#)
To: [Chris Johnston](#)
Cc: [Planning Comments \(SMDC\)](#)
Subject: SMD/2023/0625 - Stoney Rock Cottage, Common Lane, Waterhouses
Date: 20 March 2024 10:57:20
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

Chris

The proposed holiday let cabin and associated vehicle parking area would be of relatively low-impact construction, based on the site of an existing greenhouse and hard paved area. There are various trees/understorey in the immediate vicinity, mainly younger trees which would in practice not be adversely affected by the proposal.

The only substantial trees of note and relevance to the application are a mature Larch adjacent to the existing drive/pedestrian access through wall, and a couple of mature Ash trees along the road frontage boundary – the larger of which is identified and denoted as T1 on the application plans.

Relocating one stone pier further from the Larch to widen access and providing a low-key permeable stone vehicle access point off the already block-paved drive as proposed is unlikely to have any substantially harmful impact on this tree.

The Design and Access Statement (November 2023) refers to T1 having been pollarded due to falling dead wood. This behaviour is consistent with its appearance in Google images dated June 2023 (seemingly prior to pollarding) where not only T1 but in fact both mature Ash trees show clear evidence of advanced decline due to Ash Dieback Disease. Whilst it might be appropriate in tree safety terms to retain one or both Ash in pollarded form (with or without development as proposed), sadly their continued decline until death would anyway be anticipated as a result of Ash Dieback – in the Staffordshire Moorlands context this is a particularly notable problem towards/around the Waterhouses area where Ash is very prevalent on the alkaline soils of the limestone landscape. On this basis, any potential impact on these Ash trees arising from the proposed development is somewhat academic.

I have no objection to this application. Specific tree protection conditions are not required in this instance.

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