

Letter of objection to the planning application SMD/2024/0165

I am objecting to this application for the same reasons that I objected to the previous application for the same dog field as nothing has been changed.

The following should be considered regarding the application:

- It is on green belt land, which provides openness for the village and should be protected. The dog enclosure has a harmful visual impact on the farming land that is home to various livestock and wildlife.
- A dog enclosure is contrary to the policies SS1, SS10, DC1 and DC3.
- Noise pollution. The nature of a dog enclosure encourages poorly trained and reactive dog owners to bring their pets, as they are not able to safely walk them around the roads or community areas. The noise pollution will directly impact on the local residents, the groups of children who use the scout hut, the community owned pub The Auctioneers Arms and Caverswall Creative hub. There is no way of mitigating the noise or even reducing it as the dogs barking will carry across the open space. There are lots of local residents that both work nights or work from home and the noise will have a huge detrimental affect on their mental health. Caverswall is also home to a huge amount of pet dogs who will be encouraged to bark by the constant barking of the dogs using the enclosure.
- The dog enclosure is of no benefit to the local residents. It will not bring any revenue into the village as people will be unable to use the amenities as they will have dogs with them that are not able to be around any other dogs / children.
- There are no facilities for people to use at the dog field. If owners need to use the toilets the closest place will be the pub in which they would leave the dogs in the enclosure unattended to go to the toilet. This causes huge safety and welfare concerns.
- The field will be run on a self-service basis with owners accessing via the internet. This is a huge red flag as the applicant will not be able to monitor the number of dogs, breed of dogs or their welfare whilst using the dog field. Once they have obtained the code to the gate they will be free to come and go as they like until the code is changed. The applicant will have no control over what is happening at the field and she lives a distance away so is unable to support with any concerns or help if a dog escapes.
- There will be a negative ecological impact and no biodiversity gain. The applicant has added proposals for a hedgehog box and a beehive. I am extremely worried at the lack of animal knowledge this shows. Hedgehogs are a declining species and need to be protected not encouraged to go near to dogs. Dogs cause hedgehogs extreme stress and can kill them. Hedgehogs hibernate in the daytime except during breeding season where they search for food during the day. It is important to be extremely careful when cutting grass to ensure that hedgehogs are not injured. The dog enclosure field is often cut very low with a tractor and there is no care taken to ensure the wildlife is safe. Having a beehive so close to dogs and their owners will be dangerous. Not to mention the rabbit burrows that are directly below the proposed spot. There is already a large amount

of wildlife that live in the field including foxes, rabbits, badgers and hawks that will have their habitats disturbed by the dogs.

- There are dressage horses that live and train in the field adjacent to the proposed dog enclosure. They will be caused a huge amount of stress and be put at risk of injury. There is only just over 1 meter between the horse fence and the dog enclosure fence. The horses can actually touch the fence which is extremely dangerous.
- On the opposite side of the dog field there is a scout hut that is used by several cubs and scouts groups as well a children's parties. Having unknown people entering the field is a safeguarding risk to the children as well as the dogs being a danger to them.
- The entrance to the field is right next to the bus stop where children catch the school. This poses both a safe guarding risk and a risk of the children getting knocked over by cars entering or leaving the field.
- The field will bring extra traffic to an already busy road. When the A50 is blocked a lot of traffic cuts through the village and added traffic to the field will only make it worse.
- The plans state that there are already 4 car parking spaces within the field when in fact there are none. The applicant has actually got vehicles stuck in the mud in the field on more than one occasion.
- The opening hours are not only unbearable for the local residents but also dangerous due to the lack of lighting. There is no electric to the field and no plans for floodlights so hiring the field out after 4:30pm in the winter will be dangerous as it will be pitch black. 7 days a week opening will cause huge distress to the residents.
- The applicant has hired out the dog enclosure without the planning permission. In February the enclosure was used by two dogs (not the applicants) and four adults accompanied them. The dogs barked the horses next door and the adults were very aggressive when asked why they were using the enclosure. They parked their two cars on the opposite side on the road with two wheels on the pavement. This was very dangerous as it was close to the junction and caused tail backs of traffic all down the road. This shows a blatant disregard for the planning permission process.
- The fencing and gates are inadequate. They have constructed a 6ft wire fence with huge holes that dogs could easily escape through. They also has small gates that dogs could jump over. The enclosure is not secure and no fit for purpose.
- There are already two dog enclosures that are within a couple of miles of the village. They are up to standard and have people on site to monitor and ensure the welfare of the dogs. We already have a registered dog walkers that works within village so there is no call for this enclosure in the village.
- The application states that there have been other dog enclosures passed within Staffordshire but none of these are on green belt land or so close to livestock and residents.

Due to the reasons above I strongly object to this proposal.

